Inclusive Education Policy in Bangladesh: Human Rights, Social Justice and Structural Exclusion

Ferdousi Anis

Institute for Sustainable Industries and Liveable Cities (ISILC), VU Research,

Victoria University

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

2022

Abstract

Bangladesh is a signatory to international declarations that all children must have access to education and has introduced education policies to implement inclusive education in all schools. Despite the aim of the policies to build an inclusive society, widespread discrimination contributes to the exclusion of children with disability in Bangladeshi society. This study investigated how inclusive education is conceptualised in the Bangladeshi *National Education Policy 2010* (NEP10) for children with disability by drawing together social theory, policy and educational practice. A close investigation of the NEP10 utilising Carol Bacchi's WPR approach was undertaken. The theories of Sen, Slee and Spivak, in relation to inclusive education, led to a broader consideration of human rights, social justice and inclusion. Findings from policy analysis were supplemented by a small number of interviews undertaken in two villages. The research findings demonstrate that the conceptualisation of inclusive education must be complemented with a broader consideration of human rights, social justice and inclusion to strengthen inclusive education ideals. The imperative for the Government of Bangladesh to have access to richer evidence for the conceptualisation of inclusive education is suggested to reach the goals of Education For All by 2030. The study concludes by discussing the potential for NEP10 to uphold the ideals of inclusion and impact the rights of children with disability in Bangladesh.

Keywords: Bangladesh, conceptualisation, borrowed policy, disability, exclusion, inclusive education, justice, rights, discrimination, subaltern.

Doctor of Philosophy Declaration

"I, Ferdousi Anis, declare that the PhD thesis entitled Sounds of Silence: Inclusive Education in Bangladesh is no more than 100,000 words in length including quotes and exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, bibliography, references and footnotes. This thesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my own work".

Ferdousi Anis

Date: 26 November 2022

Dedication

To my parents

who would have been proud to see me fulfil their dreams.

My husband, Anis Sarder,

who has been my strength, motivator, companion and moral supporter,

and who helped me with everything.

AND

My daughter, Ferzeen Anis,

who never gave up on me.

Acknowledgments

It is good to have an end to journey towards; but it is the journey that matters, in the end.

———(Le Guin, 1969, p. 109)

Finally, the journey comes to an end. Thanks to The Almighty, and many people who provided support and stimulus for this research. Most of all my gratitude goes to my family. My husband, Anis, for undertaking all responsibilities and always supporting me during my literary journey that often seemed endless. Thanks to my daughter, Ferzeen, for cheering us up in many ways when life proved difficult. Their patience, understanding, support and inspiration have allowed me to accomplish this study when moments of grief, seclusion, depression and tension engulfed life.

Like any other journey, this literary journey has been eventful. It was filled with the challenges of life, uncertainty, anxiety and shocks. The unwanted shocks and unexpected events through the PhD process began with changes in supervision. One year after the commencement of my PhD, my Principal Supervisor, Professor Roger Slee, took up a new position interstate and could then only support me in a limited capacity as external supervisor. It was unexpected when my present Principal Supervisor, Associate Professor Dr Julie White, had to take carer's leave for six months and Dr Fiona MacDonald stepped in. Next, when my co-supervisor Dr Be Pannell left for Sydney. Then Dr Julie White returned and Dr Fiona MacDonald became a co-supervisor. Lastly, when Dr Julie White retired in December 2021 and Dr Fiona MacDonald became my Principal Supervisor. It was also particularly difficult to get through the sudden death of my father and brother-in-law for several months. Despite these challenges, I was able to reach my goal.

I must acknowledge the contributions of those who have provided me with support during my studies. Thanks to Professor Roger Slee for triggering the interest to study inclusive education from a rural perspective. I am deeply grateful to my supervisors Associate Professor Dr Julie White and Dr Fiona MacDonald for their continued guidance, morale support and for challenging me intellectually. This project would not have been possible without their valuable feedback and assistance. Many thanks to Dr Fiona MacDonald, who guided and supported me, particularly in braving the final panel presentation during

Julie’s absence. Many thanks to Dr Be Pannell for providing me with appropriate knowledge about using theories in research. I thank my sisters who came to visit me every year from Bangladesh and for understanding my inability to give them time. I would also like to thank the Examiners for their insightful feedback. Finally, a big thanks to all participants, who willingly and enthusiastically participated in this research.

This thesis was edited by Elite Editing, and editorial intervention was restricted to Standards D and E of the Australian Standards for Editing Practice.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
DPE	Directorate of Primary Education
DSHE	Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education
EFA	*Education for All*
FFE	*Food for Education*
FSP	*Female Secondary School Stipend Project*
IEP	Individualised Education Plan
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoPME	Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
MoSW	Ministry of Social Welfare
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PEDP	*Primary Education Development Program*
ROSC	*Reaching Out of School Children*
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UDHR	*Universal Declaration of Human Rights*
UN	United Nations
UNCRPD	*Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

VUHREC	Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee
WHO	World Health Organisation

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Overview

This chapter provides general contextual information to explain inclusive education at the transnational level and, more specifically, in Bangladesh. The importance of human rights and social justice perspectives on education is discussed. The history of Bangladesh and its education system is briefly outlined to contextualise the study. This is followed by a description of how the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) has conceptualised an inclusive education policy in the country. Having established the context for the study, the research question are then detailed. Following this, the overall structure of the thesis is outlined.

1.2 International Frameworks for Inclusive Education

The signing of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) *Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education* (the Salamanca Statement) in 1994 led to worldwide educational reforms to enact inclusive education policies and extend the right to education for all citizens in signatory countries. Since then, education systems in those countries have undergone policy changes to reflect a governmental commitment to promoting inclusive and democratic education systems and eliminating discriminatory and authoritarian education systems.

The issue of how to develop more inclusive forms of education had arguably become a great challenge for governments who pledged their support for the UNESCO-led Education for All (EFA)[1] by 2015. Based on the premise of a human rights and social justice approach, the Salamanca Statement states (UNESCO, 1994, p.11):

[1] The EFA movement is a global commitment to provide quality basic education for all people. The movement was launched at the World Conference on EFA in 1990, by United Nations Education and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), United Nations Population Fund, formerly the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and the World Bank. Participants pledged to universalise primary education and massively reduce illiteracy by the end of the decade 2005–15. https://unevoc.unesco.org/home/TVETipedia+Glossary/lang=en/filt=all/id=172

> Inclusion and participation are essential to human dignity and to the enjoyment and exercise of human rights. Within the field of education, this is reflected in the development of strategies that seek to bring about a genuine equalization of opportunity.

This vision of inclusion emphasises the viewing of people with disability with rights as capable of claiming those rights and making decisions about their own lives, based on their free and informed consent and being active members of society (Rieser, 2017; Unterhalter, 2013). The global education movement for the right to inclusive education is advocated by several other international statements, conventions, agreements and forms of legislation, including the *Dakar Education for All Framework for Action* (UNESCO, 2000),[2] Millennium Development Goals (United Nations, 2015)[3] and the United Nations (UN) *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (2006) (UNCRPD).[4] As a result, inclusive concepts have become an important component of the education policy agenda of signatory countries. Despite the signing of these agreements, exclusionary practices are deeply engrained in education systems globally and entrenched in social and educational practices in many countries (Slee, 2018).

Inclusive education has been reported to be a significant way to help advance the post-2015 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), now the Sustainable Development Goals 2030, to make education available to everyone and address human rights and social justice issues such as equality and equity, recognition and discrimination (Chowdhury & Chakma, 2019; Ellis & Rowe, 2020; Vargas, 2017). International acts now shape inclusive education policies and practices in many countries. Many nations, including Bangladesh, have responded to the call for inclusive education to ensure that the learning needs of all their community members are addressed, and to put an end to exclusion.

---

[2] At the 2000 World Education Forum in Dakar, 164 governments pledged to achieve Education for All (EFA) and identified six goals to be met by 2015. https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/1681Dakar%20Framework%20for%20Action.pdf

[3] The United Nations (UN) Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are eight goals that in September 2000, 189 UN Member States committed to achieving a set of eight goals to halving extreme poverty and hunger to promoting gender equality and reducing child mortality, by the target date of 2015. The MDGs have been superseded by the Sustainable Development Goals. https://www.sdgfund.org/mdgs-sdgs

[4] The United Nations *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (UNCRPD) is an international human rights treaty to protect and promote the human rights of disabled people. In 2006, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD) surpassed the Salamanca Statement, replacing its commitment with a legally binding obligation. The CRPD provides an authoritative framework for thinking about policy and practice reform. https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html

1.3 Background of the Study

Strong evidence exists to show that by providing educational opportunities to everyone irrespective of age, disability, caste, creed and ethnicity, it is possible to promote an equitable and just social system (Ellis & Rowe, 2020; Okeowhor et al., 2019; Sen & Tasioulas, 2018). Education supports individual rights, it is an essential tool for development (Appiah, 2017; Banks et al., 2017; Sen, 2000). It opens doors for individuals and communities (Armstrong et al., 2010; Roy, 2018), and offers freedom for all. It is a path by which a country can emancipate itself from discrimination, poverty and exclusionary practices (Datzberger, 2018; Frank, 2018; Slee, 2008; 2011). In particular, children with disability and marginalised communities can be empowered (Eryong & Xiuping, 2018; Slee, 2014).

Conversely, exclusion from the society of children with disability, and discrimination against them in developing countries have been shown to significantly impede the success of poverty reduction strategies. Exclusion segregates children with disabilities and their parents from society. The effects of educational exclusion also create psychological, emotional and economic pressure on children with disability and their families (Akyeampong, 2019; Carrington et al., 2019; Slee, 2018, 2019).

1.4 Human Rights, Social Justice and Education

Advocates for human rights and social justice in education highlight that discrimination, marginalisation and exclusion are not the responsibility of individuals but rather of how a society is structured, and the systems in society (Carrington et al., 2019; Chand & Karre, 2019; Slee, 2013). The denial of rights, lack of provision of basic human needs and absence of access to resources and support services contribute to discrimination, injustice and perpetuation of undemocratic principles. Other major consequences of exclusion are inequality, marginalisation, caste systems and systemic barriers that leave groups of people without a choice or recognition within their communities. These external forces create societal conditions that have far-reaching effects on individuals and society. Not only does exclusion limit individuals' capacity to produce, grow and be empowered but it also exerts a significant influence, in particular, on the economic development of a country. From this perspective, fairness and impartiality in education is vital for developing countries to establish social equity, uphold democratic ideals and emancipate

themselves from discrimination and exclusionary practices (Tromp & Datzberger, 2019; UNESCO, 2018a).

A United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs report shows that 90 per cent of the world's total rural population lives in Africa and Asia (United Nations, 2018). Rapidly evolving conditions—for example, migration from rural to urban areas, displacement, technological innovation, climate change and urbanisation—have driven significant educational reform and change in developing countries (Eryong & Xiuping, 2018; Williams, 2018; Wu & He, 2017). Global partnerships between developing countries and donors such as the International Monetary Fund, UNESCO, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), World Health Organisation (WHO), have been strengthened as nations redefine how they respond to differences in ability, ethnicity and culture. Unfortunately, the very large number of education stakeholders who live in rural and remote areas in developing countries often remain ignored as the focus of policy initiatives. They are discriminated against and not recognised (Okwayn & Kamusiime, 2017; Trivelli & Morel 2020).

Human rights and social justice have been associated with the ideals of inclusive education that can reduce discrimination and promote rights, equality, equity, acceptance, recognition and belonging in society (Ainscow, 2020; Jiménez-Ramírez et al., 2020; Rizvi, 2017; Sen, 1999; Slee, 2018). The empowerment of vulnerable communities and their participation in economic development have shown to have huge positive impacts on communities. Social exclusion can be targeted and an equitable and just social system promoted (Armstrong et al., 2010; Poveda & Roberts, 2018). This means that providing the same educational opportunities to everyone irrespective of age, disability, caste, creed and ethnicity, and a system that is fair and impartial and supports individual rights, can open doors for individuals and communities. Importantly, social exclusion can be reduced (Okeowhor et al., 2019; Sen & Tasioulas, 2018). However, the success of inclusive education will require practical solutions to problems such as its effective conceptualisation to eliminate exclusionary pressures that restrict the equal participation of all community members (Ainscow, 2005; Akyeampong, 2019; Slee, 2018).

Discrimination, marginalisation and exclusion of people with disability in developing countries have been shown to impede the achievement of the Education For All (EFA) goals (UNESCO, 2018b). Illiteracy further isolates those with disabilities and their access

to education and employment become limited (Olk, 2019; Rahman, 2020; Vargas, 2017). Educational exclusion has the potential to bring psychological, emotional and economic pressure. This is especially true for children with disability and their families who live in rural and remote areas (Akyeampong, 2019; Carrington et al., 2019; Davie, 2015).

However, there is evidence that inclusive education is a complex issue (Armstrong et al., 2011; Foreman & Arthur-Kelly, 2017; Slee, 2011, 2018). The debates around what inclusive education entails has been controversial and challenging. The conceptualisation of inclusive education from the human rights and social justice perspective has led to differing policies and outcomes among countries that has impacted its success (Boyle & Anderson, 2020; Schwab et al., 2018; Slee, 2011). In addition, there are still diverse opinions among education stakeholders about the suitability of inclusive education approaches for all children (Krischler et al., 2019). Exclusion and segregation continue to dominate inclusive education policy although huge strides have been made worldwide to address equal access to education for all children, including those with a disability (Boyle & Anderson, 2020). A failure to identify the causes of exclusion and establishing rights, equality, equity and non-discrimination, and reducing the policy gaps has shown to impact inclusive education policy (Potter, 2019; Slee, 2013, 2018).

Given the complexities and uncertainties, the conceptualisation of inclusive education is likely to raise issues for developing countries, such as Bangladesh, where approximately 17.5 million children with disability and special needs live (Asaduzzaman & Iqbal, 2018). In addition, the prevalence of inequality in terms of access to local schools, restricted social mobility and limited employment prospects have shown to persist in Bangladeshi society (Rieser, 2017). For those with a disability, Bangladeshi society is a place of restrictions, barriers, battles and unrewarding experiences. Children with disability face negative attitudes, stigmatisation and ignorance, as do their parents. Their rights to education and employment are curtailed (Bin Wares, 2019).

The inclusive education movement has made significant headway through the conceptualisation of the *National Education Policy* 2010 (NEP10). Coupled with the need to comply with international commitments to achieve the EFA and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)[5] by 2030 (United Nations, 2015a), the Government of

[5]Building upon the experience and lessons learned of the previous MDG Achievement Fund (2007-2013), the SDG Fund intends to act as a bridge in the transition from MDGs to SDGs to achieve a sustainable

Bangladesh has shown its commitment to provide education for all its citizens and prevent discriminatory practices in society:

> Equal opportunities will be created to ensure access of all children to primary education irrespective of ethnicity, socio-economic conditions, physical or mental challenges and geographical differences. This is the Constitutional responsibility of the state. (NEP10, pp. 4–5)

1.5 Rationale for the Study

The rationale for this study is both professional and personal. The professional aspect refers to the undertaking of this PhD-level investigation.

1.5.1 Gaps in the Literature

Some researchers have observed that inclusive education in Bangladesh is at an early stage of development (Khan et al., 2015; Lamichhane & Kawakatsu, 2015), which suggests that relevant policy is still in its infancy and in want of nurturing, while a recent study has argued for the restructuring of the inclusive education policy that was enacted 12 years ago (Rouf, 2021). Several other Bangladeshi studies have reported on access, equity and policy (Anis & Akhter, 2011; Beutel et al., 2019; Chowdhury & Sarkar, 2018; Rahaman, 2017) but has given little attention to the education for children with disability living in rural areas (Begum et al., 2018). An extensive review of the literature revealed that very few studies have been conducted on how inclusive education is conceptualised in Bangladeshi education policy. None to date have adopted Carol Bacchi's (2012) 'What's the Problem Represented to Be' (WPR) approach to analyse Bangladeshi education policy to investigate how the problem of inclusion is represented, the underpinning presuppositions, silences, and effects of these problem representations, nor whether the inclusive education is achieved. Furthermore, more recently, concerns around the conceptualisation of inclusion by governments have been raised in international studies that investigate who is included or excluded from education, and why (Krischler et al., 2019; Larsen et al., 2019; Mutanga, 2018). This means that the creation of an

and inclusive world post-2015 through its integrated and multidimensional joint programmes. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a plan to build a better world for people and our planet by 2030. SDG 4 aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

equitable education system for all students, including those with disability, should involve a critical analysis of how inclusion is articulated and communicated within the key policy. As a result, the present study was based on the following research question.

1.5.2 Research Question

This investigation aims to make a contribution to knowledge about how education can be more inclusive for students with disability in rural Bangladeshi schools. The research question that guided this study is:

How is inclusive education conceptualised in Bangladesh?

To gauge how inclusive education is conceptualised in Bangladesh and to understand to what extent the needs of the children with disability are incorporated into inclusive education policies is crucial. This is a step toward understanding what influences this incorporation and leads, or not, to equitable access to education. If the specific needs of children with disability are not evident or are seen as a separate issue in a national education policy, questions are raised about how their needs can be addressed. Thus, it is of interest to determine the extent to which all children with disability are included in Bangladesh's inclusive education policy document in order to advocate for their rights.

In addition, rural Bangladeshis account for well over half of the total population (Moore, 2020). An unequal society faces significant challenges in reducing poverty, and the goal of leaving no one behind in education is likely to be unachieved by 2030. Local perspectives and knowledge have the capacity to help develop a better understanding of policy (Carrington et al., 2019; Parpart & Parashar, 2019). Therefore, recognising and valuing the perspectives of this large section of society seems critical (Parpart & Parashar, 2019; Smit & Nel, 2018).

Since the Government of Bangladesh committed to the Salamanca Statement in 2001, considering the viewpoints of the researchers described above and the gaps in the literature, the present study investigated inclusive education in Bangladesh as there is a need to understand how a borrowed international policy has been conceptualised to addresses the needs of children with disability. This research investigates the NEP10 and the experiences of a small number of rural education stakeholders with inclusive

education for children with disability. The study is a theoretically-informed policy analysis with some supplementary interviews.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This investigation represents a contribution to knowledge by undertaking a theoretically-informed analysis of inclusive education policy documents. One of the most important contributions of this research, unlike other Bangladeshi studies, is the employment of theories. This approach aims to inform future research.

This research applies Bacchi's WPR approach to analyse the Bangladeshi National Education Policy 2010. This policy is relevant because it clearly mentions '*Ekibhuto Shikkha*' (Inclusive education) which is not evident in succeeding education policies. It draws together social theory, policy and educational practice to understand inclusive education and its conceptualisation by Bangladeshi education stakeholders. The study draws on three key theorists: Amartya Sen, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Roger Slee, who advocate for the establishment of inclusive practices in a society, where everyone belongs, is valued, is recognised, is accepted, has the rights and can gain equal access. Without this, they argue, a society can never claim to be inclusive. The three theories enabled an investigation of issues that affect human rights, social justice and inclusive practices in Bangladesh. In this study, human rights and social justice is considered and discussed in the context of, equality, equity, recognition, belonging, acceptance, representation and non-discrimination.

This theoretically informed investigation of inclusive education in Bangladesh theorises about the education of children with disability and the needs of the children that the NEP10 is serving. The study builds knowledge of how Bangladesh can better engage with an international education policy. The research has relevance in the international context and global commitment to inclusive education. This study addresses some critical issues that may be encountered by children with disability in other developing countries. Further, this study may serve to contribute to a growing body of literature that seeks to understand the conceptualisation of a borrowed policy in developing countries. It is hoped that this study will be useful for further studies on the inclusion of children with disability in regular schools in Bangladesh.

1.7 Thesis Overview

This section provides an overview of the research. The first chapter has provided the background and rationale for the study. The links between education and development are described, the research question are introduced and the significance of the study is outlined.

Chapter 2 introduces Bangladesh, its social class structure, achievements and aspirations. From here the Bangladeshi educational context focusses on significant international treaties and legislation that have influenced the development of inclusive education policies. The chapter provides an outline of Bangladeshi education policies. A brief discussion of the NEP10 is provided to demonstrate Bangladesh's commitment to international policy compliance and rationale for choosing this policy

Chapter 3 analyses the scholarly literature pertaining to inclusive education. The literature review extends to policy and theoretical perspectives. The complexities around the conceptualisation of borrowed international policy in developing countries are discussed.

Chapter 4 mainly focusses on the theories of social justice, development and capability by Amartya Sen (1979, 1999, 2000, 2011), the subaltern theory by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1988) and the inclusion/exclusion theory by Roger Slee (2011, 2013, 2018, 2019). These theories draw together social theory, policy and educational practice and helps understand the conceptualisation of inclusive education in developing countries with a focus on human rights, social justice and exclusion.

Chapter 5 outlines the methodological approach used in the study reported in this thesis. An overview of the philosophical stance of the researcher and the questions that guided the research is provided. The analytical approach to examining policy by adapting Carol Bacchi's (2012) 'What's the Problem Represented to Be?' (WPR) approach around inclusive education in Bangladesh is outlined. The theoretical exploration of policy is supplemented by interviews conducted in rural Bangladesh. The method and procedures for analysing the interviews are presented. Geographical and demographic information about the location of the fieldwork is provided and discussed. The chapter describes the participants and the researcher's role in the study. The chapter concludes with ethical obligations considered for the study.

Chapter 6 provides a detailed discussion of the analytical process. The chapter provides information about the understanding of a borrowed international policy and its conceptualisation within Bangladeshi context. The chapter employs the 'What's The Problem Represented to Be (WPR)' approach (Bacchi, 2012) to know how the 'problem' of inclusion is represented, and the underpinning presuppositions, silences, and effects of these problem representations and whether the intended outcome is achieved. The analysis of policy provides a greater understanding of the 'deep conceptual premises' on which policies are built (Bacchi 2009, p. xix) in Bangladesh. The chapter then investigates education stakeholder perspectives from a small number of interviews conducted in two rural areas.

Chapter 7 discusses the findings from the analysis of policy and some interviews about the educational inclusion of children with disability in Bangladesh. The findings are distilled using an amalgam of three theories and the key literature reviewed to understand the main outcomes.

Chapter 8, the final chapter, concludes the thesis by summarising what the study sought to investigate and its contribution to knowledge. The research identifies how inclusive education is conceptualised in Bangladeshi policy. It identifies policy silences, and issues that have yet to be overcome to achieve the EFA goals by 2030 (UNESCO, 2017). Further, it offers some insight into how the education policy for children with disability in the Bangladeshi context could address their needs, by proposing future research. This chapter draws together the arguments presented in Chapters 2, 3, 5 and 6. How successful Bangladesh has been in the conceptualisation of inclusive education is also addressed.

This chapter has introduced the background and rationale for the study and provided an overview of the chapters that follow. The next chapter introduces Bangladesh and the context for this study.

Chapter 2: Setting the Scene

To set the scene for this study, some general information is provided to explain education policy implementation at the national level and, more specifically, inclusive education within Bangladesh. This is followed by a brief discussion about the motivation behind the study. Then, the history of Bangladesh and the study context is outlined in order to contextualize the study. This background provides the rationale for why I have chosen to focus mainly on three theoretical perspectives for this research. I return to these at the end of this chapter. Finally, how the Bangladeshi government supports the education of children with disability is outlined.

2.1 Motivation for the Study

Exclusion is widespread in Bangladesh, especially among those who live in rural and remote areas, and those with disability. A United Nations Report (2017) on Bangladesh shows that the exclusion of marginalised people from education and economic activities contributes to increased poverty. Conversely, the education, employment and development of marginalised communities has been shown to significantly reduce poverty and contribute to individual and economic development (United Nations, 2017). It was in this context that my curiosity about rural Bangladeshis became stronger. I became particularly interested in how inclusive education policy was conceptualised in rural Bangladesh.

My work in the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE) in Bangladesh has taken me to multiple cities, rural areas and offices. A lack of access to education for children with disability was evident. Negative attitudes of teachers and parents, uncooperative school administrators, inflexible curriculum, superstition, stigma and most importantly, a rigid top-down hierarchal social structure also seemed to operate within the daily practices in society. This showed signs of structural inequalities and restrictions to education and exclusion.

As an officer at the MoE, I took the opportunity offered by the European Commission to study special education needs at the University of Roehampton, London. A requirement of the course was to live and study in the Netherlands and the Czech Republic for several months each. This gave me the opportunity to visit inclusive schools in three developed

countries. It was during these visits that I reflected on Bangladeshi schools for children with disability. My study and experiences in these developed countries and subsequent interaction with the literature introduced me to the concepts of inclusive education and I became interested in this field of study.

As my reading of the literature developed my understanding, I also became concerned about the education of children with disability in Bangladeshi regular schools. It was particularly important for the Government of Bangladesh to achieve the EFA goals (UNICEF, 2016) by 2015 as receipt of international funding for the country's development was dependent on this. I was interested to know about inclusive education and how Bangladesh perceives this international policy. This became my research odyssey.

2.2 The Bangladeshi Context

Every country has its own story about inclusive education, so does Bangladesh. Two decades after the signing of the Salamanca Statement, many countries are struggling to reach the 2030 EFA goals (UNESCO, 2017b). For Bangladesh, the struggle appears to be accompanied by significant and wide-ranging issues, specifically, having to deal with the influx of close to one million Muslim minority people from neighbouring Myanmar since 2017. This Rohingya exodus has been shown to burden the Government of Bangladesh with the responsibility of meeting the basic needs of this refugee community while providing its own children with access to formal education (Reid, 2020). Providing education to all children including non-Bangladeshi citizens, and dealing with the challenges associated with the conceptualisation of a borrowed international policy, require deeper knowledge. According to the vision of EFA and to understand the realities of the practices of inclusion, it is imperative to consider the research question:

'How is inclusive education conceptualised in Bangladesh?'

To set the scene for this study, a brief introduction to Bangladesh is provided. This background provides the rational for why I have chosen the three theoretical perspectives for this research. I return to these at the end of this chapter.

2.2.1 The Research Location: History and Demography

Before 1947, Bangladesh and Pakistan were part of India and therefore, were also British colonies. With the ending of nearly 300 years of British Colonial rule in 1947, the Partition of India occurred, and India and Pakistan were formed (Rana, 2019; Wolf, 2017). Between 1947 and 1971 Bangladesh was known as East Pakistan. On 21 February 1952, East Pakistan (Bangladesh) revolted against West Pakistan (Pakistan), demanding official status be given to the Bangla language. The revolt ended with the killing of many university student protesters by the West Pakistani police. This led to continued civil unrest in the coming years. The incident paved the way for the Bangladesh War of Liberation and led to UNESCO declaring 21 February as International Mother Language Day in 1999 (UNESCO, 2019); which was recognised by the UN in 2008 (Al-Mubarak, 2015). After a nine-month war with West Pakistan (now Pakistan), Bangladesh became independent on 16 December 1971 (Rana, 2019; Wolf, 2017).

Bangladesh is the eighth-most populous and densely populated developing country in South Asia, with 167.6 million people (Census and Economic Information Center, 2020) residing in a landmass smaller than that of Victoria, Australia. Dhaka, the capital and largest city, has 10.3 million residents (World Population Review, 2019). The country is surrounded by India on three sides and the Bay of Bengal on its southern side. It has the world's largest mangrove forest (Sundarbans) and the longest natural sea beach (Cox's Bazar) (UNESCO, 2018a). Bangladesh abounds in natural beauty but is prone to natural disasters like floods and cyclones because of its low-lying position.

Bangladesh is a Muslim-majority nation, and also has Hindu, Christian and Buddhist citizens. Two per cent of the total population are tribal people. They have their own cultures, traditions and languages. Some of these tribes do not have written scripts. They are known as 'Adivasi' or 'Pahari', and constitute Indigenous and ethnic minorities in Bangladesh who have a low level of literacy and limited access to education, information and social services; and who live in poverty (Murmu, 2019).

2.2.2 Bangladesh: Social Class

The colonial history of Bangladesh has in many ways affected the country's culture, tradition, language, education, politics and how the Bangladeshi social system operates even today (Islam, 2021). In Bangladeshi society, class is determined by various factors

that are not limited to one's family background, income, occupation and education. Political affiliation or connections, economic success and the accumulation of wealth and property are significant factors that expresses power and prestige. The dominance of the *khomotabaan* (the powerful, e.g. politicians, military, bureaucrats, wealthy and aristocrats) and *shohorbashi* (city dwellers, belonging to the elite and upper middle class) over the *moddhobitto* (middle class), *nimno modhdhobitto* (lower middle class), *goreeb* (poor), *geyo* or *grammo* (villagers, unenlightened), *bosti bashee* (slum dwellers) and *ochchut* (untouchables) is evident in society (Hossain, 2017; Islam et al., 2014, p. 11). The *ochchut* have the lowest social standing. They are discriminated against in Bangladeshi society. Therefore, they remain excluded from development opportunities.

Class distinction in Bangladeshi society creates divisions or hierarchies of advantage and influence over others. Ali et al. (2015) describe how minorities and untouchables are forced to study in segregated schools. They have limited employment opportunities and wages. This kind of behaviour and attitude demonstrates an absence of rights and social justice for these people. It reflects a highly unequal society and the existence of a highly complex social and cultural structure. Table 2.1 summarises the social hierarchy in Bangladesh.

It is quite common that people with wealth and political networks, high social positions and personal relationships with rich, powerful and famous people, come from educated, well-known families who are able to exploit the marginalised and make decisions that serve their own purpose (Ruud, 2020).

Table 2.1: Social Class in Bangladesh

Upper class	This social class is composed of the powerful, the wealthy and the educated. They constitute 2 per cent of the total population; examples are politicians, CEOs, industrialists and defence service officers.
Middle class	The middle class is divided into upper, middle and lower middle class according to level of education, wealth and prestige. There are overlaps in terms of wealth, property and family background. The upper middle class constitutes 28 per cent and the middle and lower middle class together constitute 30 per cent of the total population. The upper middle class are usually highly educated, white collar professionals with a high income and a number of properties; examples include doctors, lawyers, bureaucrats, university teachers, educators and high-ranking government officials.

	The middle class are generally educated professionals with comparatively lower income and ownership of less property than the upper middle class. The lower middle class are people in blue collar jobs who are less educated people and own limited property; examples include small business owners, rural schoolteachers, office staff and non-gazetted civil, defence and protective service personnel.
Poor	This class of people are usually illiterate or have few literacy skills. They form 40 per cent of the Bangladeshi population and are engaged in manual jobs; they include farmers, fishers, rickshaw pullers, street vendors and workers in construction, maintenance and factories. Minority[6] groups such as the Dalit and Bihari communities, and Indigenous people, are also in this social class.

Source: https://www.academia.edu/4105973/Modern_Society_and_Stratification_in_Bangladesh.

2.2.3 Bangladesh: Achievements

Bangladesh has made significant progress in combatting poverty, population growth, infant and child mortality, and polio since its independence (Guha, 2020; Trines, 2019, World Health Organisation, 2015). It emerged from a least developed country as a low–middle-income country (The World Bank, 2020). The microcredit system introduced by Professor Mohammed Yunus made Bangladesh a role model for reducing poverty and empowering women (Kandulu et al., 2019; The World Bank, 2020; Wykstra, 2019). The country is the world's second-largest garment manufacturing hub and textile exporter after China (Trines, 2019). Bangladesh has achieved gender parity in primary and lower secondary education (Anis & White, 2017; Nazeer, 2018; Rahman, 2020). More remarkably, girls' and women's education has gained significant ground through the UNICEF-funded *Meena Communicative Initiative* project (Anis & White, 2017), the *Compulsory Primary Education Act 1990(MoE, 2010)*, the *Food for Education* program 1993[7] (Meng & Ryan, 2010) and the *Female Secondary Stipend Program*.[8] Bangladesh

[6] The Dalit community, Indigenous people and Biharis. https://minorityrights.org/country/bangladesh/

[7] The *Food for Education* (FFE) program was introduced in Bangladesh in 1993. The FFE program provides a free monthly ration of rice or wheat to poor families, if their children attend primary school. The goals of this program are to increase primary school enrolment, promote attendance, reduce dropout rates and enhance the quality of education. Over the years, the FFE program has largely fulfilled its objectives of increasing school enrolment, promoting school attendance and preventing dropout.

[8] The *Female Secondary School Stipend Project* in Bangladesh was established in 1982 to increase girls' enrolment in secondary school, thereby delaying marriage and childbearing. This project gave tuition and stipends to all girls in low-literacy areas of Bangladesh to help those in the poorest areas attend secondary school and graduate from Grade 10. As a condition for receiving the stipends, girls had to maintain satisfactory grades and attendance, and parents had to agree to delay their daughter's marriage.

is regarded a world leader in pioneering education partnerships between government and non-government organisations (Global Education Report, 2013).

2.2.4 Bangladesh: Education Policy

The Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) are responsible for the implementation of the Government of Bangladesh's education policies to achieve the EFA goals. The MoPME offers education to children up to the end of primary-level; that is, Class 5. Secondary level education from Class 6–12 is provided by the MoE.

While inclusive education is on the agendas of both these ministries, the responsibility for children with disability and special needs lies with the Ministry of Social Welfare (MoSW). As this ministry is not concerned with achieving the EFA goals, this has resulted in such education being siloed away from those in charge of education in general. The role of the MoSW is to provide specific services to marginalised communities to reduce poverty (Ministry of Social Welfare, 2001). Some of these services include social protection and security, training and rehabilitation, counselling, destitute allowances and empowerment through the dissemination of information about rights. Children with disability mostly receive education through special schools and integrated programs at a few government schools (Olk, 2019).

EFA is prominent in Bangladeshi education acts and policies. Government legislation enshrines inclusive education. Article 17 of the 1972 Bangladesh Constitution states that effective measures will be adopted: (a) establishing a uniform, mass-oriented and universal system of education, and extending free and compulsory education to all children and, (b) relating education to the needs of society to remove illiteracy and produce trained and motivated citizens. This resonates with Article 26(1 & 2) of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) (United Nations, 2015b). Article 19(1), (2) of the UDHR upholds the equality of opportunity and the adoption of effective measures to ensure equitable distribution of resources among a country's citizens. In particular, Article 19(2), Article 28(1) and Article 28(3) stipulate non-discrimination, on any grounds, regarding access to any public place or educational institution.

The first Bangladeshi education policy was developed in 1974 by the Dr Khudrat-e-Khuda Commission, led by renowned scholar, Dr Khudrat-e-Khuda. This education

policy failed to progress because of serious ongoing political conditions that engulfed the country for the next few years. Several education commissions were formed successively from 1975—including the Mazid Khan Education Commission in 1983 and Bangladesh National Education Commission in 1987—but even their associated acts, such as the *Interim Education Policy* 1978, failed to be introduced.

From 1990 to 2013, Bangladesh initiated many education acts and policies that brought significant changes and improvements to the education sector. Table 2.2 presents an outline of those enacted acts and policies, whose objectives have been to mainly bring quality changes to the education system, reduce poverty and meet the demands of international funding organisations (MoE, 2010).

Table 2.2: Education Policies, Acts and Legislation in Bangladesh Since 1990

Year	Policy/Act/Legislation
1990	*Compulsory Primary Education Act*
1992–2000, 2003–15	*EFA National Plan of Action I and II*
1994	*National Child Policy*
1995	*National Disability Policy*
2000	*National Education Policy*
2001	*Persons with Disability Welfare Act*
2005	*Social Welfare Policy and Disability*
2006	*National Action Plan on Disability*
2006	*National Non-Formal Education Policy*
2010	*National Education Policy*
2011	*National Skill Development Policy*
2011	*National Children Policy, National Women Development Policy*
2011–15	*The Sixth Five-Year Plan*
2011–21	*Vision 2021/Perspective Plan*
2013	*Comprehensive Early Childhood Care and Development*
2013	*Disabled Persons Rights and Protection Act*
2013	*Education Act (Draft)*
2014	*Non-formal Education Act*

Source: MoPME, Bangladesh (2014)

Bangladesh also pledged support for EFA (UNESCO, 1990), the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994), the *Biwako Millennium Framework for Action* (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, 2002) and the *Dakar Framework for Action* (UNESCO, 2000). Bangladesh was one of the first countries to ratify and enforce global documents with a view to ensuring educational inclusion of every child and protecting the rights of children with a disability under the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (UNICEF, 1989) and the UNCRPD (UN, 2006). A comparative policy summary is provided in Table 2. 3.

Table 2.3: Comparative Policy Summary

International Policy	**Bangladesh Policy**
1989 *Convention on the Rights of the Child*	**1990** *Compulsory Primary Education Act*
1994 Salamanca Statement	**1995** *National Policy for the Disabled*
2000 *Dakar Framework for Action*	**2001** *Bangladesh Disability Welfare Act*
2006 UNCRPD	**2010** *National Education Policy*
	2013 *Disabled Persons Rights and Protection Act*
	2016 *National Education Act* (draft)
	2018 *Fourth Primary Education Development Program* (ongoing)
	2019 *Integrated Special Education Policy*

Source: UNICEF (2021)

The comparative policy summary shows that education for children with disability has increasingly gained currency in government policies and initiatives for education in Bangladesh. In support of the international trend of inclusion, the Government of Bangladesh enacted the *Disability Welfare Act 2001* (MoE, 2010) and the *Disabled Persons Rights and Protection Act 2013 and the Integrated Special Education Policy 2019*. These acts provide legislative support to promote the protection of rights and equal opportunity for those with disability.

The commitment to providing education to all is reflected in the conceptualisation and development of projects including the *Reaching Out of School Children* program (ROSC I, II) (Directorate of Primary Education, 2020) and the *Primary Education Development Program* (PEDP I, II, III, IV) (Directorate of Primary Education, 2020). These projects

are undertaken by the MoPME and funded by international donors such as Asian Development Bank (ADB), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Department for International Development (DFID), UNESCO, UNICEF, United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the World Bank. As an intervention program conceived by the Bangladeshi government (The World Bank, 2016) and operated by the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, ROSC has provided primary education to out-of-school children in targeted under-served *upazilas* (sub-districts) by facilitating access to formal primary education with grants to learning centres and education allowances, especially for the disadvantaged children (The World Bank, 2010). This project also provided alternative education[9] to out-of-school children living in urban slums in 8 cities and pre-vocational training to school drop-outs and adolescents. "*Ananda Schools*" (*Ananda* meaning joy in English) were set up targeting 60 *upazilas* out of a total of 460 rural *upazilas* in Bangladesh. The *upazilas* selected were based on poor performance on the following indicators: (a) net enrolment rates (b) the gender gap in enrolment; (c) the primary cycle completion rates, and (d) poverty levels (Ahmed, 2006). The main focus of PEDP I, II, III and IV projects has been on infrastructure development and school facilities improvement since 1997. PEDP IV is currently operating and will cease operation in June 2023 (Centre for Research and Information, 2019).

2.2.5 *National Education Policy 2010*

With the NEP10, the aim is to eliminate all forms of discrimination against marginalised and socially excluded people to promote inclusive education (MoE, 2010). Another aim is to prevent socially excluded children and students with disability from dropping out of school by ensuring a 100 per cent enrolment rate and attendance up to Year 12. To achieve these aims, the NEP10 states that all children have equal access to their local school with support services reaching out to children with disability and underprivileged children (Ministry of Education, 2010, p. 5). Building schools and providing educational

[9] The alternative education program aimed at resisting the drop out of children from slum school areas by an accelerated model syllabus to appear in a formal examination at the end of Class 5. The curriculum included painting and drawing, drama, story book reading, songs. This program was a blend of formal education with non-formal means of delivery to the young learners, providing them with an opportunity to complete grade five and transition to secondary education.
https://dpe.portal.gov.bd/sites/default/files/files/dpe.portal.gov.bd/publications/dff9a5f1_f974_4da5_98ce_3b8348e05ce0/ROSC-II%20SIMF%20July%2029,%202012(Revised%2015Aug).pdf
https://bitactg.org/present_activities/test/

opportunities to socioeconomically marginalised children from slums, hilly, remote and wetland areas has been prioritised (NEP10, p. 8).

Equally, the policy seeks to empower all children to be successful academically and in their social life by catering to their needs. For this purpose, the publication of textbooks in Indigenous languages and the recruitment of teachers from the relevant ethnic background has been emphasised (NEP10, p. 8). Over and above this, addressing disparity between rural and urban schools has been stressed (Ministry of Education, 2010, p. 9).

In addition, the NEP10 was strengthened in 2011 to uphold the rights and entitlements of children with disability in Articles 6.8 and 6.9 (Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, 2011). The Government of Bangladesh endorsed the *National Children Policy 2011*, and the *Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2013* and *Education Act 2013* were then enacted. The principles of the *National Children Policy 2011* are focussed on, 1) Ensuring child rights in accordance with the constitution of Bangladesh, Child Act and International Charters/ Conventions, 2) Poverty alleviation, 3) Elimination of all forms of child abuse and discrimination, 4) Elimination of all forms of abuse of and discrimination to female child and 5) Participation of the children and accepting their views for their protection. The *Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2013* and *Education Act 2013* emphasise inclusive values and practices to address the rights and needs of children with disability. However, the term, 'inclusive education' is not clearly stated or conveyed in these policies either in English or Bangla although they show a strong commitment by the Government of Bangladesh to achieve the post-2015 EFA goals (UNESCO, 2017b) and sustain the pressure to prioritise education within the aid budgets of donor countries (Global Education Report, 2013; Wood, 2020). Equal access to education for all children with disability in every school in Bangladesh is highlighted. But the scope for special education in segregated schools also exist in the *National Children Policy 2011*, the *Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2013* and *Education Act 2013* (Ministry of Law, Justice & Parliamentary Affairs, 2019). As a result the NEP10 document remains the most relevant to inclusive education policy in Bangladesh.

Despite the strengths of the NEP10, the educational exclusion of children with disability remains a significant concern. Ambiguity in policy statements, use of terminology that belittles inclusive values, and insufficient direction and guidelines to implement this

policy have contributed to its limited success (Malak, 2013). Like many developing countries, for these reasons Bangladesh did not meet EFA goals by 2015 (UN, 2017).

2.2.6 Education Policy Development

In the development of education policies, there is a top-down policy and administrative framework in Bangladesh. National initiatives to develop policies correspond with UNESCO guidelines on inclusive education to promote equity and quality (UNESCO, 2009). They reflect the principles stated in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) *Equity and Quality in Education: Supporting Marginalised Students and Schools* report for establishing an equitable education system by allowing individuals to receive education and training (OECD, 2012).

Primarily, the MoE develops policies and acts to uphold the Bangladesh Constitution. These policies are executed by the DSHE in secondary schools (Year 9–10) and colleges (Year 11–Masters). The MoPME formulates, plans, monitors and implements policies relating to compulsory primary education and non-formal education in Bangladesh (Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, 2019). Policy decisions are taken by the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE). The DPE controls, coordinates and regulates field administration of primary education. From the district, through the *Upazila* (sub-district) school level, the local education authority plays a mediating role between central-level policy and school-level practice in Bangladesh.

Bangladeshi and international researchers have criticised this top-down policy system and characterised the Bangladeshi bureaucracy as complicated, authoritative, sluggish and conservative (Hossain, 2017; S. Rahman & Tosun, 2018; Slee et al., 1998). Research on how the bureaucracy operates shows that political actors focus on risk minimisation and rules rather than individuals (Slee et al., 1998). Analysing and remediating problems through differentiation procedures and care for individual or community requirements does not occur (Boussaguet & Faucher, 2020; Davie, 2015). Based on empirical evidence of policy development, it has been argued that policy bureaucrats often seek to pursue policy goals and objectives, giving less consideration to the conceptualisation of methods used to achieve them, and their effectiveness (Hudson et al., 2019; Slee et al., 1998). As a result, despite national and international policy frameworks and policy development, inclusive education for all Bangladeshis does not appear to have been achieved.

2.2.7 Bangladesh: People with Disability

The definition of physical condition relates to the level of wellbeing in relation to the functioning of all internal and external body parts, organs, tissues and cells. Good physical condition is defined as, for example, the ability to see properly, hear normally, walk, jump, run and generally carry out all other normal activities without struggle, and to adapt to living conditions (Butenko et al., 2017).

In Bangladesh, there is strong evidence of exclusionary practices in the education system with people without good physical condition, i.e with a disability (Beutel et al., 2019; Chandan, 2020; Olk, 2019). Bangladeshi research on the education of children with disability demonstrates that while some children with mild and moderate disability attend school, a high proportion of these children are being left behind because of negative attitudes that contribute significantly to stigmatisation and a high rate of school absenteeism (Chandan, 2020; Nazeer, 2018; Rahaman, 2017). In thinking about disability, a general perception in Bangladesh is that people with disability have no ability to contribute, are good for nothing, someone to be ignored, a curse, a burden and an object of charity (Olk, 2019, Thompson, 2020). For many children with a disability, participation in regular classrooms in Bangladesh remains allusive.

Recent Bangladeshi research reported a decline in the enrolment of children with autism in 2019 in public schools but an increase in those enrolled in specialised schools (Directorate of Primary and Mass Education, 2019). An alarming lack of compassion, tolerance and understanding towards children with disability and their families forces them to live in seclusion (Olk, 2019; Tazrian, 2020). Despite the many government initiatives, children with disability remain ignored and excluded from receiving education (Thompson, 2020). Those who enrol either drop out or are gradually or intentionally pushed out of the school system because schools are not prepared or equipped to cater to the different learning styles and requirements of students.

Although Article 11 of the Bangladesh Constitution upholds basic human rights, and Article 28 guarantees non-discrimination to all citizens (Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, 2019), disparities in the education of children belonging to different groups continue to be evident in Bangladeshi society (Tazrian, 2020). Stereotyping and discrimination against children with disability reflect the existence of

social conditions such as inequality, absence of equity in education and employment, slow progress and poverty (Ingraham, 2018; Oando & Akinyi, 2019; Sarker, 2020). Deprivation and the unequal distribution of opportunity in Bangladesh contributes to the vulnerability of children with disability (Tazrian, 2020). Scarcity and disproportionality reflect policy gaps and human development deficits in policy strategies that affect the country's economic growth and the empowerment of children with disability (Beutel & Carrington, 2018; Olk, 2019; Yunus, 2010).

In regular schools in Bangladesh, attitudes towards children with disability are profoundly negative. Although the primary school enrolment rate in Bangladesh is high, only four per cent of children with disability out of an estimated 1.6 million of primary school age, have access to education (Zulfiqar, et al., 2018). Disability is understood as a curse and burden force parents to withdraw their children and enrol them in special schools or schools that provide non-formal education (Al Noor, 2017; Islam, 2020; Lamichhane & Kawakatsu, 2015). These schools are operated primarily by two non-governmental organisations: the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC)[10] and Bangladesh Protibondhi Kallyan Shomity.[11]

When children with disability face exclusion, their human rights, and the social and economic security that education offers, become restricted (Lamichhane & Kawakatsu, 2015). There are, however, other effects of exclusionary practices. A hostile environment often tends to exacerbate the living conditions of children with disability as well as their economic condition (Lamichhane & Kawakatsu, 2015; Olk, 2019). In addition, discriminatory attitudes have shown to increase the risk of violence, abuse and exploitation for them (Olk, 2019). Families with children with disability have been found to live what appears to be a miserable life of marginalisation and seclusion (Anis & Ahmmed, 2009; Olk, 2019).

[10] The Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) is the largest non-governmental development organisation in the world. It was established by Sir Fazle Hasan Abed in 1972 after the independence of Bangladesh. A BRAC is present in all 64 districts in Bangladesh, as well as 11 other countries in Asia, Africa and the Americas.

[11] Bangladesh Protibondhi Kallyan Shomity was established in 1985. It is a non-governmental, voluntary organisation that aims to mainstream people with disability into the national development process. It also ensures their equal rights and opportunities so that they can play a responsible role as equal citizens.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses and analyses significant literature about inclusive education, specifically, its characteristics and worldwide practices, focussing on human rights and social justice. Definitions of inclusive education exist in abundance in the literature. To avoid repetition, this chapter provides a brief history of some theories of inclusive education together with their key aims and objectives. The concepts of borrowed and symbolic policies have also been detailed. Further, how the conceptualisation of inclusive education can be addressed in developing countries to provide access to education to all children has been examined. Then, the chapter briefly examines how inclusive education has been conceptualised by international organisations and some researchers and, crucially, what policy bureaucrats in developing countries can do to re-orient to this educational change.

The review of the literature, investigates (1) the understanding of inclusive education, characteristics, practices and the general theories that underpin it, (2) approaches to theorising inclusive education, and (3) Policy discourse. The point of examining this literature is to provide an important international and national context for this study. Also, to respond to the research question for this study.

3.2 Inclusive Education

Inclusive education grew out of a desire to reach out to all learners and address all forms of inequality, exclusion and school participation. Inclusive education is built on a set of values, principles and practices that seek meaningful, effective and quality education for all students, and that do justice to the diversity of learning conditions and requirements not only for children with disability but for all students (United Nations, 2006, p. 19). This perspective of inclusive education points out that inclusive education is beneficial for all learners with its focus on diversity, equal participation and responsiveness to the different needs of children.

For UNESCO, inclusion is a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners. The aim is to increase participation in society and reduce

exclusionary practices (UNESCO, 2006; pp. 13, 15). UNICEF sees inclusive education not as a marginal issue, but as central to the achievement of quality education for all learners and the development of more inclusive societies. For UNESCO and UNICEF, inclusion is a broad concept that includes children being at risk and excluded from education and participation.

Researchers, practitioners, scholars and organisations have conceptualised inclusive education from the perspective of human rights and social justice. The human rights and social justice stance includes—but is not limited to—equality and non-discrimination, participation and inclusion, acceptance and belonging, respect and recognition, and empowerment and equity.

Different interpretations of inclusive education can be attributed to national, educational and bureaucratic contexts and being influenced by international organisations and their goals, philosophies and ideologies. The diversity of definitions has resulted in different conceptualisations and understandings of disability and inclusive education policy (Armstrong et al., 2010; Verger et al., 2018).

3.2.1 Understandings

Inclusive education is controversial because of the absence of an agreed perception and definition, which seems to be an amalgamation of propositions. These propositions have been shown to arise from personal feelings and sentiments (Allan & Slee, 2008). In this way, inclusive education has impacted thinking and its conceptualisation. As a result, even within a single country or school, understandings of inclusive education differ (Ainscow & Miles, 2008; Mura et al., 2020). Consequently, the personal understandings of inclusion affect the way inclusive education is translated into practice by policy bureaucrats.

As studies show, the understanding of inclusive education develop in terms of a country's specific educational system, and consideration of local circumstances, culture and history (Boyle & Anderson, 2020; Carrington et al., 2019; Muthukrishna & Engelbrecht, 2018; Zangmo, 2018). Inclusion requires changing 'the ways of thinking, being and doing, and recognising that education needs to be open and responsive' to diversity (Cologan, 2019, p. 3). Rather than creating systems and practices for which each person must shape themselves or be shaped to fit – or else be excluded – education systems and pedagogies

need to be transformed to be open to, value, and be shaped for the many ways of being human. Importantly, the promotion of inclusive practices depends on the development of a clear understanding of the concept of inclusive education within a country's cultural context. The core argument is that understanding the concept of inclusion is different from understanding its implementation. Inclusion, at all levels, implies non-discrimination. This emphasises the need for governments to recognise differences in terms of local and contextual needs, including human differences. Accommodating diversity and creating a conducive learning environment for all children are crucial in the conceptualisation of policy (Cologon, 2019; Mahlo, 2017; Pasha et al., 2017). Most importantly, Slee (2018) contends that a 'commitment to the principles and practice of inclusive education' must be reflected in reality for policies to be successful (p. 20).

Vargas (2017) found that meeting the needs of every child in a fair and democratic way offers hope for advancing inclusive education. For schools to become more accessible and render effective services to all children with disability, having a clear understanding of inclusive values and ideals is crucial. Similarly, Rose (2017) highlights the significance of informed policy. An informed policy is particularly important to gain a deeper understanding of the local needs and identify what will work to create and sustain inclusive school environments.

Given this definitional debate, and knowing that researchers have not agreed on an acceptable definition of inclusive education, attempting to identify a theory with which everyone agrees will inevitably be difficult. Instead, it seems logical to muster several theories provided on inclusive education since its inception in 1994 (UNESCO, 1994), to be equipped with the knowledge of how it is conceived and enacted.

3.2.2 General Inclusive Education Theories

As inclusive education gained prominence, various perspectives on inclusion emerged, as have significant debates and discussions on inclusion as a movement, philosophy and rights issue. These debates have contributed to the development of new perspectives on inclusion. However, researchers argue that attempting to ascribe a general theory to inclusive education is not possible (Armstrong, 2005; Foreman & Arthur-Kelly, 2017; Slee, 2018). A plethora of literature draws on a philosophy that inclusion does not necessarily mean to include. It is only by emphasising and addressing access, acceptance,

equality and rights that inclusion can be established (Carrington et al., 2019; Graham & Slee, 2007; Muthukrishna & Engelbrecht, 2018).

Graham and Slee (2007), for example, note that 'to include is not necessarily to be inclusive' (p. 278). Their argument is geared towards the identification of factors that lead to discrimination and exclusion. They challenge the conceptual foundations of inclusive education. They argue to conceptualise and interpret inclusive education in new ways to better understand inclusion. Their theoretical perspectives about inclusion are not limited to including children with disability in regular classrooms. The principle of inclusion according to Graham and Slee entails valuing people, recognising individuals and building connections with the community. In considering these principles, a commitment to recognising, networking and working in collaboration with all education stakeholders is highlighted. These principles can help reduce the barriers that impede and restrict all children's access to education. Through collective effort, individual and community development can also occur.

Other proponents of inclusive education, for example, Ainscow (2005, 2020), Armstrong and Armstrong (2019), Barton (1997), Booth and Ainscow (1998), Clough and Corbett (2000) and Vargas (2017) provide supporting theoretical perspectives on inclusive education. Together, their theories describe inclusive education as a social movement against educational exclusion that responds to all learners as individuals. From the human rights perspective, they inform that creating conditions for all children to access and receive an education with others is essential for social inclusion.

Inclusive classrooms have been shown to benefit children with and without disability and have long-term benefits in life for both (Sakellariou et al., 2019; Smogorzewska et al., 2020). It can play a significant role in challenging disabling attitudes by transforming the attitudes of children without disability towards those with disability. These studies show that through social interaction, attitudes towards children with disability improve, resulting in the development of positive social skills and an attitude of acceptance in the community, therefore contributing to building a more inclusive society. Further, social engagement provides children without disability to be tolerant and empathic, and to interact appropriately with children with disability (Duque et al., 2020). As a result, children with disability will not feel they are ignored and discriminated against in their environment. The social justice perspective of this research points to acceptance,

recognition, belonging and non-discrimination. Fundamentally, it emphasises the democratic theory of inclusive education that accentuates diversity in terms of race, gender, ethnicity, culture, age, religion and disability. Predominantly, from the human rights perspective, the focus is on how society guarantees freedom to everyone to equally access education without being discriminated against, and to belong.

Those supporting inclusive education from a human rights perspective view inclusive education as a right for people with disability to make choices and be part of the community (Foreman & Arthur-Kelly, 2017). To others, inclusive education is more aligned with the system of delivering educational services to every child, with or without disability, and to those who suffer from poverty (Vargas, 2017). These perspectives recognise that all children are part of the general education system, rather than a system within general education. Taking the inclusive perspective further, enhancing physical access, social equality and the allocation of resources to respond to the individual needs and capability of each learner in the same classroom was found to be necessary (Ainscow, 2020). In this sense, it may be appropriate to state that inclusion implies recognising diversity and supporting every student to access education and learn together, with the aim of providing education to all.

As indicated above, for inclusive education to be deemed a practical term rather than just rhetoric, understanding is crucial (Slee, 2013, 2018). This means that policy needs to recognise the right to education from the points of social justice and then put into action by ensuring that no learner is excluded from school, respecting the diverse needs and abilities of students, and eliminating all forms of discrimination in educational institutions and society. This will help establish a democratic and equitable society (Armstrong & Armstrong, 2019).

3.3 Approaches to Theorising Inclusive Education

The UNICEF's approach to inclusive education is based on the principles of human rights and social justice (UNICEF, 2015). Inclusive education signals not only to include children with disability and those who are discriminated against in regular schools. Developing inclusive practices by bringing a shift in the values and beliefs of all education stakeholders is crucial. Furthermore, inclusion places an onus on policy to

support the learning and development need of every student (Knight & Crick, 2021). A learner centered-pedagogy within a flexible curriculum is critical to minimise educational inequalities and promote rights (Power et al., 2020). Thus, inclusive education is shaped by many considerations that can promote social justice and develop the right of every person to access education without discrimination or exclusion, both in society in general and in institutions in particular. Inclusion does not have clear limitations (Jiménez-Ramírez et al., 2020) and therefore the success of a policy may be affected by the attitudes towards inclusion and its conceptualisation (Krischler et al., 2019; Poveda & Roberts, 2018).

Theories about inclusive education have been shown to be related to perceptions of inclusion (Armstrong & Armstrong, 2019). Those who conceive of inclusion as a process of reducing educational barriers to meet the demands of marginalised children consider inclusion as transmitting information to education stakeholders. Conversely, researchers who conceive of inclusion as attitudinal changes, consider it in terms of changing the perceptions of community members (Chand & Karre, 2019). These approaches have considerable merit for understanding inclusive education. They explain that strategies need to be considered to provide an environment that is conducive to learning and promotes individual development. For inclusive education to be effective, consideration must be given to the child, the family, the school, the environment and society. Their views highlight that it is essential to reduce the gap between theory and practice. Similarly, Ainscow, et al. (2019) argue that an inclusive approach will require shifts in policy bureaucrats' values, attitudes, behaviour and ways of thinking. Fostering inclusion and equity will also require equal opportunities and equal participation by removing the barriers and providing freedom to access and choice. Depriving people with disability of the right of access to different services and to make choices is based on weak policy, which needs to be overcome by legislation (Slee, 2011; Webster, 2018).

The discussion that follows considers the arguments in support of the principles and theories of inclusive education from different perspectives. The theories of Sen, Slee and Spivak have been emphasised to examine issues that influence how inclusive education is conceptualised in Bangladesh. These theories explore the differences and similarities in the conceptualisation of inclusive education, inclusion and disability for rural education stakeholders. Further, the theoretical underpinnings of Carol Bacchi's WPR approach

(Bacchi, 2012) is introduced for policy analysis as a way of knowing and understanding problems and problematisations.

3.3.1 Combatting Exclusion

Proponents of inclusive education—for example, Ainscow (1999, 2020), Armstrong et al. (2010), Booth and Ainscow (1998) and Clough and Corbett (2000) provide several theories to combat exclusion in education. They describe inclusive education as a social movement against educational exclusion that responds to all pupils as individuals (Ainscow, 2005, 2020; Armstrong & Armstrong, 2019; Shebba & Ainscow, 1996). Their views suggest that theoretical concepts of inclusion must be inextricably linked to their application, to combat exclusion.

Other inclusive education researchers point out that providing conditions to educate all children from a human rights perspective is necessary to reduce exclusion in society (Barton, 1997; Slee, 2018; Vargas, 2017). This democratic theory of inclusive education addresses diversity in terms of race, gender, ethnicity, culture, religion and disability. Predominantly, the focus of inclusion is to include all children in education systems to establish their rights and freedom, and to receive the education to which they are entitled as guaranteed by policy. Highlighting the importance of reducing exclusion from education and achieving equality of educational outcomes for all, researchers argue that a commitment to the fundamental principles of inclusive education is necessary (Ainscow, 2020; Graham et al., 2020).

Inclusion, at all levels, implies rights, equality, equity, recognition, representation and non-discrimination. This requires governments to recognise differences in terms of local, contextual and individual needs. Equity requires that individual rights are recognised and appropriate services are provided; this is required to prevent exclusion. These practices must be reflected in reality for inclusive policies to be successful and reduce exclusion (Slee, 2018).

Further, social structures and systems need to be explored and research investigating systemic and systematic barriers (discrimination and disparity) to inclusive education must occur. These include: power structures, policies, practices or procedures, funding, curriculum, transportation, communication and resources. Also, the understanding of inclusive education as a concept and the role it has to play in the development of a just

society must also be explored (Boyle & Anderson, 2020). This will allow a better understanding of successful and sustainable policies that can combat the exclusion of children with disability living in rural and remote areas in developing countries and why the progress towards full inclusion has slowed in many countries, including Bangladesh.

3.3.2 Promoting Rights and Social Justice

One important underlying aspect of inclusive education is human rights and social justice. However, the notion of justice concerns not only equality and equity. Justice in education according to Bell (2016) is, "to enable people to develop the critical analytical tools necessary to understand the structural features of oppression and their own socialisation within oppressive systems" (p.4). Here Bell draws attention to awareness and knowledge on the issues of social justice and discrimination to disrupt and change oppressive and exclusionary behaviours, actions and beliefs at personal, institutional, cultural and societal levels. Bell argues that a social justice perspective can provide individuals with knowledge and skills to assess inclusive education policies, contest dominant discourses, and create inclusive schools and society.

A further example of justice shows the recognition of individuals is fast becoming a social and political milieu (Bonomo et al., 2017; Rizvi, 2017; Slee, 2019). According to Smit and Nel (2018), justice is about managing social benefits in a fair and equitable way by recognising the potential and capability of every individual. The idea of justice in terms of rights and recognition shows that the opportunities and freedoms available to individuals in society will affect their wellbeing, self-respect and sense of belonging (Slee, 2018; Terzi, 2014).

Spivak's (1988, 1999) vision of social justice is premised on the identification of power structures in society that lead to discrimination, marginalisation, expulsion and the subjugation of the subaltern. Her subaltern theory relates to non-recognition, being denied the right to participate in social activities and the inability to share views and be listened to. Spivak argues that equity is not only a matter of changing the system for the better. It requires valuing democratic ideals, such as basic human rights, equal opportunity, recognition and the freedom to express, participate and give opinions, so that everyone can receive what they require. Not belonging, not being represented and not being listened to justify the existence of an unjust society in which the power hierarchies dominate

individual rights and lead to uneven development (Spivak, 1988). There is little to suggest that non-representation demonstrates an individual's choice to abstain from participation. Instead, non-representation shows a flaw in society and law that transcends justice and rights. It denies subaltern rights and celebrates authority (Spivak, 1999).

To realise rights and justice in terms of equality, equity and recognition, Sen (1999) alerts us to conceptualise equity within a social and distributive justice framework. He advocates for those who are marginalised and discriminated against in his concept of justice, and points out that equal priority needs to be given to address policy disequilibrium and invite new possibilities to ensure equal participation in society. The right of children with disability to access education and function with resources available according to their capabilities is crucial. He argues for minimising exclusionary practices and discrimination in society. As explained by Sen (1999), equality is important for social participation, establishing a democratic society and acknowledging diversity. More broadly, Sen (1999) echoes Rawls's (2001) justification of fairness and equality. He insists on maximising liberty (opportunities) and minimising inequalities (differences and disadvantages) to establish human rights and promote social justice:

> Social and economic equalities must satisfy two conditions: first they must be attached to offices and positions open to all, under conditions of fair equality of opportunity; and second, they are to be to the greatest benefit to the least-advantaged members of society (Rawls, 2001, pp. 42–43).

Looking closely, Sen's idea of justice is anchored in a vision of the elimination of inequality and discrimination. The right to education on one hand and the importance of being fair on the other, implies an understanding of justice, rights, equity and equality. To put it another way, the concept of equity in education policy from Sen's perspective involves giving every learner the same opportunity to access schools and providing all students with resources from which to choose to acquire knowledge and skills. Equity also entails how best to ensure the equal distribution of resources so that everyone in society benefits without discrimination. A crucial factor emphasised in determining equity in resource distribution is the ability of a person to access resources and their capability to use those resources (Sen, 1999). Ignoring the capabilities of those with disability dismisses the right to be treated equally. Rather, ignorance accentuates the violation of human rights (Spivak, 1988, 2015) and the fundamentals of inclusion and

inclusive practices (Graham et al., 2020). From the above, it can be seen that governments are key actors in creating more equitable societies, protecting the most excluded people from the negative effects of society and ensuring their benefits.

Substantial evidence exists to demonstrate that a lack of the right to education and freedom can thwart a country's economic growth (Frank, 2018; Sen & Tasioulas 2018). With specific reference to economic development in developing countries, several researchers strongly advocate for the meeting of the educational demands of marginalised communities (Appiah, 2017; Cologon, 2019; Murmu, 2019; Thompson, 2020). They show that education can empower marginalised people and lead to their emancipation from subjugation. This makes education an important strategy to achieve the MDGs.

Many education experts and researchers maintain that education is a human right to achieve necessary capabilities for those who are disabled by social, cultural, environmental or physical conditions (Eryong & Xiuping, 2018; Sen & Tasioulas 2018). More specifically, education can help attain 'educational equality' and 'equal participation' (Nussbaum, 2006, pp. 322–323). Therefore, the need to eliminate injustice by diverting policy focus from achievement and productivity to respecting individuals and inclusive values is necessary (Slee, 2011). Otherwise, tensions will arise as educators are required to follow policy guidelines of inclusion, which may conflict with their personal values and understandings of inclusion (Slee, 2011). Although Australian research shows that education cannot be considered a 'quick fix' to reduce marginalisation (Crewys et al., 2013, p. 22), research conducted in Africa and India confirms the right to education can equip people in low-income countries with skills to participate in the global knowledge economy and enhance social mobility (Chand & Karre, 2019; Tromp & Datzberger, 2019).

As has been documented in other research, the right to access education is important for developing countries in the realisation of economic empowerment and individual development (Schroeder, 2020; Sen, 1999, 2000; Wykstra, 2019). Studies conducted on marginalised communities in developed and developing countries show that inequality in rights has debilitating effects on individuals and communities (Cruwys et al., 2013; Goldberg, 2019; Haile, 2020; Ingraham, 2018). Ensuring equal access and rights, freedom of opinion and expression is viewed as critical to the success of inclusive education (Armstrong et al., 2011; Foreman & Arthur-Kelly, 2017; Slee & Allan, 2001; Terzi,

2010). These studies critique social and cultural systems that affect policy. Several factors have been identified in relation to strategies to conceptualise inclusive education, and reduce exclusionary practices. While disability awareness and addressing marginalisation are vital to enhancing human rights, key to the realisation of these rights is understanding what the rights are (UNICEF, 1989, Article 28, 29) and how to make them accessible (UNICEF, 1989, Article 4).

3.3.3 Individual Development

It has been argued that individual development is a social justice stance and fundamental to the human rights and well-being of everyone (Carrington et al., 2019; Sen & Tasioulas, 2018; Spivak, 1988). It can affect positive social and economic change (Yunus, 2010). Sen (1999) argues that development entails five kinds of freedom: 'political freedom, economic facilities, social opportunities, transparency guarantees, and protective security' (p. 4). Sen maintains that the freedom to choose available resources according to individual capability is crucial for individual development. It can lead to economic growth and social development. Significantly, these are interlinked and strengthen one another. For example, political freedom and social opportunities can lead to economic security and economic participation. Seen in this light, opportunities are essential elements to achieve valuable functioning and developing capability. This is important for improving quality of life and individual empowerment.

Supporting Sen, other studies also show that the ability to function with available resources is particularly important in developing countries where poverty is intrinsically linked to disability and development (Akyeampong & Fofack, 2019; Datzberger, 2018). Most notably, these studies suggest that often marginalised communities are unable to access and use available facilities provided by the government. The top-down policy approach is unfavourable, as is inflexibility in the education system. Therefore, to stimulate individual development, the capability of every individual needs to be respected and recognised. Adjustments are required so that learners can access appropriate knowledge and develop their skills. As empowered individuals, they can contribute to the social and economic development of a country (Goldberg, 2019; Sen, 1979).

Sen (1992) suggests that policies will not succeed unless governments address challenges faced by those who are marginalised and discriminated against. This view is supported

by recent studies showing that policies must consider how to accomplish their task (Rizvi, 2017). What is required is for policy bureaucrats to recognise the heterogeneity and diversity of the population and the context, including rural and remote areas (Jiménez-Ramírez et al., 2020; Poveda & Roberts, 2018).

In recognition of the heterogeneity and diversity of the population, Individualised Education Plans (IEPs) for children with disability are central to classroom practices in developed countries to support students' learning (Agran et al., 2020; Elder et al., 2018, Timothy & Agbenyega, 2019). This pedagogical strategy is aimed at identifying student's capabilities and needs and adapting teaching and learning materials to meet the capability, needs and pace of each learner. It indicates an inclusive approach, rather than a special educational approach whereby the system needs to adjust to the learner instead of the student adjusting to the system. Inclusive education and IEP development require the collaboration between parents, teachers and students (wherever possible) to exchange information and develop a mutual understanding of the child's abilities and needs. In this process, school and parents become partners in developing a more inclusive system where decision-making and the responsibility for student outcomes are shared (Elder, et al., 2018). The absence of IEPs on a whole school level significantly affects inclusion (Timothy & Agbenyega, 2019). This is linked to the argument for an increased focus on rights, recognition and equality to reflect government commitment to inclusion and democratisation of education. There is little doubt that if these conditions are not met and continue to persist, human development will be difficult to achieve, as will inclusive education (Goldberg, 2019; OECD, 2019; Slee, 2011).

Other factors that affect individual growth concerns acute inequality in resource distribution, physical facilities and support for those with disability, which negatively impacts school participation and individual empowerment (Thompson et al., 2022; Tierney et al., 2018). This is discussed below.

3.3.4 Equitable Distribution

Findings from numerous studies confirm that unequal funding and resource allocation contribute to great inequity (Charema, 2010; Davie, 2015; Muthukrishna & Engelbrecht, 2018; Tierney et al., 2018). Countries with the slowest national growth also show significant levels of inequality in the education sector (Eunice et al., 2015; Phasha et al.,

2017; Rahman, 2020). These studies suggest equitable funding and needs-based resource allocation systems can provide equal opportunity in access to education and achievement of quality educational outcomes.

One fundamental characteristic of inclusive education is homogeneity and equal participation, where inclusive education upholds inclusive values and practices. Another characteristic rests on the principles of heterogeneity to ensure that the needs of every child are met in the same manner as others. The gap between urban and rural areas and inequalities in education systems in terms of ethnicity, race, gender and stakeholder involvement are long-standing problems in many developed and developing countries. Discrimination in education systems has been documented in a significant number of studies, for example, Carrington et al. (2019), Corbett (2016), Diwan (2015), Tamayo et al. (2019), Tierney et al. (2018) and Wu and He (2017). As indicated in such research, education can be a powerful tool for social transformation and achieving development goals, if it is equitable.

However, a study in rural China found that not only funding and resource distribution, but the distribution of schools, can affect learning opportunities (Yan et al., 2018). Yan and colleagues found that school dropout and migration to urban areas were the result of uneven distribution of schools. They argue that 'the basis of fair education' can be transformed by the balanced distribution of schools (p. 651). In this setting, the lack of resources restricted access to use those resources and the location of schools was major determinant that affected inclusive education in developing countries (Charema, 2010; Dubin, 2019; Sen, 2002; Slee, 2013). Dubin (2019), Slee (2013) and Yan and colleague (2018) argue that consideration needs to be given to eliminating discrimination in the distribution of resources. This raises awareness that equitable distribution can help minimise contextual gaps and allow for individual and economic development (Davie, 2015; Sen & Tasioulas, 2018). Other studies highlight that without adequate and equitable distribution of resources, the lives of many—particularly those who are marginalised and discriminated against—will be affected (Beutel et al., 2019; Carrington et al., 2019; Rahman, 2020). Therefore, the need to maintain equality and equity in funding is an important consideration in the conceptualisation of inclusive education policy. It can facilitate inclusion and help meet the EFA goals and SDGs by 2030 (United Nations, 2015a, 2018; UNESCO, 2017b).

Research suggests that the proportionate distribution of benefits (Sen, 2002; Smit & Nel, 2018) and economic restructuring is essential for developing countries (Akyeampong & Fofack, 2019; Nussbaum, 2006, 2011; Price, 2018; Rizvi, 2017; Yunus, 2010). In this sense, the idea of justice and equality in inclusive education entails a fair distribution of resources, equal opportunities for everyone to seek education and the securing of basic rights. Otherwise, unequal education facilities will adversely affect individuals' and the country's development (Eunice et al., 2015; Roy, 2018). It is evident from these studies that the equal distribution of resources and the distribution of schools needs to be prioritised in policies for learning to happen in all schools and justice to prevail.

Unequal resource distribution between rural and urban schools is indicative of economic disparity and macro-level inefficiency (Davie, 2015; Rahman, 2020; Wu & He, 2017; Yan et al., 2018). Social justice emphasises access, recognition, respect and equity, as well as equal distribution of resources (Sen, 1979, 1994) so that marginalised communities can achieve equality (Diwan, 2015; Muthukrishna & Engelbrecht, 2019). From this perspective, social justice can help achieve inclusive and equitable societies and address the issues of inequality and human rights targeted by the 2030 EFA goals (Rahman, 2020; Silva-Pena et al., 2020; UNESCO, 2017b). A social justice approach in policy conceptualisation can narrow the gap between inclusion and exclusion, and equality and equity (Sen, 2011; Slee, 2013).

In contrast, several studies present different notions of justice from a wider perspective when considering the equal redistribution of material resources to achieve justice and equality. Some researchers contest the definition of justice and argue that the term lacks conceptual clarity (Munger et al., 2016; Nozick, 1974). A particularly potent argument made by Nozick (1974) is that redistribution implies charity. Nozick (1974) emphasises the importance of acquisition and production. The fundamental basis of his argument is to exercise rights, freedom and autonomy.

Along similar lines, Goldberg (2019) investigated the rising inequalities in developing countries and found that equality implies more than equal distribution. According to Goldberg (2019), inequality goes beyond disparities in income and wealth. The perception of being ignored is a significant issue. Goldberg goes on to point out that the lives of marginalised people are not reflected totally in the logic of distribution. In regard

to inclusive education policy, Goldberg suggests the need to step outside the understanding of justice and clarify its meaning from a different perspective.

To Goldberg, thinking about inclusive education involves the creation of separate provisions for every individual and the recognition of the reality that equality does not equal sameness. Her study reveals that justice and fairness can prevail if an individual's potential is acknowledged and marginalised people receive appropriate support to learn. Her perspective of distribution is dominated by theories of inclusive education that emphasise differentiated and individualised support based on abilities and interests. More importantly, Goldberg's findings support Sen's (1979) view of justice, equality and differentiation in the distribution of resources by recognising individuals' capabilities and needs.

3.3.5 Recognising Disability and Diversity

Building on the studies by Goldberg (2019), Price (2018) and Rizvi (2017), recent research by Carrington and colleagues (2019) and Boyle and Anderson (2020) on the learning of children with disability and special needs, points out that the distribution of resources should consider different criteria to cater for different needs given that marginalised communities are made up of heterogeneous individuals and groups. For example, for those with disability and special needs, Carrington and colleagues (2019) and Anderson (2020) suggest that taking into account the interests and capabilities of individuals to function is important. They claim that positive effects of educational outcomes for those with disabilities can be achieved when the individual's capability is recognised and education programs and service adjustments are made. Whereas, 'othering' those with disability for impairments and unable to perform marginalises, excludes and construes them as 'objects of pity or charity' (Nachman & Brown 2019, p. 213).

Zembylas and Bozalek (2014) argue that the capacity to respond to diversity and render each other capable is important in inclusive classrooms. They have stressed that responding to diversity needs to be cultivated for a pedagogy that acknowledges and addresses the potential of students. Thus, critical to addressing educational exclusion is seeking a more comprehensive vision of justice, a critical engagement with human rights (Zembylas & Bozalek, 2014) and viewing capability as equality (Terzi, 2014). More

attention to the identification of the power structures in which human rights violations are ingrained, remain unaffected and prevent the social justice agenda is crucial to establish the rights and capabilities of every child at all levels of the education system and ensure unrestricted access to education and learning. All in all, the above studies found that recognising diversity is important for the understanding of inclusion and exclusion and respond to prevailing injustices. This must be accounted for and addressed if the desire is to legitimise difference and make inclusive education a reality. An effective pedagogical approach has transformative possibilities for all children. Therefore, these studies call for a policy that is built on an inclusive philosophy of rights, recognition, belonging and equality (Ainscow, 2020; Slee, 2011, 2018; 2019).

The inclusion of children with disability into regular schools emphasise a multitude of requirements to support their learning and participation. The following sections describe the ways in which borrowed policies can be understood and what this means for developing countries. The distinction in policy conceptualisation in developed and developing countries is unpacked and what effective policy conceptualisation entails is discussed. This is followed by a discussion on how inclusive education can be addressed in developing countries to provide access to education to children with disability.

3.4 Policy Discourse

In this section policy discourse is examined with a brief overview of policy conceptualisation, borrowed policy alongside symbolic and effective policy to enable a theoretically informed investigation of inclusive education in Bangladesh undertaken in this study.

3.4.1 Policy Conceptualisation

A favourite text of mine, *Alice in Wonderland*, poses the question, ‘What is the use of a book, without pictures or conversations?’ (Carroll, 1871, p. 4). This question raises an interesting observation about policy conceptualisation, which explicitly states that policies that do not provide context-specific guidelines, are not adapted to local contexts, and exclude the participation of concerned stakeholders may be difficult to achieve. This is especially true for developing countries in regard to ideas and guidelines borrowed from developed countries and how they are adapted in policies.

Despite the controversies about inclusion, effective models of inclusive education policy have shown to empower marginalised children and help them play an important and active role in society (UNESCO, 2006). For a borrowed international policy, the conceptualisation is crucial. Braun et al. (2011) refer to policy interpretation and translation by policy bureaucrats as a process that involves making sense of policy texts, conceptualising and then translating them to fit the context. The policy content includes, what it sets out to be done, how it communicates the problem to be solved and how it aims to resolve the problem.

Inclusive education begins with the assumption that all children have a right to be in the same school. From this perspective, it may be argued that inclusive education policy needs to be conceptualised from the moral view point. Such a moral position needs a theoretical grounding to steer developments in inclusive education policy (Penney, 2017). Inclusive education policy is not only about improving access, facilities and increasing the educational budget; but about continuous, systemic transformation of educational policy, cultures, and values. How inclusive languages and inclusive education is conceived in policy documents can also have a profound impact on the success of inclusive education policy (Erdocia, 2022). The language used in policy documents does not merely reflect the thinking of policy bureaucrats, it also shapes the thinking of everyone. For e.g. if words and expressions that imply that one group is inferior to another and is constantly used, that assumption of inferiority tends to become part of the mindset (Erdocia, 2022). Therefore, adjusting language when ideas evolve is crucial. In other words, contradictions between the understanding of inclusive education, and the use of language in policy is damaging from the human rights and social justice perspective. When policy conceptualisation is significantly prejudicial, social inclusion and the development of inclusive societies will not occur (Ellis & Rowe, 2020; Guerrina & Murphy, 2016; Messiou, 2019).

Worldwide, policy design practices demonstrate that making policies as reasonable as possible to support practices underlies sound decision making (Ball, 2017). As a consequence, providing only guiding principles or legislative reforms cannot improve access. More attention to the contextualising of policy and direction for implementation is crucial (Beutel et al., 2019; Hudson et al., 2019).

Research shows that for this to happen, policy bureaucrats can play a significant role, especially when policy is conceptualised. It has been documented that critical elements of inclusion and its conceptualisation include engagement and cooperation, being sensitive to culture and context, and access to information (Poveda & Roberts, 2018; Singal, 2016; Tuia & Iyer, 2015). The researchers have found that insufficient coordination between governments and education stakeholders hampers progress towards achieving inclusive education. These studies stipulate that having a pragmatic understanding of inclusive values, ideals and practices is crucial for policy bureaucrats (Boyle & Anderson, 2020; Haug, 2017; Rose, 2017). Valuing for whom, the local context and how all education stakeholders can be benefitted is essential to achieve positive policy outcomes (Ball, 2017).

Ball (2017, p. 11) reminds policy bureaucrats that to move forward, the complexities of inclusion should be considered. That is, if policies exist but remain under-resourced or are not enforced, they will act as barriers to inclusive education. Progress towards inclusive education can be made by fully engaging all education stakeholders during policy conceptualisation. This will help connect philosophies and procedures. From Ball's viewpoint, community experiences and good practices are crucial to gathering reliable information for the conceptualisation of an effective policy.

Among the many approaches identified in the literature, important recommendations to consider are those suggested by two international organisations, UNESCO and UNICEF, as well as a few inclusive education researchers whose work focusses on rural areas in developing countries. The current study is limited within this frame as numerous studies (e.g. Boussaguet & Faucher, 2020; Cologon, 2019; Guerrina & Murphy, 2016) have previously expounded upon this issue, although they have not exclusively focussed on developing countries.

Positive policy outcomes may be understood as the successful results that a policy yields from the strategies and actions employed during its conceptualisation. However, the above studies do not include borrowed education policy implementation in rural areas in developing countries. As an overall principle, a common feature of those studies is that they show education policies and their conceptualisation needs to be based on the premise that education is a basic human right and the foundation for a more just and equal society. They also show how to make a borrowed international policy as reasonable as possible to

support the practices and help transform and strengthen the capacity of the education stakeholders and the education system.

Mahlo (2017) and Pasha et al. (2017) reinforce the need for education policy to accommodate diversity as this can create a conducive learning environment for all children. Their arguments suggest that while developing an understanding of inclusive education is crucial, policy bureaucrats must be committed to the principles and values of inclusive education. In developing countries, the challenges appear to be culturally embedded (Chand & Karre, 2019; Gettleman & Raj, 2018; Muthukrishna & Engelbrecht, 2019; Zangmo, 2018). Inclusion will be difficult if policy bureaucrats fail to consider the effectiveness of a policy that has been adopted, monitor processes or respond to the needs of communities (Haug, 2017; Vargas, 2017). Respecting diversity and acknowledging learner capabilities by providing necessary support for all children with and without disability to fully participate in schools is important to minimise disadvantage and promote inclusion. Furthermore, reducing exclusion and discrimination is equally crucial, as this may lead to practices that are consistent with the 2030 EFA goals and the SDGs (United Nations, 2015a; UNESCO, 2017b).

3.4.2 Effective Policy

In the next few sections, literature about how policy can be effective, in particular for Bangladesh is examined.

3.4.2.1 Pragmatic Considerations

In the myriad studies on the effectiveness of policy, the targeted environment in which a policy is implemented is considered vital (Rizvi, 2016; Rose, 2017; Tan, 2016; Steiner-Khamsi, 2016; Zangmo, 2018). Different geographical locations, demographics, budget allocation, resources, attitudes, culture and social class patterns have been shown to impact policy outcomes (Chand & Karre, 2019; Dubin, 2019; Jiménez-Ramírez et al., 2020; Okeowhor et al., 2019; Yan et al., 2018). This variety of barriers shows that no one difficulty is unique to any specific country. As characteristics differ between countries and within local areas, inclusive education for all children will be difficult to address with a single policy (Ainscow et al., 2019; Davie, 2015).

In addition, problems with policy will arise if a policy is not context-specific and the different perspectives and involvement of all local members are ignored (Ball et al., 2012; Maguire et al., 2015; Otieno & Onyango, 2018; Rahman, 2020). Such policies can continue to challenge the success of inclusive education as they are unsustainable, complex and fragile (Maguire et al., 2015). Policy requires the consideration of practical mechanisms, flexibility and accountability in bureaucratic processes and procedures (Rose, 2017; Thompson, 2020). This leads to recognise the importance of contextualising policy for its effectiveness.

Policy emerging from international requirements is effective when it is shaped by national practices and has a proven record of effectiveness (Mphahlele 2020; Rose, 2017; Silva-Pena et al., 2020; Zangmo, 2018). The introduction of a new policy has been found to be risky as old policies are demolished to legitimise the new one (Ball, 1990; Zangmo, 2018). Conversely, the conglomeration of practice and theory has proven to positively affect policy. This can facilitate policy dissemination and interpretation. Better policy outcomes can also be achieved (Maguire et al., 2015; Singal, 2016, Steiner-Khamsi, 2016).

The above studies suggest a borrowed policy will become a bricolage of ideas and practices that will eventually fail when applied, if theory and practice are viewed separately and do not meet the needs of local conditions (Ball et al., 2012; Chandan, 2020; Tan, 2016; Zangmo, 2018). The adoption of pragmatic policies that have local relevance is highlighted by these studies. The idea is that a well-integrated policy that uses the resources at hand can be more effective than a policy that focusses on enforcement. Policies that consider cultural and regional characteristics can be sustainable and successful (Mphahlele, 2020; Mura et al., 2020; Tamayo et al., 2017).

The conceptualisation of inclusion demands social and cultural change (Scott et al., 2016; Slee, 2001a, 2004). From this perspective, what causes exclusion and inclusion are crucial factors for inclusive education policy (Price, 2018; Scott et al., 2016). For example, the rights of all children—including children with disability—to participate in regular classrooms needs to be recognised, as must the fact that inclusive education should be accepted as a framework for institutional, political, geographical, historical and cultural reform to address inequality and exclusion (Mura et al., 2020; Sarker et al., 2019). These concepts aim to find different ways to establish rights and social justice; such as

addressing social disintegration, social struggle and inequality through education (Chowdhury & Sarkar, 2018; Datzberger, 2018; Messiou, 2019; Price, 2018).

Further, diverse approaches to achieve positive academic, individual and social development outcomes, and progress towards social justice is important and should not be foregone in the conceptualisation of inclusive education policy (Shaeffer, 2019; Sen, 2000). Inclusive education as a concept now has a wider definition. The conceptualisation goes beyond a focus on children with disabilities and special needs and to reduce barriers to access schools. The broader definition of inclusion is now concerned with responding to the diverse needs of all children by promoting participation in learning and in society (inclusion through education) access and equity (exclusion from education) and quality (exclusion within education) (Booth & Ainscow, 2011).

Recent conceptualisation of inclusion and inclusive education demands a continuous evaluation and critical examination of the system (policies, curricula, structures, and strategies) and of the classroom (content, pedagogy, and learning environments) to make it effective (Schuelka, 2018). There is no one-size-fits-all policy approach. Policies can be successful and sustainable if they relate to the worldviews of local community members and the local context (Rizvi, 2016; Silva-Pena et al., 2020; Zangmo, 2018). At the same time, it is essential for policy bureaucrats to extend access to education and promote system-wide intervention policies to address multifaceted exclusionary practices (Carrington et al., 2019; Chand & Karre, 2019). These studies suggest that policy bureaucrats should consider examining the local context to reduce the gap between policy conceptualisation and processes of implementation. A key strategy is to bridge the rural–urban gap and recognising rural people as critical education stakeholders who cannot be ignored in policies (Corbett, 2016; Mphahlele, 2020; Okeowhor et al., 2019).

3.4.2.2 Stakeholder Engagement

A significant body of research in inclusive education found that the lack of collaboration perpetuates inequality in society and emphasises the need to promote social cohesion (Cologon, 2019; Li et al., 2019; Otieno & Onyango, 2018). For example, by creating a welcoming environment, building the capacity of marginalised communities and positioning the needs of those who are excluded at the centre of the inclusion agenda (Otieno & Onyango, 2018; Spivak, 2012a). Other studies conducted in rural areas reveal

the valuable contribution local people can make to policy (Malkani & Rose, 2018; Rudolph, 2017; Sen & Tasioulas, 2018). Insights from rural communities can contribute to rich knowledge and inform research (Malkani & Rose, 2018). This stresses the importance of face-to-face contact with education stakeholders.

Many researchers have sought to include the views of education stakeholders in an attempt to gather the opinions that underpin equality and rights. For example, Slee (2011) contends that the views of marginalised people are important to reduce social exclusion and uphold recognition and belonging. He maintains that the perspectives of marginalised education stakeholders can help to develop sustainable policy, rather than to simply 'respond to crises' (p. 169). Thus, Slee suggests that the perspectives of those who are discriminated against hold an important key for the success of policy. Drawing on Slee's argument, it can be understood that it is the government's responsibility to increase social interaction among all education stakeholders as this can lead to the conceptualisation of inclusive education policy that is sustainable and successful. Along with reducing social exclusion, it will show evidence that society has in terms of recognition and belonging to ensure inclusivity.

Providing people with the opportunity to give opinions can empower communities to change their lives. Governments can gain increased positive effects by including the everyday experiences of marginalised communities in the conceptualisation of policy (Bonomo, e al., 2017; Messiou, 2019)—in this regard, the development of knowledge that can take place through social interaction. Conversely, the restricted participation of education stakeholders in discussions will promote exclusion, not inclusion. Given that every country has its own challenges, constraints and opportunities, Davie (2015) stresses the importance of incorporating marginalised stakeholder perspectives to promote diversity and establish rights. Although stakeholder perspectives cannot correct all social and cultural inequities, collaborative actions and dialogues can help identify specific problems and conceptualise solutions. Therefore, stakeholder perspectives can be seen as a tool that policy bureaucrats can employ to achieve the best outcomes of an international policy as has been found from Australian studies on communities living in remote areas (Cologon, 2019; Slee, 2019).

Similarly, Maguire et al. (2015) reported that conversations can help policy bureaucrats to shape effective policy. This would allow stakeholders to cope with differences, as well

as acknowledge diversity—a combined action in which the power of the individual and society is recognised, individual dignity is upheld and everyone contributes to reducing exclusionary practices. Conversations allow knowledge to be shared and help translate collected beliefs into policies, and policies to yield positive outcomes (Maguire et al., 2015; Otieno & Onyango, 2018; Rose, 2017; Slee, 2018). With this newfound knowledge, both the speaker and the listener can be empowered to bring positive changes to their lives and the lives of others (Freire, 2014; McKay, 2018; Slee, 2013; Spivak, 1988). This underlines the idea that educational change is not primarily about the restructuring of organisations. Further, the development of more inclusive approaches does not arise from policy reform and structural alterations; rather, inclusive practices require social learning to contextualise the policy (Li et al., 2019; Slee, 2013, 2019).

Slee (2008, 2011) points to structures in a society that disadvantage people and perpetuate inequalities, which include non-recognition, the absence of limited resources, and the rural–urban gap in support services for those with disability. According to Slee, these conditions disconnect and exacerbate social inclusion. Therefore, engaging in communication with marginalised communities is critical to upholding democratic ideals and for the effective implementation of inclusive education policy. Such actions can extend the learning experience and knowledge far beyond the theoretical into the practical (Armstrong et al., 2010; Rose, 2017; Rudolph, 2017). Issues of fair representation and rural-urban inequity can be addressed (Martinus & Reilly, 2020; Spivak, 1988).

To further address rural urban inequity in developing countries, it is crucial that literature on funding is considered. I examine this important factor below.

3.4.2.3 Funding

Research shows that the understanding of inclusion is often tied up with funding, which can have an adverse effect on how inclusion is conceptualised (Graham & Spandagou, 2011). In developing countries, the practical implementation of inclusive education policies suffers because of finance and resource challenges (Armstrong et al., 2011; Asongu et al., 2020; Chand & Karre, 2019). In particular, Chand and Karre (2019) reported that poorly resourced policies cannot be enforced effectively; for example, a lack of teaching resources has been seen to affect classroom teaching and teachers' negative

attitudes when engaging with children with special needs. Poorly resourced policies act as barriers (Ball et al., 2012; Datzberger, 2018; Maguire et al., 2015; Mueller, 2020).

Substantial levels of international funding have been crucial for the conceptualisation of policies and programs that have led to achieving gender parity in education in Bangladesh (Anis & White, 2017; Rahman, 2020; Nazeer, 2018). These studies show that funding and resource allocation significantly affects all aspects of policy implementation and its success.

In recent years, decreased global funding has been threating the Education 2030 Framework for Action (Albright, 2018; Tromp & Datzberger, 2019). Particularly for developing countries, matching national budget allocation with international funding and prioritising services has been difficult. With reduced finances, children with disability living in developing countries are denied access to education and continue to experience exclusion in rural and remote areas (Datzberger, 2018; Rahman, 2020). Although international aid doubled between 2002 and 2010, and reached a record high of US$1,348 billion in 2013, it fell by 12 per cent from 2013, to 16 per cent in 2014 (International Disability and Development Consortium, 2013; Rahman, 2020; UN, 2014). Underfunding of education systems is a concern for developing countries because it is common for children with disability to receive less financial support and suffer the consequences of reduced aid (Asongu et al., 2020; Cruz et al., 2020). Without adequate funding, access to education cannot be guaranteed, nor can 'the production of human capital needed for national development' (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, p. 148; Rizvi, 2017).

There is international evidence that education funding in developing countries is not being spent effectively, and that it is channelled towards only a few children and schools, rather than distributed equitably (Nazeer, 2018; Rahman, 2020). It has been reported that, 'In Bangladesh, the lack of schooling and employment for people with disabilities and their caregivers, could be losing the country US$1.2 billion of income annually, or 1.74% of GDP' (Baboo, 2016). This report indicates that international aid impacts the development of inclusive education policy and its progress for low-income countries. Thus, while governments are conceptualising inclusive education policy, effective budgeting is fundamental to ensure equitable distribution of resources and for governments to meet the 2030 EFA goals (UN, 2018). Further, as education is more expensive for developing

countries, redirecting 20 per cent of the national budget to education is essential to meet basic education needs for all (UNESCO, 2017a).

Advocates supporting international financial grants contend that developing countries are dependent on foreign aid for development purposes and the implementation of projects (Haq et al., 2020; Mahembe & Odhiambo, 2017; Niyonkuru, 2016). Therefore, addressing social and economic inequalities, and resource allocation and distribution in education will require a multifaceted policy approach. Changes in policy such as equitable funding and resource distribution for all schools in rural and urban areas, and stipends for children with disability may accelerate the global push towards the 2030 EFA goals and SDGs. Such policies have promoted female education and helped achieve near gender parity in education in Bangladesh (Anis & White, 2017). With effective budgeting, monitoring and data collection processes, similar outcomes for inclusive education might be possible (Nazeer, 2018).

Although recent research on inclusive education (Chand & Karre, 2019; McKay, 2018) suggests that inclusive education can only occur when the development of attitudes and adaptation for students with disabilities is ensured, other research shows all of the above elements are necessary to shift schools towards inclusive practices (Albright, 2018; Carrington et al., 2019; Miller, 2018).

3.4.2.4 Systemic adaption

Numerous studies consistently show that in the interpretation of inclusive education, the goals of inclusive education cannot be met if policies do not reflect inclusive values (Ainscow, 2020; Cologon, 2019; Rose, 2017; Shaikh, 2019). Shaikh (2019) states succinctly that ‘Change on paper can be easy; in practice it is often more complicated’ (p. 16). His study demonstrates that policies may look excellent on paper but when it comes to implementing them, support processes and procedures for policy success are crucial.

Recently, Akyeampong and Fofack (2019) and Eryong and Xiuping (2018) investigated the importance of education in Africa and China. They reported that addressing social, cultural and political views is necessary to transform societal perceptions of exclusion and conceptualise inclusive practices. Following Sen’s (1999, 2003) concept of poverty and education, their studies emphasise the need for policy to correlate with and cater to the needs of marginalised communities. Their argument is built on the study findings of

Kuper et al. (2018) that demonstrate the effects of social barriers on access to education and health, and on the economic mobility of people when a policy is not adapted. They show that social barriers have an emotional and psychological impact. Social barriers create a sense of alienation and powerlessness among marginalised communities.

Akyeampong and Focak's (2019) and Eryong and Xiuping's (2018) views raise several concerns regarding inclusive education policy in developing countries. A consideration of contextual barriers to achieve the maximum level of success in inclusive education they argue is important in policy and cannot be ignored. The increasing gap between urban and rural areas should also be considered, and this needs attention in policy to minimise the equity gap (Akyeampong, 2019; Corbett, 2016; Fuchs, 2015; Sen, 2002). According to Akyeampong (2019), if continuing exclusionary practices threaten society, and if the continuing political play of a one-size-fits-all policy is mandated, policy will fail to succeed. This is consistent with arguments by Cologon (2019) and Smit and Nel (2018) that inclusive education requires the transformation of educational systems; for example, personalising learning rather than changing children to fit within the system. The crux of policy change entails changing how policy bureaucrats and educators relate to contextual factors and negotiate between power, authority, individual principles and values and political interests to move towards inclusive practices (Carrington et al., 2019; Weir, 2017).

Overall, the findings from Akyeampong and Fofack's (2019) and Eryong and Xiuping's (2018) studies indicate the importance of inclusive education to achieve SDG1, 4, 10 and 16 (United Nations, 2018). These goals aim to eradicate social, cultural and economic barriers and bring changes to established systems, with the SDG era concluding in 2030. However, changes associated with borrowed policy will require policy to focus on reducing or removing exclusion and catering for and valuing diversity. For example, the strategic positioning of institutions forms an important component of democratic learning and advancing the rights of children with disability (Rizvi, 2017; Smit & Nel, 2018). What emerges from Akyeampong and Fofack's, and Eryong and Xiuping's arguments is that inclusive education must adapt to contextual changes to help translate the philosophy of inclusion into policy. For e.g. attitudinal change, ensuring the rights of everyone, and recognising equality and equity and putting this into action. This is discussed in the next two sections that follow.

3.4.2.5 Attitudes

A major focus noted in several studies is the attitudes of those in power and the positioning of the subaltern at the centre of reform. According to Spivak (1988), the subaltern are the heterogeneous marginalised communities who do not have a say in society. They are unable to represent themselves as they are spoken for by the powerful. They are silenced by a system of societal organisation in which all positions of power are held by the influential people and social hierarchy.

Studies conducted in Africa and Asia illustrate the negative effects of policy when social and cultural norms influence its conceptualisation (Diwan, 2015; Khan, 2016; Mitchell, 2017; Tierney et al., 2018). Diwan (2015), Khan (2018), Mitchell (2017) and Tierney and colleagues (2018) found that a rigid bureaucratic system, racism, hierarchy, class and caste distinction and discriminatory practices in services contribute to disparities in the delivery of education to all. Their investigations draw mostly on social exclusion and inequalities and stress how class hierarchy affects social cohesion and causes disparity. As explained in these studies, class hierarchy is unjust as the monopoly of power is vested in a particular group, leaving out those belonging to the lower social stratum and creating unequal access to social benefits. Further, their research demonstrate that the inclusive education policy is affected in societies with class hierarchies, and those governed by rules created by the powerful (Chand & Karre, 2019; Cologon, 2019; Rudolph, 2017).

Another study demonstrates that in developing countries, submissiveness is an issue for people without power or position, and those who belong to the lower hierarchies of the social class system (Slee, 2018). This issue becomes clear in inclusive practices where those in power and positions of authority tend to avoid marginalised communities. The political argument lies in the assumption that inclusive education requires effective policy action (Beutel et al., 2019; Mueller, 2020). Many different attitudes and demands prevail in society and therefore education for children with disability cannot just happen with having policies. Generating different developmental paths, such as accountability systems which are highlighted as a disability inclusion policy focus by the United Nations (United Nations, 2019), and interacting and collaborating with all education stakeholders are necessary to reinforce and promote inclusion (Cologon, 2019).

3.4.2.6 Recognition

When examining policy, Slee (2011, p. 171) provides guidance to policy bureaucrats to govern their actions. He describes this as, 'a necessary prelude for consideration of the origins and "progress" of inclusive education' (Slee, 2011, p. 39). That is, inclusive education cannot be achieved without the recognition of the unequal social relationships that lead to exclusion. Further, he informs us that policy conceptualisation should proceed with a clear understanding of exclusion across all sectors—the government and the community.

According to Slee (2011), non-recognition in policy such as inflexible curriculum and school assessment processes significantly contribute to the exclusion of marginalised communities. Central to inclusive education policy is the need to address educational failure; for example, by focussing on formative rather than summative assessment, disadvantage and poverty. Most importantly, Slee argues for accountability measures in the policy. The move to inclusive education suggests that human rights, equality, equity, recognition and belonging should not be abandoned; rather, they should be strengthened by offering viable social and political alternatives. If policies fail to inform practices the goals of inclusive education cannot be met (Hudson et al., 2019; Mueller, 2020).

From the perspective of human rights and social justice, and the review of the national and international contexts discussed in this chapter, it is clear that the perspectives and conditions required to promote inclusive education justify the need to investigate inclusive education policy in Bangladesh. It is this quest for the equality of opportunities, human rights and recognition for all children with disability that leads me to consider Amartya Sen's theory on social justice, development and capability (1979, 1999, 2000, 2011), the subaltern theory of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1988) and the inclusion/exclusion theory of Roger Slee (2011, 2013, 2018, 2019). I discuss these theories in detail in the following chapter.

3.4.3 Borrowed Policies

With the objectives, the literature related to borrowed policies is examined in the next few paragraphs to provide an understanding of how the notion of policy borrowing can be applied to analyse the situation in Bangladesh.

With the objectives to adhere to inclusion, rights and justice, and development goals, and to keep up and connect with the processes of global transformation, policy borrowing has become a common phenomenon, especially for developing countries (Zangmo, 2018). There is an assumption that borrowing policy will ensure 'best practices' are embedded, but can overlook the educational context of the host nation (Steiner-Khamsi, 2014).

Policy borrowing has been shown to benefit developing countries. It has shaped global knowledge production and created channels for the inflow of international aid to developing countries (Tromp & Datzberger, 2019; Zangmo, 2018). In tandem with these changes, governments from, for example, Africa, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Samoa have borrowed and introduced inclusive education policy (Beutel et al., 2019; Rizvi, 2016; Sharma et al., 2016; Verger et al., 2018; Zangmo, 2018).

However, it has been found that that borrowed policies are influenced by the values of the developed countries; hence it is not value free (Zangmo, 2018). Also, educational policy change is heavily influenced by the 'surrounding socio-political milieu' (Burdett & O' Donnell, 2016, p. 113). For example, Bhutan's decision to borrow policy was based on its need to transform its monastic system of education, end its self-imposed policy of isolation and fit into a globalised world (Zangmo, 2018). For Samoa, there was the need to keep up with global trends in education and comply with donor requirements (Tuia & Iyer, 2015). This is similar to the Bangladesh case.

In assessing the implications of policy borrowing, Tan (2016) argues that policy borrowing for developing countries is not a 'straightforward, predictable and uncontested' process (p. 196). Tan's study shows that when conceptualising an international policy, systemic challenges are inevitable. Several researchers argue that a borrowed policy requires a reformation of the whole education system to align with Western thought and ideologies (Rizvi, 2016; Tuia & Iyer, 2015, Zangmo, 2018). Otherwise, there may be significant impacts. Therefore the adoption of an international policy requires adaptation.

Even Rizvi and Lingard (2010) warn against blind borrowing of a 'glossy document' without considering the context (p. 19). They argue that policy borrowing from developed countries has significant implications for developing countries without its proper conceptualisation. Also, without understanding and 'exploring the realities of practice'

(Booth & Ainscow, 1998, p.3). Consequently, the replication of borrowed policies from developed countries is not reflected in the pragmatics of implementation (Reiser, 2012). The result, for those with disabilities, are continued societal, environmental and institutional barriers.

According to Tromp and Datzberger (2019), the blind borrowing of policy without any consideration of the local context and appropriateness, when the adoption is not culturally appropriate, has been shown to lead to policy complications and failures. Disparities between rural and urban educational institutions arise. Developing nations borrow international policy but it is less clear how these address the needs of rural communities. This literature argues forcefully that in the process of translating borrowed policies into practice, policy bureaucrats need to consider the contextual realities of their own nation.

The borrowing of policy highlights that a lack of understanding, cooperation, collaboration, and agreement and discussion between policy bureaucrats and stakeholders contributes to the development of symbolic policies. Thus these gaps in policy may explain why developing countries are lagging behind in achieving the 2030 EFA goals. If these goals are to be achieved, there is a need to minimise the policy gap. This would enable children with disability to access education and other services within their environment (Boussaguet & Faucher, 2020).

Borrowed policies require continual adaptation and adjustment to local conditions as they do not conform to local values, needs or contexts (Beutel et al., 2019; de Bruin, 2019; Tan, 2016; Tromp & Datzberger, 2019). Often, bringing changes to educational systems may not be acceptable and applicable to local contexts. Changes may involve a lack of community involvement, initiative and support for policy bureaucrats seeking to implement a borrowed policy. Policy may be challenged as it may have a significant impact on beliefs and practices in a country's education system (Slee, 2011). Nevertheless, policy borrowing is a very important strategy for national development (Nguyen & Obaidul, 2015; Rizvi, 2017; Zangmo, 2018).

In their consideration of borrowed education policy, inclusion researchers maintain that the goals of inclusive education cannot be met if policy conceptualisation (Ainscow et al., 2019; Mueller, 2020; Muthukrishna & Engelbrecht, 2018; Slee, 2006). The challenges of conceptualising an appropriate policy have been known for some time. There is no

single education policy that is best suited for all countries and that could be equally effective in all environments. Therefore, Rose (2017) concludes that developing countries can benefit from borrowed policies when they are adapted to local conditions and shaped by national practices. A key strategy suggested is the appropriation of inclusive education policy through a unified education system and its contextualisation to local demographics (Muthukrishna & Engelbrecht, 2018).

Alur (2009) suggests that having an understanding of policy failures and addressing the reasons for failures can promote inclusion. Alur's (2009) study of inclusive education in developing countries found evidence of exclusionary practices. She regards this as the failure of government systems to 'operationalise policy', demonstrating 'institutionalised discrimination from the top' (p. 86).

While Alur argues that a lack of well-considered policy and a top-down approach affects inclusion in developing countries, Li et al. (2019) contend that balancing the top-down and bottom-up process when policy is conceptualised is crucial. Their study focussed on balancing the Western and Eastern philosophies of policy strategy management. They argue that policies have traditionally been guided by the Yin–Yang perspective, which is a top-down process. Therefore, they propose an alternative philosophy, the Zhong–Yong, which values the perspectives of marginalised people to make informed decisions, as recommended by Spivak (1988) and Slee (2013). This process involves listening, analysing collected views and opinions, accepting positive solutions and providing unbiased information. It can be seen as an effective way to promote inclusive values. The Zhong–Yong perspective supports human rights and social justice, such as inclusion and participation, acceptance and recognition, interaction, representation, equality and respect. Central to the Zhong–Yong perspective is reducing systemic inequities and being open to ideas. These strategies can help avoid policy failures.

Observations from Alur (2009) and Li and colleagues (2019) are striking and demonstrate how inclusive education policy can exist in developing countries but have slow or ineffective outcomes because of how it is conceptualised. Adding to Alur (2009), recent Bangladeshi research on inclusive initiatives emphasises the need for change in society so that marginalised children can have equitable access to education (Begum et al., 2018; Chowdhury & Chakma, 2019; Olk, 2019; Tazrian, 2020). These studies indicate that developing countries are faced with significant national and global constraints and

challenges during implementation, yet borrowed policies are positive developments that ought to be implemented.

3.4.4 Symbolic Policies

Symbolic policy is defined in the literature as meaningless government programs that does not yield any result as the intention is to attract public attention that government 'do something' (Elder & Cobb, 1983, p. 22) or 'policy statements with no teeth' (Mazur 1995, p. 2), which, in contrast to policy silences, involves 'an intensive dissemination of symbols that have no tangible effect on resource allocation' (Anderson 1990, p.15; Edelman, 1964, p.26). Symbolic policies provide many benefits to politicians who support them—in general public recognition, coalition-building capabilities, interest group support, […] but cost little in administrative resources and money' (Mazur 1995, p.2). Moreover, they fail in the long term 'to generate an active network of state and societal actors interested in the success or failure of the policy' (Skocpol 1988, p. 22).

Several studies document the existence of symbolic policies in developing countries (Chandan, 2020; Okwayn & Kamusiime, 2017; Opoku et al., 2015; Tuia & Iyer, 2015). These studies provide evidence that although policies are proposed and developed, local authorities often ignore them and strategies are not goal-oriented. They are cited occasionally to shape beliefs and expectations (Boussaguet & Faucher, 2020). Rizvi and Lingard (2010) define these as symbolic policies, which are vague, ambiguous and have 'abstract goal statements' (p. 9). They also contend that symbolic policies lack commitment from governments, that their conceptualisation is faulty and that their ability to convey clear understandings is non-existent. Generally, symbolic policies exist in written form but are inactive, ineffective and unsustainable (Megan, 2015).

The implications of such research for borrowed policies include a lack of understanding, agreement and collaboration between policy bureaucrats. This all contributes to the development of symbolic policies. It seems, therefore, that symbolic policies can be seen as a reason for developing countries to be lagging on the 2030 EFA goals. Inclusive education policy emphasises the rights of all children to access education and, therefore, recent studies on inclusion stress the importance to broadening the definition of inclusion (Boussaguet & Faucher, 2020; Krischler, et al., 2019; Tromp & Datzberger, 2019).

Issues with symbolic policies have repeatedly surfaced on discussion agendas at international conferences (Rizvi, 2017). The common message that comes through about inclusive education policy is a marked trend by governments to express compliance as signatories to international declarations and establish political priorities (Rizvi, 2017; Wood, 2020).

To prevent a culture of symbolic policies, governments have been advised to prioritise investments and strengthen the legal systems so that everyone can participate in society and no one is left behind, including people with disabilities (United Nations, 2018). These initiatives and actions are preferable as they can help meet SDG17 of the 2030 *Agenda for Sustainable Development*. This is particularly relevant for strengthening partnerships, solidarity and multi-stakeholder involvement (United Nations, 2018). Critically, these actions of a government will uphold inclusive principles and values. Inclusive education will be sustainable and accessible to all education stakeholders (United Nations, 2018).

3.5 Summary

This chapter has discussed and analysed significant literature about inclusive education, specifically, its characteristics and worldwide practices. The generally accepted theories that underpin inclusive education have been discussed, focussing attention on human rights and social justice. The literature on equality and recognition in terms of social justice has been highlighted. The literature review has highlighted the difficulties involved in policy conceptualisation in developing countries, particularly in relation to borrowed international policies. Policy discourse and the concepts of borrowed and symbolic policies have been discussed. Further, how the conceptualisation of inclusive education can be addressed in developing countries to provide equal access to education to all children with disability has been examined. The literature offers a vision of justice, rights, equality, inclusion and systemic transformation, and highlights the positive effects of the borrowing of global policy on developing countries.

Chapter 4: Theoretical Perspectives

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I introduce the three theories that have informed my thinking. The theoretical perspective includes the theories of social justice, development and capability by Amartya Sen, the subaltern theory of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and the inclusion/exclusion theory of Roger Slee. The need to apply the three theories arose to understand the emerging themes from the small number of interviews conducted as part of this research and to supplement policy analysis. The theories are complementary to the related and manifold processes involved in understanding policy conceptualisation.

The works of Sen (1979, 1999, 2011), Slee (2013, 2014, 2018, 2019) and Spivak (1988, 1990, 2015) independently argue for the rights, recognition, acceptance, representation and non-discrimination of marginalised communities. For Sen, Spivak and Slee, justice, inclusion and rights are political issues requiring a fairer and more equal consideration for everyone in society. Many of their ideas align, including circumventing exclusion and empowering those who are marginalised. Sen (1999, 2011) speaks of social justice, the development of capabilities and the rights of marginalised communities. Spivak (1988) argues for rights, social justice, recognition, non-discrimination and the empowerment of the subaltern. To bring about changes following the fundamentals of inclusion, Slee (2013) advocates for the right of children with disability and of marginalised communities to belong, be recognised and be accepted. As demonstrated below, their theories provide a solid justification for the argument I put forward later in the thesis that stakeholder perspectives from the ideals of human rights and social justice cannot be ignored and are crucial for the success of inclusive education policy. Sen, Spivak and Slee maintain that local knowledge can help with the gathering of substantial information for contextual development and inclusive practices, whereas the detachment of local people can only contribute to the ineffectiveness of policy. The three theories are introduced in the following sections. I have provided the justification for the application of the three theories in Section 5.5.2.

4.2 Amartya Sen

4.2.1 Social Justice, Capability and Functioning Theory

To realise justice, rights and equality, Sen (1999) argues for minimising exclusionary practices and discrimination in society. For Sen, social participation is crucial to establish a democratic society. Capability, according to Sen (1999) is the activity one is able to undertake ('doings'), and the kinds of people one is able to be ('beings'). This means that capability is not merely the formal freedom to do or be something, but the consideration of being given the equal opportunity to achieve it. Central to Sen's capability is functioning and social justice. Sen's (1999) theory highlights functioning as equal access to and the distribution of appropriate resources from which individuals can benefit from. This means that the capacity to be productive depends on wellbeing, such as one's ability to use available opportunities and participate in activities as an equal member in a democratic society. The capability approach focusses on ends (what people are able to do and be with those resources and goods) rather than on means (the resources people have and the public goods they can access).

Sen's concept is echoed in Article 19 in the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol* (UN, 2006), which emphasises full inclusion and participation in the community by:

1. providing persons with disabilities the opportunity to choose where and with whom they live
2. providing a range of support services for inclusion and preventing exclusion
3. ensuring that all community services are provided to persons with disabilities on an equal basis.

Each of these three components is important to realising community living. Another way to think about functioning is one's ability to use available resources to achieve positive outcomes (Sen, 1999, p. 53). Because of the nature of human diversity and contextual conditions, the capability of one person will differ from that of another. Therefore, Sen (1999) argues that how a person can function will depend on the distribution of resources and the capability of individuals to use those resources. Sen explains that individuals have

to be given the right and freedom to not only choose to function according to their own capabilities, but also to live in any given way with available resources.

An examination of the right and equal freedom to choose for individual growth and development is examined below.

4.2.2 Growth and Development Theory

Literature shows that development can affect positive social and economic change and improve services. It is viewed as a social justice stance and fundamental to the human rights and wellbeing of everyone (Carrington et al., 2019; Sen & Tasioulas, 2018). Sen (1999) argues that development entails five kinds of freedom: 'political freedom, economic facilities, social opportunities, transparency guarantees, and protective security' (p. 4). The freedom to choose available resources according to individual capability is a crucial element to wield power for individual and economic growth as well as social development. Significantly, these are interlinked and strengthen one another. For example, political freedom and social opportunities can lead to economic security and economic participation. Seen in this light, opportunities are essential elements to achieve valuable functioning and developing capability, which is important for quality of life and wellbeing. Policy will fail unless governments address the challenges faced by those who are marginalised and discriminated against. This view is supported by educational research showing that policy must consider how to accomplish the task (Rizvi, 2017). Only when policy bureaucrats recognise the contextual realities, remove barriers and provide opportunities for equal participation and the freedom to choose, can policy be successful (Jiménez-Ramírez et al., 2020; Poveda & Roberts, 2018).

4.2.3 Sen's theory in the Bangladeshi context

Sen's view of freedom and capability has been described as myopic and contradictory (Laruffa, 2019; Patrón, 2019; Selwyn, 2011), and his ideas on democracy as ancient and impractical (Bonvin & Laruffa, 2018; Laruffa, 2019; Selwyn, 2011). Nonetheless, Sen's (1979, 1999, 2011) ideas of freedom, facilities, opportunities, justice and rights are reflected in the SDGs. They are also reflected in the UNCRPD (UN, 2006), which recognises the importance of 'access to the physical, social, economic and cultural environment, to health and education, and to information and communication, enabling

persons with disabilities to fully enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms' (UNCRPD Preamble, 2006, p. 3).

Sen's concept of equality is articulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights[12] (United Nations, 2015b), which proclaims, 'all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights' (Article 1). On addressing the issues of global inequality, Sen (1999) highlights that development 'consists of the removal of various types of unfreedom that leave people with little choice and little opportunity of exercising their reasoned agency' (p. xii). Agency is the ability to engage in actions.

According to Sen (1999), society creates barriers, and marginalised communities are required to enact their agency to challenge existing barriers. Considering freedom and the process of development, Sen's view is agency oriented. He challenges the concept that development is concerned with economic growth (Mendonca, 2018; Poveda & Roberts, 2018). Rather, he argues that economic development does not reflect economic growth. His perspective on development focusses on human prosperity and the creation of opportunities and individual capability to exercise social, economic and political freedom (Poveda & Roberts, 2018).

Sen (1999) argues that agency can be affected by, 'poverty as well as tyranny, poor economic opportunities as well as systematic social deprivation, neglect of public facilities, as well as intolerance or overactivity of repressive states' (p. 1). Respect for human rights and freedom, opportunities for development and eliminating the disparity in education are important for marginalised communities to function effectively. This can improve the human condition and help alleviate global inequality. Sen's perspective suggests that power control by bureaucrats, such as that in Bangladesh, can hamper individual, social and economic development (Rahman, 2018). Therefore, effective policies are needed to create freedom and offer opportunities for greater democracy (Sen, 1999, p. 41).

Within inclusive education, equality and equity can be viewed as one's freedom to exercise the right to participate in learning (Chand & Karre, 2019). Bearing the notion of

[12] The UDHR is a document on human rights. It recognises the fundamental human rights to be universally protected and it has been translated into over 500 languages. The UDHR is widely recognized as paving the way for, the adoption of more than seventy human rights treaties, applied today on a permanent basis at global and regional levels (all containing references to it in their preambles).

equality and equity in mind, individual function, capability and ability will depend on the skills one has and can perform. This is crucial, yet being able to choose and participate in all activities is just one aspect of inclusion. This shows the agency aspect is regulated by the availability of resources and negotiating socio-cultural and political processes (Carrington et al., 2019; Eunice et al., 2015). For policy bureaucrats, this means making educational services not only available but also accessible and compatible with individual needs, this especially applies to children with disability. This approach can enhance the capacity of everyone (Oando & Akinyi, 2019; Sen, 2005; Sen & Tasioulas, 2018).

Sen's theory provides a lens to investigate equality, rights and freedom for children with disability to access education in mainstream schools. This can help with an understanding of whether children with disability have choices in how they access available resources. It can also help to understand if available resources and the curriculum can help them to function and participate in learning along with others in the same classroom. Sen's concept follows the trajectory of changing bureaucratic principles to concepts of democracy deeply rooted in the discourses of justice, rights, freedom, recognition and development.

In addition, Sen's idea of human capital and the freedom and right to choose according to one's capability is crucial for inclusive education. Inclusive education implies 'recognition and representation' (Slee, 2011, p. 164). Resource determinism also seems to be a concern for Sen's concept of functioning and the ways in which equality in education can be maintained. These are among the major fundamental philosophical aims to be considered in inclusive education.

In a keynote lecture at Harvard University on the issues of insecurity and inequality, Sen (2018) pointed to the transformative powers of education on society and individual wellbeing. He maintains that the creation of a just society requires acknowledging differences in human identities. Sen contends that education in this globalised world is marred by classification systems (Sen, 2003), that classifying people in a world of profound inequalities will contribute to individual, social, political and economic insecurity, exclusion, violence and conflict. It is evident from Sen's view of classification that the most significant barrier to learning and exclusion is discrimination and inequality in services offered to people. Also, in the equal redistribution and the availability of resources to function with. Sen's views point out that the social participation of

marginalised people and the lack of school participation by children with disability is characterised by neglect, non-recognition, discrimination and extreme exclusion. For example, in the availability of social and medical services and resources to function with. This is evident in both developed and developing countries, (Boyle & Anderson, 2020; Cologon, 2019; Otieno & Onyango, 2018).

Sen (1992) argues that a right, 'gives a person a certain opportunity' (p. 141) to function in society. It gives individuals the choice to live in any given way with the resources available and capabilities they have (Sen, 1979). Moreover, it allows individuals to contribute to economic development, and the 'freedom to live well' (Sen, 1999, p. 2). In other words, factors such as the social environment and options from which to choose can affect capabilities.

Sen (1999, 2011) suggests that many will miss out on the benefit of inclusive education if capability and functioning are not valued. From a human rights perspective, the ideas of capability and functioning are intertwined. Sen argues that the capability to choose in the form of political and individual freedom and the right to education in the form of social opportunity can promote financial security and social participation. When individuals can function without restrictions and with the available resources, this can promote individual and national development (Kandulu et al., 2019; Munger et al., 2016).

4.3 Roger Slee

4.3.1 Inclusion/Exclusion Theory

Slee's inclusion/exclusion theory is concerned with students with disability in regard to whether they should stay in mainstream classrooms full or part-time. The theory began by arguing whether regular or special schools are better equipped to handle children with disability (Slee, 2001a).

According to Slee's more recent work (2018, 2019), governments worldwide have incorporated inclusive education into their education policies. In addition, international organisations such as UNESCO and the OECD have shown their full commitment to education for everyone and have upheld the key principles, as well as the practice of inclusive education. Nevertheless, despite strong global support for inclusive education, there is extensive debate among policy bureaucrats, parents, teachers and researchers

concerning aspects of inclusive education. Various parties continue their discussions on both the nature and degree of inclusion.

For Slee, a continuous focus on regular schools or even a focus on special schools hinders the progress of inclusive education. Slee's theory emphasises a better understanding of exclusion from education. Slee contends that the associations between exclusion and attainment are not often addressed directly with school reforms to accommodate inclusive schooling. He advocates for practices that develops an understanding of the ways in which children with disability become excluded. Policy conceptualisation on the basis of these understandings will benefit all children and help promote democratic learning. Importantly, the main themes in Slee's theory (2018, 2019) are humanity, justice, rights, recognition, belonging, inclusion and exclusion.

In order for inclusive education to occur, Slee (2011, 2014, 2018) advises schools to engage in systemic and systematic reformation that involves the transformation of education systems in legislation, policy and the mechanisms for financing, administering, designing, delivering and monitoring education. These reform efforts are needed to eliminate the deficits that exist in the current mainstream provision. This is also crucial to move away from social structures that are focussed on 'most' and 'some', to ones that are compatible for 'every' and 'all' (UNICEF, 2017, p. 4-7; United Nations, 2016).

Slee's (2014, 2018) vision to reducing exclusion is about school reform and school improvement. His idea on school improvement focusses on improving student accessibility and outcomes. That is, leadership, teachers, culture, resources, pedagogy and community all working together to effectively change school practices. Slee's inclusive school reform extends the concept of structural improvement to that of addressing diversity. This is crucial for all students to access, participate and make progress in their learning and in classrooms. When inclusive school reform is combined with school improvement, it can lead to change process to be accessible and sustainable.

4.3.2 Slee's theory in the Bangladeshi context

Slee's theory takes the approach that inclusion contains an essential idea of diversity which is not found in the idea of integration. By using the term inclusion, changes in the educational system is implied, leaving the idea of equality as an illusion behind. His perspective makes clear that recognising children with disability and respecting their

equal rights to education by the enactment of laws by the Bangladeshi government is not enough. Factors that affect attitudes, relationships and systemic and systematic exclusion are important. Reducing exclusionary forces that operate within regular classrooms and disrupts class participation needs to be addressed.

4.4 Spivak

4.4.1 The Subaltern Theory

In ‘Can the Subaltern Speak?’, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak presents subalterns, as the marginalised people and groups who occupy a position without identity, a position ‘where social lines of mobility, being elsewhere, do not permit the formation of a recognisable basis of action’ (Spivak, 2005, p. 476). The term was originally used by Antonio Gramsci to describe cultural hegemony (Hoare & Nowell, 1971), to identify groups that are excluded, displaced and marginalised because of socio-economic institutions put into place, so their political perspectives are denied. However, Spivak uses the term metaphorically to describe someone who lacks mobility, ‘to be removed from all lines of social mobility’ (Spivak, 2005, p. 475). The subaltern is subjugated by the powerful, with lower status and belonging to subordinated social classes in post-colonial countries.

Spivak’s focus is on violence that is not physical, rather inflicted through thought, speech and writing. She terms this as “epistemic violence”. For Spivak, epistemic violence occurs when subalterns are excluded from representation, when they are classified, when they are not allowed to speak for themselves, or to have their contributions recognised. According to Spivak, a socially-stratified system divides communities into groups and obliterates the existence of the subaltern from their place in the world. Spivak (1988) argues that this is especially common for the ‘‘general, non-specialists,’’ the ‘‘illiterate peasantry,’’ the ‘‘tribals,’’ and the ‘‘lowest strata of the urban sub proletariat’’ (p.282–83) and the female (Spivak, 1988). These groups are routinely silenced, marginalised or subjected to neglect as can be seen from Spivak’s argument: “If, in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow” (Spivak, 1988, p. 287).

At the heart of Spivak’s theory (1988) is the issue of representation and recognition of marginalised groups. She highlights how the problem of representation is linked to

problems of relations, between the West and the rest, rural and urban and aboriginal and national culture. Her views emphasise different methods of engagement with the subalterns, in particular the need to value the knowledge and perspectives of these population who belong to the lower strata of the society. The perception of these communities as unknowledgeable only further marginalises and prevents them from engaging in and contributing to the community and from participation.

In her view about the development of those who are marginalised, Spivak (1988, 2012b) argues for the crucial necessity of the empowerment of subaltern groups and the need for developing social relations. Spivak emphasises this vision to help the subaltern transcend the existing authoritative domination, for a post-subaltern state to be possible (Spivak, 1988).

4.4.2 Spivak's theory in the Bangladeshi context

In her discussion of the subaltern and pointing to the importance of contextual knowledge production, Spivak's theory discusses the issue of listening and learning from subalterns. For this purpose, Spivak insists on the need to develop relationships between the powerful, the privileged member, the elite and the commoner (the subaltern). Spivak's question, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' directly speaks to the main objective of social justice and human rights theory—the opportunity and freedom to speak, the right to be recognised and participate, and be heard. In other words, the need for the Bangladeshi government to rethink the structures of power that divides is important as this can minimise, or even end the exclusion of the community members of society. Bangladesh's colonial history of nearly 300 years under British rule before the Partition of India in 1947[13], entails reaching across communication, cultural and geographical boundaries to build bridges in an attempt to connect societal divides.

4.5 Summary

In this chapter, the three theorists and theories that informed my research are introduced. In order to apply the theoretical perspectives to the rest of this thesis, the work of Sen,

[13] Information about this is given in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.1

Slee and Spivak have been introduced to inform the investigation of how inclusive education in Bangladesh is conceptualised.

At the heart of Sen (1999), Slee (2013, 2018, 2019) and Spivak's (1988) theories are the reduction of inequality, exclusion and discrimination. In situations where marginalised communities are not discriminated against or isolated in any way, their theories not only promote individual development and national growth, they can also lead to personal and economic empowerment. It may be applicable in the context of education in Bangladesh to promote rights, create social opportunities, and enhance individual capability and development.

Although Sen (1979, 2011) and Spivak's (1988) work does not primarily focus on education, their idea of rights, justice, capability, freedom and the notion of equality can be best thought of as guidance for governments on how policy affects the function and achievement of individuals. As social justice emphasises, 'people in a different economic situation should be treated differently' (Hodgson, 2010, p. 5) and have equal access to services to achieve equal outcomes. Sen, Slee and Spivak's perspectives on equality, recognition and non-discrimination are fundamental to establishing agency. Otherwise, it will be hindered by economic, social and political systems (Rawls, 1999). Therefore, to achieve the best results from policy, other strategies—such as guaranteeing the freedom to choose, equal opportunity to participate and be recognised, and the fair distribution of resources—are imperative. From this perspective, a social justice approach can provide a full rationale for education policy focussed on equality with an emphasis on human rights and economic development at all levels. Extending the argument put forward by Hodgson (2010), it can be argued that there is a need for Bangladeshi government officials and policy bureaucrats to situate themselves in the context and register questions about contextual barriers and strategies for the success of inclusive education. Subjective experience can empower and help in the designing of effective policy (Precious, 2020).

Sen and Spivak's observation of discrimination and social justice moves beyond Western thinking of discrimination and survival. Sen (1999) and Spivak (1988) highlight how marginalisation can affect individual rights, development and freedom. Inadequate education, illiteracy and innumeracy because of marginalisation leads to insecurity and impairs individuals in many ways. It reduces motivation and affects individual, social and economic development. The lack of capability to function effectively in society and the

lack of freedom to choose are forms of social injustice. According to Slee (2019), discrimination and marginalisation excludes and does not endorse respect, recognition and belonging.

Rural areas in Bangladesh have fewer schools and are often remotely located at considerable distance from urban areas. This can make learning conditions difficult. Adding to this already challenging situation, marginalised children and those who are discriminated against are deprived of educational facilities. The question to ask about inclusive education policy in rural areas is how each student—especially those with disability and special needs—is benefitting in the context of capability expansion. As individuals vary greatly in their abilities, converting the same resources into valuable capacity to function will require the freedom of an individual to choose between different resources.

The thinking prompted by Sen, Slee and Spivak's theoretical arguments led me to a deeper search for the perspectives of rural Bangladeshis. Rural people can share collective views and help identify strategies to create a more receptive environment for change. They can help create a more inclusive environment (Slee, 2013, Spivak, 2015).

The common view that the perspectives of marginalised people have no value and that these communities lack interest in communicating and being involved in social and political discussions needs to be dissolved (Slee, 2011; Spivak, 1988). Since rural people make up a significant proportion of the population in Bangladesh, it became imperative that this research engaged with rural people to ensure the local perspective is included. Such practice is valuable to reduce the exclusion of the subaltern from participation and validate the questions of representation and speech and nullify subjectivity. Sen, Slee and Spivak's theory values marginalised people and present policy perspectives for their inclusion and recognition.

Chapter 5: Methodology

5.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodological approach undertaken in this study presenting an overview of methods, motivations, stance, research design and paradigm. The chapter begins with an overview of the philosophical stance of the researcher and introduces the question that guided the research, 'How is inclusive education conceptualised in Bangladesh?'. The chapter proceeds with an explanation of the research design and paradigm. Then, Carol Bacchi's 'What's the Problem Represented to Be' (WPR) approach is explained in relation to my examination of Bangladesh's National Education Policy 2010 (NEP10).

This leads to an overview of the discourse of rights, justice and equality analysis undertaken in this research. The perspectives of Sen, Slee and Spivak, which have informed my thinking about inclusive values in developing countries—especially Bangladesh—and how to respond to the research question follows. After that, a small number of interviews undertaken in rural Bangladesh is introduced and justified. This study has been informed by these approaches and I draw together policy, social theory and educational practice.

5.2 Planning the Study

This purpose of this research was to examine the conceptualisation of inclusive education in Bangladesh. The methodological approach to address the research question that seemed the most appropriate was qualitative inquiry. Qualitative inquiry allows the understanding of a phenomenon and the examination of practices, and helps advance the issue of social justice (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). It has the potential to provide a deep understanding of the issues surrounding a research topic (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Patton, 2015; Yin, 2015).

5.3 The Researcher in This Study

The methodology for this study was influenced by my epistemological stance and the theoretical perspectives adopted. Epistemologically, this research is located within the

critical theory paradigm. In the following paragraphs, the decision to align with this paradigm is justified.

I was raised in a privileged family. Being the daughter of a diplomat, I had the opportunity to live and study in schools overseas before Bangladesh was born. From a human rights stance, I strongly believe that everyone has a right to education, and to grow, develop and lead a life free from discrimination. I made the conscious decision to understand the experiences of others and how inclusive education is understood. I was particularly interested in the experiences of children with disability and the extent to which rural primary schools accommodate their needs. I learned that support services for education are most likely to be extended to schools within cities and nearby areas. I was also interested in finding out more about approaches that could positively influence inclusive education. From my work experience in Bangladesh's Ministry of Education and the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, I was aware of the government's commitment to ensure equal rights to education for everyone, including children with disability living in rural and remote areas. On a professional level, being a teacher, I felt the need to look at rural schools. Therefore, I wanted to gain knowledge from rural education stakeholders. My work experience at Ministry of Education assisted me to understand culturally how policy works in Bangladesh while the fieldwork added to that knowledge. It needs to be mentioned here that the motivation for the study has resulted from my personal interest, and with the aim of providing benefit for others (Cornwell et al., 2017).

5.3.1 'Am I an Insider or Outsider?'

In deciding my role as an insider or outsider, I procrastinated with the question: 'Am I an insider or outsider?', as it is important for qualitative researchers to situate or position themselves in the research (Shai, 2020). I sometimes saw myself as an outsider instead of an insider, and vice versa.

It has been argued that insiders know their own disadvantages, in contrast, outsiders imagine what disadvantage is for insiders (Dunn, 2019). In this research I am an outsider as I see inclusive education from a Western perspective. I support equality of opportunities and participation, for example, the human right to education for all. As a Bangladeshi by descent, I share in this belief and also the human rights stance, with my

education being grounded in developed countries yet understood by living and working in Australia. This difference in views and experience has shown to have a profound influence on individual's explanations and beliefs and could influence my interpretation of participant views (Dunn, 2019).

At the core of the insider–outsider distinction is the notion that 'insiders receive preferential access and, consequently, a range of excludable goods' (Chang & Kerr, 2017, p.69). Chang & Kerr state that one's insider-outsider status have significant implication on attitudes and behaviour. My insider role can be traced back to my being a Bangladeshi by descent, having a career as an officer at the Ministry of Education and having significant knowledge of Bangladesh and experience of the Bangladeshi education system. As an insider, I know what are acceptable behaviours and customs of Bangladeshi society. I can provide insights into the complexities of the local context that an outsider may fail to understand and notice, for example, Bangladeshi culture, tradition, environment, history and politics. This would not have been possible if I were not Bangladeshi. However, despite Bangladesh being my homeland, I was introduced to rural Bangladeshis as a researcher from Australia, making me an outsider in this study. This duality in my position as a researcher has been foremost in my mind throughout the research. I dwelled on questions such as, Who am I? How do I represent myself to Bangladeshis? What are my responsibilities as a researcher? How do I minimise power imbalances in relationships?

My insider position facilitated my access to Bangladesh, reading the *Education Act 2013* in Bangla, as this was unavailable in English, and comparing the translated NEP10 policy document with the original Bangla version. But, at the same time, as a researcher from Australia, situated me as an outsider. There was a concern that rural people might treat me differently. The potential tension was between the desire to protect the rural people, and the desire to find out and contribute to the body of knowledge, making these understandings publicly available. On reflecting on my role as a researcher, I felt that I had insider knowledge of the experiences of rural Bangladeshi education stakeholders because of my Bangladeshi background and my working and teaching experience in Bangladesh. At the same time, having resided outside of Bangladesh, I was less familiar with the updated curriculum ideologies and combining English and Bangla while

communicating. These cultural and linguistic features served as patent emblems of difference in the Bangladeshi research context.

In this study, I took an emic approach (Mostowlansky & Rota, 2020) whereby I engaged in the field of inquiry with an insider perspective. The emic approach helped to better understand rural Bangladeshi education stakeholder's contextualised experiences, viewpoints, perceptions, meanings and interpretations of inclusive education. Over time, I found that positioning myself as an insider or outsider required balancing my position and role to manage inequalities and being sensitive to social, cultural, political and religious issues. This was crucial for me to deal with inequalities and establish empathy with rural Bangladeshis. My experience assisted me to understand culturally how policy works in Bangladesh while the fieldwork (Appendix O) added to that knowledge. I had more knowledge of education policy in this space. My insider knowledge of the language was helpful in analysing policy written in Bangla and English, and to transcribing interviews.

Being a Bangladeshi was an advantage and there were some commonalities between the participants and myself in terms of speaking the same language. However, it could not be assumed that as a Bangladeshi having lived in Australia for many years I would be able to identify with rural conditions, and recent social and cultural developments. On further reflection of my role as a researcher, I find I am a researcher occupying 'the space between' (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009, p. 60), that is, the position of 'insider and outsider' rather than 'insider' or 'outsider'.

It is important to clarify that this study is situated under the critical theory paradigm.

5.4 Critical Theory and Paradigm

The critical paradigm has a transformative dimension. Its aim is to effect positive social change in regard to existing ideas and actions by revealing all forms of exclusionary and power differences in society (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Horkheimer, 1982). Essentially, critical theory analyses social practices to uphold the principles of human rights and social justice (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), that is, equal participation and opportunities, recognition, non-discrimination and acceptance.

The critical paradigm is an appropriate choice to investigate and reveal practices that exclude, discriminate, marginalise and are unjust (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). As the purpose of this study is to investigate how inclusive education policy is conceptualised within the Bangladeshi educational system, the critical paradigm is an appropriate choice. Importantly, the critical paradigm allowed me to analyse and uncover policy ideologies in the Bangladeshi NEP10 in regard to the conceptualisation of inclusive education, and provide suggestions of how to make policy just for all (Forester, 1993).

To justify the suitability of my study within the critical paradigm, I assert that policy objectives that exclude and segregate any child with a disability is unjust and a form of discrimination. The critical paradigm enables this research to interpret, critique and analyse how policy informs unfair practice or ideology. It also allows to investigate exclusionary powers and expose conceptualisations and beliefs that marginalises, segregates and excludes, and advocate for a more just social system (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

5.5 Policy and Policy Analysis

Ball (2012) defines policies as complex social practices that require constant negotiations between the principles of social classification, the limitations of problem categories, the interpretation of common experiences, the conceptual framing of problems and the definitions of ideas. These criteria guide how shared meanings are created and motivate individuals to act (Fischer & Forester 1993, pp. 2–3). Ball's definition suggests that policies are not free from political dimensions as interests are negotiated among policy bureaucrats and organisational actors that may influence policy conceptualisation. It is a choice that policy bureaucrats make between 'competing alternatives' to suit political commitments (Anyebe, 2018, p.8). Further, Ball (2012) sees the policy as both a product and a process. He argues that a policy can be seen as not only the statements of strategic, organisational and operational values (product) but also the capacity to operationalise values (process). The conceptualisation of policy as a product and a process emphasises the political character of policy. It demonstrates that policy is about both the identification of political objectives and the power to transform values into practice through organisational principles and operational practices. This emphasis on the policy as a process recognises that values are not neutral. They are contested and often the subject of negotiation, compromise and conflict. In this conception of policy, power, conceived of

as largely unproblematic, moves centre stage (Ball, 2012). For these reasons, it is important to look deeply into the conception of power in the conceptualisation of policy.

"Policy analysis in education is grounded in the belief that it is crucial to understand the complex connections between education and the relations of dominance and subordination in the larger society—and the movements that are trying to interrupt these relations" (Apple, 2019). It provides a way for understanding the power relations embedded in them. It may assist to improve policy and inform practitioners in their advocacy. As such, policy analysis provides researchers with a powerful tool to develop an enhanced understanding of the values, interests and political contexts underpinning policy decisions. Such methods may enable more effective advocacy for policies that can lead to improvements in education.

It is also well documented that the philosophy of inclusion is often not translated into the policy (Ainscow, 2005; 2010, Ainscow et al., 2019; Webster, 2018). Therefore, there is a need to analyse policy in order to understand how policy is conceptualised in particular contexts, 'by who, for whom, based on what assumptions and with what effect' (Somekh & Lewin, 2005, p. 97). However, it has been argued that analysing policy is not straightforward because disagreement exists about what public policy is and how it can be investigated and understood (Anyebe, 2018; Sabatier & Weible, 2014 ; Peters, 2021), with different approaches based upon diverse theoretical and methodological assumptions.

5.5.1 Approaches to Policy Analysis

Scholars have offered different approaches, strategies and models for examining education policy (Diem et al., 2019; Young, 1999; Young & Diem, 2016). More recently, the attention of critical policy analysis has shifted to examining the governance, accountability and policy advocacy processes, rather than purely focusing on the government itself (Apple, 2019; Anyebe, 2018; Diem et al., 2019; Fischer & Miller, 2017). The focus has shifted as policy has become a central concept in the way that modern society is organized and managed—it is through policy that authority is exercised. Policy outcomes include not just the decisions about why and how to act but reflect societal values and the allocation of resources to support the enactment of policy. Critical policy analysis illuminates these important aspects of public policy (Anyebe,

2018). Another focus was examining the movement towards accountability in the policy. On the use of critical policy analysis in education, Diem et al., (2019) state that critical policy analysis "offers the promise of broader, deeper, and potentially more complex understandings of educational policy issues" (p. 7). As attention and interest gained momentum, educational policy scholars moved towards using a critical framework rather than the traditional approaches to policy analysis (Diem et al., 2019).

There are a number of approaches to policy analysis that I outline here.

Dunn (2017) offers six procedures that should be incorporated into policy analysis: solving, defining, predicting, prescribing, describing, and evaluating. Blondel (2013) suggests a comparative approach to policy analysis. Kern and Rogge (2018) demonstrate three approaches to analyse policy. Young and Diem (2016) point out, a theoretical lens or framework is required; otherwise, it becomes difficult to distinguish what is likely to be important and what can be ignored, to which recently Anyebe (2018) highlighted six theoretical approaches. These include elite theory, group theory, political systems theory and institutionalism, policy output analysis, incremental theory and rational-choice theory. However, Anyebe contends that these theories are primarily concerned with public policy-making as a process. Browne et al. (2018) highlight three broad orientations to policy analysis. These are: (i) Traditional approaches that aim to identify the 'best' solution, through undertaking objective analyses of possible solutions. (ii) Mainstream approaches focusing on the interaction of policy actors in policymaking and, (iii) Interpretative approaches examining the framing and representation of problems and how policies reflect the social construction of 'problems'. In other words, the policy analysis approach depends largely on what aspect of the policy is under review.

This research takes an interpretative approach (Browne et al., 2018) to examine and critique policy in the field of inclusive education. The study employs Carol Bacchi's "What's the Problem?" (WPR) approach to analyse policy and answer the research question, How is inclusive education conceptualised in Bangladesh? In addition, the theories of Sen, Slee and Spivak are included to analyse the small number of interviews and to supplement the policy findings from the perspectives of human rights, inclusion and social justice.

Before outlining the WPR approach utilised in this research, I provide a justification of policy analysis, the use of theory in research and the methodological issues in policy research.

5.5.2 Justification of policy analysis

Borrowed policy, as has been discussed in Chapter 3 (3.4.2) requires action at many levels of society. Policies inform these activities and policy analysis is crucial to understand the extent to which the rhetoric is supported (Marsden & Watt, 2003).

5.5.3 Justification of using theory in policy research

Apple (2019) and Fletcher (2017) contend that critical policy analysis approaches policy-making as a dynamic and complex process. It challenges objectivist assumptions that policy inputs will lead to intended policy outputs. It emphasises realism and views policy as the outcome of historical and social contexts and power relations rather than as rational and linear. Critical policy analysis examines policy interaction with philosophy, theory and methodology (Diem et al., 2019). For example, in an early critical policy analysis a 'multifocal policy analysis' was conducted by Young (1999) that blended theory with methodology. In this approach traditional interview methods were combined with critical readings in a multi-theoretical 'process [that] involved viewing from one lens and subsequently reconsidering the phenomena from another' (p. 679). Young's study demonstrated that methods of multifocal and critical policy analysis allowed to understand policy through the lens of critical theory. A critical frame helps expose the problematic nature of dominant ways of knowing and doing and offers alternative strategies to produce effective inclusive and equitable policies and practices.

Young and Diem (2016) have argued that 'Policy analysis is, by its very nature, theoretical; that is, it requires theorizing about the objects of study" (p.2). Their studies show the requirement for theories to guide the study of public policy, facilitate communication, and suggest possible explanations for policy action. Theories direct attention to important political phenomena, help clarify and organise our thinking and suggest explanations for political activities such as public policies (Anyebe, 2018).

Cairney and Jones (2016) found that most empirical applications fail to sufficiently engage with broader policy theory and are mainly interested in understanding the

empirical case. These approaches to policy analysis have been characterised as theoretically narrow as they rely on the notions of reality and knowledge and are 'dislocated from any coherent explanatory or predictive framework' (Ball, 1994, p. 1; Young & Diem, 2016). The analysis is descriptive and lacks attention to how policy is interpreted by policy bureaucrats (Young & Diem, 2016). On the other hand, theories can offer an invaluable guide to policy analysis, conceptualisation and advocacy (Anyebe, 2018; Ball, 2012; Nisa et al., 2021). A policy can be successful when the policy goals and perceptions, actions and events are explained by theories (Hornberger, 2015; Nisa, et al., 2021).

The application of theories has led scholars to draw on different critical perspectives and methods in their exploration of policies, policy contexts, policy processes, policy communities and policy impact (Young & Diem, 2017). Moreover, as analysing educational policies through multi-theoretical approaches gained momentum, the interest in the results in policy analyses to show more depth and breadth arose (Diem et al., 2014; Kern & Rogge, 2018). These studies show that not only does theory impact the identification of the research topic or problem, it impacts the way the researcher thinks about the problem, and it impacts the questions that the researcher asks about the issue. Making sense of the world begins with the researcher's notions, conceptualizations and theories about it. The analysis involves a close examination and distinguishing among various aspects of a data set and how to go about separating and examining.

This study conducts an analysis of policy in Bangladeshi education. It responds to the call for theory-informed policy analysis as a valuable research method in inclusive education (Anyebe, 2018; Breton & De Leeuw, 2011). The aim is to "discover and/or question the complexity, subjectivity, and equity of policy" while highlighting both "the intended and unintended consequences of the policy" (Diem et al., 2014, p. 1084). Theory is valued in the analysis of policy and interviews to understand the reality of the inclusion of children with disability. This builds on the assumption that theory is not value free (Donaldson & Walsh 2015). Theories of Sen, Slee and Spivak around inclusion and exclusion, equality, recognition, non-discrimination, capability, development and rights were employed to understand education stakeholders' conceptualisation of inclusive education, disability and policy. The study aligns with previous work in Critical Policy Analysis and challenges the view of policymaking as a linear, deliberate, unbiased process (Young & Diem, 2017). As this study aims to situate policy within a theoretical framework of

interpretation, I draw upon Carol Bacchi's (2012) 'What's the problem' (WPR) approach to understanding the ideologies and social contexts that problematise policy conceptualisation (Young & Diem, 2017). The WPR approach is discussed in Section 5.6.1.

5.5.4 Methodological issues in policy research

Policy analysis is important to understand the role of government systems, power and practices in society. Dunn (2018) argues that the methodology of policy inquiry is the critical investigation of potential solutions to practical problems. The aim of the methodology is to help understand and question, not only the products of policy inquiry, but the processes employed to create these products. The methodology of policy inquiry contributes to the reflective understanding of theories, methods, and practices (p. 3).

Diem et al. (2014) have pointed out that 'there is no single or correct critical policy analysis method 'as long as the scientific methods produce reliable knowledge (Dunn, 2018, p. 3). Policy analysis process involves a number of steps, although these steps are not always sequential, and the process is iterative. Reasons for policy analyses may include research (i) for policy in order to contribute to the actual policy production process, and (ii) of policy, in order to contribute to the academic body of knowledge about policy and to contribute to our understanding of contemporary social life.

Analysis of policy is research that is often carried out by bureaucrats and researchers to support the development and implementation of a particular policy in its actual production (Rizvi and Lingard, 2010). Analysis of policy, on the other hand, takes a more critical stance, in which the purpose may be to investigate the policy at any point in its development and implementation stage, with the goal of reviewing from disinterested stances (Nzinga et al., 2018; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). This is the more academic study of policy, which aims to contribute to the academic field of educational policy studies, though as Rizvi and Lingard (2010) suggest, perhaps it is better to see the research for/of distinction as sitting on a continuum rather than as simple binary.

This study conducts research of policy in Bangladeshi education and supplements with a small number of interviews. This is not intended as analysis of implementation or enactment, but to introduce the perspectives of rural Bangladeshis. In the concluding,

chapter recommendations are made for policy bureaucrats on the conceptualisation of inclusive education in Bangladesh.

5.5.5 Application of "What's the Problem?" Approach

The analytical approach, the "What is the Problem Represented to be?" (WPR) has been adopted for this research. WPR is the Bacchi's (2012) analytical framework that enables an investigation of issues or problems within policy and the effects of that representation. Bacchi distinguishes this approach (which focuses on problems) from policy studies (which are concerned with solutions). Bacchi differentiates between what she calls problem solutions analysis and problem representations analysis. Problem solution analysis, Bacchi contends, focuses on (a) a belief that problems exist "out there" and are available for objective analysis (comprehensive rationalists) or, (b) a belief that problems result from political processes that seek to give voice to all stakeholders and constituents (political rationalists). Bacchi's framework is not merely focused on problem identification but also on what is silenced in this process. The framework reveals the assumptions and values that come into play in the policy. As such, she provides the following questions to frame this analytical approach:

1. What is the problem represented to be, in either a specific policy debate or in a specific policy proposal?
2. What presuppositions or assumptions underlie this representation? What effects are produced by this representation?
3. How are subjects constituted within it?
4. What is likely to change?
5. What is likely to remain the same?
6. Who is likely to benefit from this representation?
7. What is left unproblematic in this representation?
8. How would "responses" differ if the "problem" were thought about or represented differently? (p. 12).

In a WPR approach this first step involves identifying the representation of a problem. The first few questions allow for an examination of the way in which the issue under consideration has been "problematized," in other words, to give it importance. By asking

questions about representation, Bacchi highlights the human and political role played in the policy. She emphasises that policies and problems are constructed. Bacchi wants to provoke consideration of how the problem has appeared, not only in terms of its facets and constituent parts but also in the way that it has engaged interest and justification. This becomes evident when considering the assumptions and presuppositions on which the policy is based. This point goes to the heart of the value or moral base on which the representation is founded.

In Question 3, where she asks how subjects are constituted in the representation, Bacchi refers to the way that various representations bring actors into play, what their roles are, and how they are likely to affect or be affected by the problem representation. Questions 4–6 then direct the analyst to probe the solution or proposal for change, asking about the: 'rationales for the proposal, deep-seated presuppositions underpinning the proposed change, possible silences in the understanding of what needs to change, and the effects that are likely to accompany this particular understanding of the "problem"' (Bacchi 2009, p. x). In the last two questions, 7-8, Bacchi demonstrates how her analysis goes beyond a mere description of the problem representation. By asking what is left unproblematic and how the response would be different under another way of representing the problem, Bacchi seeks comparisons with alternatives, which forces a consideration of other more productive, equitable and socially just ways of approaching the same area. The application of the WPR approach (2012) can be used to analyse a number of contemporary policy contexts (Tawell & McCluskey, 2022). The policy chosen in this thesis demonstrates the current debates in Bangladesh and worldwide regarding the conceptualisation of inclusive education and the use of borrowed policy in this context. In this thesis I have adapted three questions from Bacchi's WPR approach to respond to the research question,

How is inclusive education conceptualised in Bangladesh?

A justification for having chosen the three questions follows in the next section.

5.6 Policy Analytical Process

To analyse education policy, the investigation focussed on identifying scholarly literature on policy that addressed issues about inclusive education. The conceptualisation of

inclusive education in Bangladesh was the major focus of this study. The research analysed inclusive education policy and supplemented this with interviews to introduce the experiences of education stakeholders in rural Bangladesh.

An investigation of two recent national policy documents for e.g. the *National Children Policy 2011* (English Translation) and the *Integrated Special Education Policy 2019* was initially conducted to identify how inclusive education has been conceptualised. The term, 'Inclusive Education' was applied during the search in the former document and the Bangla term, '*Ekibhuto Shikkha'* in the latter policy document as the translated English document was not available. However, as neither the terms 'inclusive education' nor '*Ekhibhuto Shikkha'* appeared when the search criteria was applied, these two documents were not analysed as the intention was to understand how inclusive education was conceptualised in Bangladesh education policy. This meant the NEP10 document was the most relevant for this investigation.

Carol Bacchi's (2012) 'What's the Problem Represented to Be? (WPR) approach was adapted and employed to make sense of power and the political dynamics influencing the conceptualisation of inclusive education policy in Bangladesh. The WPR approach focuses on the ideas that:

- Every policy seeks to solve a particular problem;
- The policy represents the problem that it seeks to solve in a specific way; and
- The choice of this representation advantages some groups and disadvantages others.

The WPR approach fits within a critical paradigm because it refuses to take problem representations for granted. This approach questions what effects these problem representations have, and who benefits or is disadvantaged from these effects. Further, the underlying premises, assumptions and discourses that make certain problem representations dominant in policy and other problem representations unthinkable, is highlighted. THE WPR approach encourages to "identify and examine categories and concepts that are embedded within particular policies and to see them, to an extent, as pliable and variable" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 264). Bacchi's approach can help investigate how inclusive education policy is conceptualised in Bangladesh and the effects the problem representations have on children with disability.

Bacchi informs that the consequence of positioning issues within a knowledge–power context leads to problems. She acknowledges a debt to Michel Foucault (1997), a social theorist, who had influenced her thinking in her "What's the problem?" approach (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016). In the section that follows, Bacchi's WPR approach is briefly outlined.

5.6.1 Bacchi's 'What's the Problem Represented to Be' Approach

Bacchi's WPR approach is designed to critically examine policies with a focus on the ways in which problems are initially defined. The WPR approach asks about proposals for change or solutions set out in a given policy, and then uses these changes or solutions to trace how the problem is constructed (Bacchi, 2012, p. x). The approach challenges the 'problem-solving' paradigm in policy research and instead proposes a new 'problem questioning' paradigm (Bacchi 2009, p. xvii). Importantly, Bacchi's WPR approach is an analytic strategy that is not concerned with rules and procedures to produce scientific knowledge, but rather with strategies that enable to obtain knowledge (Tawell & McCluskey, 2022). The approach consists of a series of six guiding questions that can be applied to effect social change, as follows.

1. **'What's the "problem" represented to be in a specific policy?'**
   Problem definition can relate to an alleged cause (e.g. the lifestyle of certain populations), how far a government should go to address it (e.g. regulate, fund or exhort) and which part of government is responsible (e.g. whether it is a problem of public health, social security or criminal justice).
2. **'What presuppositions or assumptions underlie this representation of the "problem"?'**

WPR focusses on the 'deep-seated cultural values' that are taken for granted even though they underpin debate. Examples include the rules we use to categorise populations and distinguish between normal versus deviant behaviour, and the role of government in 'private' or 'family' life.**3. 'How has this representation of the "problem" come about?'**

Issues may be apparent for long periods before becoming problems for governments to solve. Explanations for intervention can include shifts in social attitudes or attention, changes in government, new information and new

technologies (e.g. in medicine, transport or communication) that change social behaviour or make new interventions possible. Further, old ways of solving problems can endure long after the problem seems to have changed.

3. **'What is left unproblematic in this problem representation? Where are the silences? Can the "problem" be thought about differently?'**

   The power to decide who—or what—is a problem and the powerlessness to challenge that choice. A population's 'problems' could be caused by their lifestyle or the ways in which their behaviour is interpreted. The cause of traffic congestion could be over-reliance on cars or the absence of appropriate infrastructure. Comparing problem definitions and cultural reference points, in different countries, can help identify which frames dominate.

4. **'What effects are produced by this representation of the "problem"?'**

   Problem definition can help close off debate. They help alienate and stigmatise some populations. They have positive or negative material consequences and intended or unintended effects. Question 5 helps us ask who benefits from the current definition, and who might benefit from a new representation of the problem.

5. **'How/where has this representation of the "problem" been produced, disseminated and defended? How could it be questioned, disrupted and replaced?'**

   People exercise power to create or defend these ways to characterise problems, in a context in which certain practices and ideas dominate debate. Bacchi argues that researchers have a responsibility to question them, and their 'origins, purposes and effects', rather than 'buy into' them as a natural starting point for policy analysis.

The key aspects of the WPR approach are problems, assumptions, policy silences, effects of these silences and the causes of the problems. In this study, Bacchi's WPR approach to policy analysis was adopted to provide an overview to understand the conceptualisation of inclusive education within rural schools.

To supplement the policy findings, a small number of interviews were undertaken as the purpose was to introduce the experience of rural Bangladeshis to this research and add to the major focus which was the policy analysis.

In Section 5.6.3, a justification for employing interviews is outlined.

5.6.2 Policy Documents and Analysis

Documents refer to a wide range of written, visual, digital and physical material (Merriam, 2009). A review of the National Education Policy 2010 (NEP10) was an important source of data. Other document sources (primary /secondary) included: online articles on issues of inclusive education, policy debates, and information about policy conceptualisation, university library Theses, articles, books and online newspapers.

Document analysis as a method interprets and analyses documentation in a way that gives a voice and meaning to the content of this documentation (Bowen, 2009) in a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents including both printed and electronic (computer based and Internet transmitted) material. Like other analytical methods in qualitative research, document analysis requires that data be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The analytic procedure entails finding, selecting, appraising (making sense of), and synthesising data contained in documents. Document analysis yields data, excerpts, quotations, or entire passages that are then organised into major themes and categories specifically through content analysis (Labuschagne, 2003). Following these processes, the documents that were analysed in this study led to the development of themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

As all documents to be used require authentication and confirmation of accuracy (Merriam, 2009), government education policies, such as the *NEP10*, the *National Children Policy 2011* and the *Integrated Special Education Policy 2019* helped me to understand in detail, the objectives and significance of a policy. The method was useful as a tool to analyse policy and discover problematic issues within it (Dunn, 2015). The specific policy that was analysed for the study is the Bangladeshi 'National Education Policy 2010' (NEP10). This policy addresses education for all children including students with disabilities. The application of the WPR approach and the analysis process to analyse NEP10 questions the policy, particularly pertaining to its conceptualisation.

Document analysis is often used 'in the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon' from different angles as a means to track change and development and verify findings from other sources (Abdalla, et. al., 2018; Bowen, 2009; Denzin,

1970, p. 291) such as interviews, participant or nonparticipant observation, and physical artefacts (Bowen, 2009; Flick, 2015; Yin, 1994). Data drawn from documents, for example, helped to contextualise interview data that supplemented policy data. Document analysis helped generate interview questions that needed to be asked and situations that needed to be observed as part of the research.

5.6.3 Justification for the Employment of interviews

Understanding how inclusive education is conceptualised in rural Bangladesh was vital to this research and informed the decision to include the experiences of rural Bangladeshi communities. Interviews were conducted with 12 education stakeholders from two rural schools located in two villages in Bangladesh. Interviews with rural education stakeholders supplemented the findings from policy analysis and introduced their perspectives to understanding the research question, 'How inclusive education is conceptualised in Bangladesh?'. The method allowed direct interaction and the documenting of the perspectives of rural education stakeholders.

Second, interviews are important to introduce the experiences of marginalised people in research (Jagtap, 2022). The small number of interviews here focused on relationships and knowledge about individuals and communities in rural Bangladesh (Rossman & Rallis, 2017). There are debate though around researchers justifying generalisations from a limited number of interviews (Dooley, 2002) also, the potential for researcher bias, validity of the research and problems of replication (Baldwin, et al., 2022; Tincani & Travers, 2019). This has been addressed in this research by my reflection of my role as an insider or outsider, on page 94.

The interviews in this thesis became supplementary to the policy analysis and theories applied, because the researcher's purpose was to use these to supplement the critical policy analysis. Primarily, the goal was analytic generalisation (Flick, 2015). This means that the intention was to expand and generalise theories, not enable statistical generalisation. Supplementing the policy analysis with a small number of interviews was important to follow up on and add context-specific evidence to a significant amount of Bangladeshi inclusive education research, as mentioned in Chapter One (Section 1.6). Also as mentioned in Chapter 1, the existing research has primarily focussed on semi-

urban and urban areas, with less consideration given to the perspectives of rural education stakeholders.

The use of a small number of interviews in the fieldwork component of this study is justified because it was appropriate to gain additional knowledge from relevant stakeholders around the conceptualisation of inclusive education in Bangladesh's education policy (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Liamputtong, 2019). Using multiple data sets, collected through different methods, helped to expand on findings and reduce the impact of potential biases that can exist in a single study (Bowen, 2009). The next section discusses this approach in more detail.

5.7 Methods for Data Collection and Analysis

To investigate the research question, careful consideration was given to the choice of methods to conduct the study. Decisions had to be made to ensure methodological and theoretical rigour. The fundamental philosophical assumptions that guided me as the researcher to make sense of the world, my worldview and my concept of what constitutes knowledge had to be taken into account (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Second, the types of research question posed and the approaches to the inquiry—that is, the collection, analysis and interpretation of data to gain insights into the research question—required consideration (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Jackson & Mazzei, 2012; O'Leary, 2017).

The primary data emerged from my analysis of the NEP 10, to investigate the conceptualisation of inclusive education in Bangladesh. This was supplemented by a small number of interviews to investigate the current situation of inclusive education in rural areas. Policy analysis and interview transcripts provided the data on which the findings are based.

To address the research question, 'How is inclusive education conceptualised in Bangladesh?', an exhaustive literature review was undertaken and relevant documents examined. A thorough analysis of the Government of Bangladesh NEP10, the inclusive education policy for children with disability was performed. In addition, published reports and documents from international organisations such as the Global Monitoring Report,

Save the Children, The World Bank, UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF and WHO about the right to education for children with disability were examined. International literature on policy and stakeholder perspective was reviewed as well as journals and articles on inclusive education, with a particular emphasis on the South Asian context as the situation in other developing countries, for example, Afghanistan, Ghana, Hong Kong, Nigeria, Tanzania, Vietnam and Zimbabwe, which have quite similar situations to that in Bangladesh.

Information from grey literature provided the context and detail about the formal structures and processes which supported the existing policy of inclusive education. These documents helped to understand in detail, the objectives and significance of the policy that came into existence and to the analysis of the NEP10 as an important source of data.

Next, Sen, Slee and Spivak's conception of rights, development and justice was applied to the reading of the policy, in particular the NEP10 policy. This assisted with the development of patterns and themes related to the research question. Key concepts—for example, inclusive education, disability, understanding, policy, equality, rights, recognition, acceptance, belonging and social justice—were examined closely to understand the conceptualisation of policy each time it appeared in the policy. Other terms or inferences that emphasised conceptualisation, inclusive education or practices of governments and phrases or clauses that implied an attitude towards children with disability and their education (e.g. inclusive education, exclusion, negative, recognition, acceptance/belonging, resources) were considered and placed into categories (e.g. inclusive practices, exclusive practices). The three theorists assisted in the analysing of NEP10.

It was possible to examine NEP10 for its online availability both in Bangla and in English. In addition, as mentioned earlier in Chapter 2, Section 18 in NEP10 emphasises on the educational inclusion of children with disability, special needs and all other children. However, the policy objectives in the *National Children Policy 2011* and the *Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2013* focuses more on protection, development and social integration. The *Education Act 2013* is not a policy, and *Integrated Special Education Policy 2019* states integrated and special education programs for a particular group of

children with disability. For e.g. children with Autism, visual impairment and neuro-development disability.

Terry et al (2017) insist that researchers revisit their research questions and examine how their analysis corresponds to their initial questions. This led me to realise that the research question was limited and warranted the incorporation of elements specifically related to the conceptualisation of policy. Thus, the analytical process served to respond to the research question and provide a more holistic account of the values policy bureaucrats hold and the impact on policy conceptualisation. The analysis of the data set followed the phases identified by Braun and Clarke (2006) and Terry et al (2017).

Braun and Clarke (2006) method of analysis consists of six steps and is designed to be recursive, rather than linear. This process requires the researcher to circle back to earlier steps in light of new data or newly emerging themes that merit further investigation (Kiger & Varpio, 2020). The identified patterns were then considered in light of the theories of Sen, Slee and Spivak, which led to the development of four themes from the interviews. This approach was employed to deepen understanding and strengthen explanation from three perspectives. Examination of the rural perspectives from the interviews revealed several common patterns that led to the development of themes.

I familiarised myself with my data by listening to the interviews repeatedly. Engagement with the recorded interviews was crucial as it allowed me to examine the responses to the questions, and translate the interviews. Some initial notes were applied which helped me process the data as a whole and led me to construct generic ideas. Then I created codes and examined each translated interview thoroughly. Comments were inserted next to the translated interview narratives. The initial codes from the data set were subsequently grouped into provisional themes. Excerpts from each data set were included in corresponding initial codes and a first attempt was made to assign codes into tentative themes. A number of themes, which included a multitude of sub-themes were identified and I began to organise these around central concepts (Terry et al, 2017) with the aim of establishing their coherence and their capacity to connect to other themes while remaining distinct. Themes were then reviewed for internal and external consistency to ensure that they were related (Braun and Clark, 2006) and presented meaningful accounts of the data excerpts they contained. Finally, themes were delineated and re-named to ensure their focus was sharp and clear. The intention throughout this process was to ensure that the

themes flowed naturally and presented satisfactory and well-argued evidence that answered the research questions.

Braun and Clarke (2006) advise researchers to ascertain if their analysis will remain at the semantic level, thus examining the narratives of educators, as they are communicated and verbalised or will delve into the latent level thus attempting to interpret the sociocultural and historical framework that created these meanings. As this study is guided by an interpretive epistemology, it aims to understand meanings and views and is thus focused primarily on semantic meanings. The epistemological positioning of thematic analysis is to yield insightful, contextually grounded interpretations. It is also used as a systematic approach to the analysis of data that involves identifying themes and patterns of cultural meaning, to support the coding and classification of data, in this study's interviews and policy documents. Thematic analysis helps to identify commonalities, relationships, overarching patterns and theoretical constructs that may emerge from the data.

I have focused on the method as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006) as it has become the most widely adopted method of thematic analysis within the qualitative literature (Clarke and Braun, 2017). Their method of analysis consists of six steps and is designed to be recursive, rather than linear. This process requires the researcher to circle back to earlier steps in light of new data or newly emerging themes that merit further investigation (Terry et al., 2017; Kiger & Varpio, 2020). The participants are placed at the forefront of the phenomenon of interest, so that understanding is developed from the participants' perspectives, not the researcher's (Freebody, 2003; Merriam, 2009);

- The researcher is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis (Patton, 1990; Merriam, 2009);

- A deductive approach to thematic analysis was used where I constructed data to elicit themes and concepts for consideration against existing theoretical frameworks (Merriam, 2009);

- The research design was emergent and flexible to respond to the conditions of the project in progress (Merriam, 2009); and

- The data were developed into rich descriptions of the education stakeholder perspectives (Freebody, 2003) and research findings were presented as a richly descriptive narrative (Merriam, 2009).

In selecting an interpretive method, I needed to ensure that findings were presented in such a way that would allow scrutiny and challenge (Freebody, 2003). Transparency in my descriptions of how data were collected and analysed has been important.

To understand the contexts and content of the policy, a detailed textual analysis of policy text central to the conceptualisation of inclusive education in Bangladesh has been undertaken, in addition to semi-structured interviews to supplement policy analysis. The analysis of policy documents was done inductively and deductively. Semi-structured interviews also used inductive and deductive methods for the derivation of major themes, using thematic and content analysis. In the next section, the data strategies will be explained in greater detail.

5.7.1 Data analysis and interpretation

Ball's (1994, p. 97) suggests that analysis of interview data needs to consider the form of interview and the way the information has been produced. Inductive and deductive reasoning were applied in the data analysis. I used an inductive approach (Boyatzis, 1998) to analyse the interviews. At the same time, deductive methods (Crabtree & Miller, 1999), working from theories drawing on critical policy sociology and themes identified in the research literature around inclusive education for children with disability, were used to derive important themes or categories. Both induction and deduction are reasonable strategies and social scientists frequently make use of one or the other, or both approaches to analyse the theoretical arguments to determine which the researcher relies upon (Clarke & Braun, 2017).

The inductive and deductive methods identified four major themes. The data analysis followed a linear process of, first, collecting data then analysing it.

5.7.2 Data coding and thematic analysis

Open coding was used when analysing the interview transcripts. Holloway (1997) described open coding as a process of breaking down and conceptualising the data (p. 84). Each of the ideas within the data was given a code and similar ideas were marked

and labelled with the same code. The coding was used to identify the main concerns and perceptions of the interviewees and these were developed into patterns. These themes were obtained after the data were coded, a method identified by Creswell (2005) as being useful when analysing qualitative data. The coding system did not use computer generated codes, but undertook the process manually through a matrix analysis.

Below are the protocols that were used for analysing the interview data based on the thematic analysis.

5.7.3.1 Phases of thematic analysis

1. Familiarisation with data: reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas
2. Generating initial codes: Coding interesting features in a systematic fashion for the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code
3. Searching for themes: Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential themes
4. Reviewing themes: Checking if the themes work in relation to coded extracts (level 1) and the entire data set (level 2), generating a thematic map of the analysis.
5. Defining and naming themes: Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and generating clear definitions and names for each theme
6. Producing the report: Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis (Boyatzis, 1998).

The six stages coding process involved recognising important moments in the data and encoding it. These were the stages prior to the process of interpretation (Boyatzis, 1998). A “good code” is one that captures the qualitative richness of the phenomenon being researched (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 1). Encoding the information organises the data to identify and develop distinct themes. During the coding of transcripts, inductive codes were assigned to segments of data that described new themes observed in the texts (Boyatzis, 1998). According to Miles and Huberman (1994), the process of data analysis has a few stages, including the data collection period, where there are a few stages in data collection processes, including pre-, during and post-data collection; that is, the data identified during post-collection, and the conclusions and verifications drawn before, during and after the interviews.

To analyse the interview results, I went back to my research question, 'How is inclusive education conceptualised in Bangladesh?' to reflect on why I undertook the interviews and consider the analysis that would help me gain the best insights. Organising the material under these original headings was done to distinguish between direct quotations from the interviews and impressions or conclusions I deduced from the data. Comparing views and findings among several participants when responding to similar questions also triggered variations based on knowledge and background. As outlined earlier, see pages 69-70, the 'positionality' of the researcher is important, so too the 'positionality' of research participants is central to understanding their experience. These useful findings helped me to construct new themes and categories to enhance the interpretations of the policy data. The new categories influenced the interpretations, as did my own experiences and the reading of the literature about inclusive education policy in Bangladesh.

5.7.3 Fieldwork

In deciding how to undertake the fieldwork, it was necessary to devise approaches that would capture rural experiences. The inquiry questions of this thesis meant that conducting semi-structured interviews would allow participants to share their 'what', 'how' and 'why' experiences. Earlier I noted that I was both an insider and outsider. This insider/outsider positioning provided me with access to rural Bangladesh and to communicate with research participants, while also allowing me to take a more theoretically framed stance to both data collection and data analysis.

5.7.4 The Location of the Fieldwork

Bangladesh has a little over 68,000 villages. Most have plain lands, riverine areas and lie in close proximity to urban areas, with the exception of those located in the hilly, Haor[14] and Char areas.[15] The site for this study is located geographically within the district of Munshiganj. Two villages, 1 kilometres apart from each other, approximately 30 kilometres from Gulistan[16] in Dhaka were the focus of this study. The travel time to these

[14] A Haor, also known as a backswamp, is a wetland ecosystem in the north-eastern part of Bangladesh that is a bowl- or saucer-shaped shallow depression. The Haor basin is an internationally important wetland ecosystem situated in the Sunamganj, Habiganj and Moulvibazar districts and Sylhet Sadar Upazila, as well as the Kishoreganj and Netrokona districts.

[15] The word char is used to refer to floodplain sediment islands in the Ganges Delta region. The islands of Bangladesh are scattered along the Bay of Bengal and the river mouth of the Padma.

[16] Gulistan (The Nur Hossain Roundabout), is considered the 'zero point' to calculate driving distances from Dhaka city to other places.

two villages from zero point in Gulistan, Dhaka, is close to four hours by car and five hours by bus, when traffic volumes are low. Munshiganj is famous for its 5,000-year history and archaeological heritage dating back to the 13th century. The district is crisscrossed by six rivers and is the largest potato production area in Bangladesh.

The inhabitants of the two villages are largely Muslims and minority Hindus. Relative to other Bangladeshi districts, Hindus from the district of Munshiganj—in particular these two villages—make up a large proportion of the minority group. The villagers are mostly engaged in paddy farming, poultry, hawking, street vending and operating their own or rented rickshaws, pushcarts or vans. Over recent years, the number of men living in these two villages has shown a significant decrease. Urban migration in search of work, and the export of human resources overseas are key factors that have created an enormous gender imbalance.

People with disability constitute 1.5 per cent of the total population in Munshiganj (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2015). Demography, the rate of literacy, the number of educational institutions, social services and poverty level differ slightly among the villages. Of the six *upazilas*[17] in the district of Munshiganj, Sirajdikhan Upazila was suggested by an informed colleague and, therefore, was chosen for this study.

The study villages of Sonali and Rupali[18] are located within a half-hour walk of each other. They were recommended based on the understanding that schools located in remote areas are less advantaged than schools closer to the capital city. As educational facilities and the distribution of resources are not equally distributed between urban and rural areas, these two schools would provide important insights into the enactment of inclusive education policy.

Other factors that required significant consideration when choosing the villages to interview rural stakeholders were researcher safety, electricity disruptions, accommodation, unpredictable weather, sickness, political unrest and availability of travelling companions. Because of socio-cultural expectations, travelling with both a

[17] The *upazila*, pronounced ‘upojela’, is a sub-unit of a district. *Upazilas* are the second lowest tier of regional administration in Bangladesh. In total, the administrative structure consists of 8 divisions, 64 districts and 495 *upazilas*.
[18] Pseudonyms for the two villages.

female and a male was important. Even with a well-planned travel schedule, these issues could not have been ignored in Bangladesh.

5.7.5 Participant Recruitment

The process of recruiting participants was facilitated by my 'insider' position (see section 5.3.1, Mostowlansky & Rota, 2020; Shai, 2020) that made contacting a friend and accessing interview locations relatively easier than it may have been for an outsider However, prior to recruiting participants and setting up interview sessions a few important attentions were necessary.

Before participant recruitment, a thorough review of the academic literature, policy documents was completed to determine who to approach for interviews to enable the collection of quality data and enable me to address and answer the research question underpinning the study. A purposive sampling technique was applied for recruiting participants as specific kinds of people may hold different and important views about the ideas and issues at question and therefore need to be included in the sample (Mason, 2017; Robinson, 2014; Yanow, 2017). I selected the sample based on my research training, judgement and the purpose of the research (Yanow, 2017).

Interview flyers (Appendix A, B) and a short description of the purpose of the interviews (Appendix C) was sent from Australia to the village elder to provide primary information to potential participants. The flyers were used by one village elder, who was in charge of both the villages, to inform the villagers about the interviews. The village elder were a conduit for access to rural homes and meeting potential participants upon the researcher's arrival.

Gaining access to villagers' homes was enabled as the village elder travelled with the researcher and introduced her to the villagers. The presence of the village elder made the villagers feel comfortable when speaking to an outsider. This was evident from their interactions and as they shared personal information. Also, a recent African study confirms the close connection a village elder has with community members for rural development activities (Mutua & Kiruhi, 2021). Access to rural households would likely have been problematic, if not impossible, for a stranger. The presence of the village elder also provided a sense of security for the researcher in this male-dominated society.

A compromise had to be reached between the number of interested participants and the number of participants approved by the Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee (VUHREC) (APPENDIX P). Further, the need for participants to return home for work and rest created time pressure, so interviews were conducted on a first-come-first-serve basis. This led to a low representation of participants from the second village, Rupali, who were mostly Hindus and were engaged in farming and fishing and came later at night. Insights into villagers' experiences were also gained by engaging in casual conversations, a few days before the interview, in the mornings when they cooked and cleaned, when villagers offered to have lunch with them and at teatime in the evenings. These were not recorded by phone or notes but informed my thinking around the contextual environment of the two villages.

Participant recruitment from the two villages required travelling with the same village elder by foot, rickshaw and baby-taxi (a small, motorised vehicle able to carry only two people on the back), for the initial introduction and distribution of flyers (Appendix B). The village elder was the first point of contact to access to the two villages and his support was vital for the success of the field visits. He advised ways in which participant recruitment and interviews might be feasible, for example, how to adapt to and adopt rural living conditions, how to interact with rural people and why establishing connections before interviews would allow for more open exchange during interviews. This helped develop an understanding of rural life, culture and expectations of the community. Participants provided written and verbal consent prior to the interview.

The need to balance the role of being an insider, outsider, student, professional and woman, and coming from a privileged urban family was crucial. This was done by for the minor part of the study, the interviews, I focussed on addressing my privilege and adjusting to rural and cultural expectations. I stayed in each of the villages and had casual conversations with many rural Bangladeshis, wanting to know more about their lives and the education of their children often helped develop a friendly relationship. In a male-dominated society, it was preferred that I followed behind rather than walking beside a male. Although these local and cultural expectations are not demanded, the researcher was aware of them as essential actions. Aiello and Nero (2019) note that as the 'insider' and 'outsider' roles are complex and multi-layered, the researcher 'must be nimble in balancing training, identities, and positionings in response to the complexity of the

context, and must be perceptive of the implications of the power inherent in her researcher role'(p. 262).

To gain knowledge it was more important that I considered, 'whom I had to become' than to represent 'who I am'. As the Bangla proverb goes, *Bhalo kichu pete hole, kichu deete hoi*. The literal translated meaning of this sentence is, 'If you want something good, you need to give something'. Self-reflection was important to enable me to integrate within the rural environment and interact with less fortunate people, with the intention of achieving the goals of the study.

5.7.6 Participants

Twelve participants were involved in this study. The literature suggests that in studies involving in-depth qualitative interviews, there is no minimum number of participants; rather, the question is whether there is "sufficiency" of information to reflect a range of experiences, without having "oversaturation" (redundancy) (Seidman 2006, p.55). Participants were parents of children with and without disability, two college students aged 18 and 19 years, a school managing committee member and two recently retired primary school teachers. Retired teachers were purposively selected as the literature suggests they are much easier to access, usually have the time to participate in interviews, are a valuable source of information (Audenhove & Donders, 2019) and the availability of current teaching staff was a concern. It was important for the research to capture teacher experiences because currently employed teachers may have felt obligated to conform to employer expectations, including speaking well of policy and programs. Whereas as Walford (2012) suggests, retired personnel are also able to speak without the constraints on them when still in powerful policy positions.

Abbreviations are used in this thesis to refer to participants of different kinds (see Appendix N) to ensure confidentiality and anonymity regarding the identity of participants and their workplaces.

5.7.7 Interviews

Interviews provide insight into human understanding of the social realities and how participants create meaning about their experiences and their positions in different social environments (Silverman, 2016). As one of the main objectives of this study was to

understand about education stakeholder experiences, undertaking interviews was the most appropriate tool to employ to supplement other data source (Powney & Watts, 2018), i.e. policy analysis. Flick (2015) advocates for researchers to conduct interviews in a way that motivate participants to go beyond general, superficial answers. What Flick suggests is to create conditions for interviewees to present experiences they have had by asking them to recount relevant situations. This can help gain an understanding of the situation and the answers to 'what' and 'how' questions.

Semi structured interviews were considered as it offers flexibility for both the researcher and the participants and hold the meeting with a more conversational tone (Corbin & Strauss, 2015), to ask spontaneous questions, or ask for more clarification that is linked to the research questions and for new information and knowledge to be generated by the participant as well. Furthermore, participants have more freedom to present comments, concepts, ideas or questions (Brennen, 2017; Corbin et al., 2014).

The open-ended, semi-structured interview mainly focussed on the understanding of inclusive education, disability and rights to education rather than on enactment or implementation. Interviews were held after written permission was given by participants. The questions were initially written in English (Appendix E, F, G, H) and later translated into Bangla (Appendix I, J, K, L), the language spoken in Bangladesh.

Relationship-building with the participants occurred every day by engaging in casual conversations. This was done to encourage rural Bangladeshis to elaborate on any concerns they may have had about the interviews, such as the length of sessions, or feeling embarrassed if they failed to understand the questions and respond appropriately. Engaging in casual conversations helped resolve problems, consider alternatives and take action to ensure the interviews were successful. Participants were encouraged to share as much as they could from their personal experiences and understanding. The benefit of these casual conversations was that they seemed to have provided a level of comfort for the villagers. Another advantage of casual conversations was that they enabled the participants to be aware of the benefits they may gain, and prepared them to manage their time and respond to the questions at the time of the interview a few days later. Culturally appropriate behaviour dictated that I accepted the invitation for food prepared by the rural people. The interview with the managing committee member was also followed by an

invitation to dinner. A casual conversation was held about inclusive education in Australia and other developed countries.

Reflective notes were written at night to record experiences and ideas that emerged from the initial visit. These notes led to the modification of words and phrases to make the interview more feasible. For example, the Bangla term for inclusive education, *ekibhuto shikkha* needed to be changed to *ekottrobhuto shikkha*—the prefix *eki* seemed confusing to the participants because to them it meant 'coeducation'.

When participants arrived at the interview, every interview question was explained. This took approximately 15 minutes followed by recorded interview sessions of up to 20 minutes. Interviews were held in the evening as that was preferred by the participants. 8 participants requested to be reminded after 10 minutes of the recording. The need to say prayers, prepare dinner and return home before their husbands arrived, was important for women to observe. Male participants wished to rest if they had undertaken intense physical work in the field, tending cattle far away from home and travelling long distances on foot. These requests were respected as Yin (2015) counsels interviewers to "be respectful but not condescending, friendly but not ingratiating, and attentive to others but not pandering to them" (p. 126).

Written consent on forms (Appendix D) was sought from participants, as well as verbal consent for audio-recording after the interview questions (Appendix I, J, K, L) had been read out in Bangla more than once to clear doubts about words, phrases and language used. Two mobile phones were used to record the interviews in order to undertake what Bhattacharya (2017) notes that the interviewer must record everything in the interview. Recordings were copied onto a USB each day.These strategies helped manage the time and conduct of the interviews (Olson, 2016).

Extra care was taken to avoid sensitive and offensive questions directed at rural Bangladeshis (Bell & Waters, 2014; Cole, 2018). More emphasis to listening was given. There were occasions where a dilemma naturally arose in regard to whether to intrude or remain silent, to allow conversations to continue and information to be revealed. This temptation to enquire was overcome by being an active listener rather than not engaging in conversations and remaining detached (Green & Thorogood, 2018).

Knowing that participants may have had a low level of Bangla, consideration was given to the vocabulary of rural Bangladeshis when the research question were developed. The language of several questions was simplified and explained in different ways to make concepts more comprehensible because of the varied abilities of the participants (Powney & Watts, 2018). For example, a question might be broken into segments and the meaning of what was being asked explained using synonyms and shortening phrases (e.g. *neetimala pronoyon* translates into English as 'the enactment of policy' and was explained using a simplistic phrase *neetimala banano,* meaning 'making policies'). Follow-up questions were used to confirm that important information was not missing, that information collected were balanced and thorough, and to gain a deep understanding of words, phrases and concepts introduced by participants.

Another important consideration was responding with patience and kindness when participants asked that the researcher repeat or explain a question. There were instances where moments of silence occurred. Showing empathy and patience was important at such times (Powney & Watts, 2018; Yin, 2015). These actions helped participants to respond with confidence and created conditions to gain valuable information.

Each interview began by capturing personal information about the participant. Then each of the interview questions was explained. The recording of responses followed this.

Throughout the interviews, it was important to be mindful about overcoming difficult moments. The low level of literacy of rural Bangladeshis required maintaining awareness of the researcher's role and responsibility in dealing with the limited vocabulary available. Therefore, moments of unresponsiveness from participants required patience, kindness and the awareness of vulnerability (Cole, 2018; Yin, 2015). It was critical to remain conscious of power hierarchies (Doucet, 2019) for knowledge to be constructed and shared (Ming & Goldenberg, 2021). Questions were rephrased several times to help participants gain the confidence to respond. Instead of actually using the exact wording of questions, probing questions such as, 'Did you mean to say…?', 'What else can you tell me about…?' and 'Do you think…?' were used for clarification and to gain specific and in-depth information. Powney and Watts (2018) advise researchers to probe and pause in the questioning process to hear and give the participants the opportunity to respond to a question fully, connect with the participant and elicit more valid information (p. 139). When using different prompts, caution was necessary to not impose any personal

views. It was important to remain unprejudiced and neutral to the responses participants gave, as bias could have created problems. For e.g. the rigour of findings (Buetow & Zawaly, 2022).

The study applied the thematic approach (Braun and Clarke, 2006) to analyse interviews as the approach offered flexibility to fit into different epistemological and theoretical assumptions. The analysis was guided by 'specific analytical interests', that is, to respond to the research question (Braun and Clarke, 2006 p.79). The identified patterns were considered in light of the theories of Sen, Slee and Spivak, which led to the development of four themes, which are discussed in Chapter 6 (Section 6.4). The three theories helped deepen understanding and strengthen explanation from three perspectives. Interviews revealed several common patterns.

5.8 Bilingual Information Analysis

An unavoidable problem in this study was analysing and interpreting bilingual information. Interviews for this study were conducted in Bangla, and findings reported in English. The reason for conducting interviews in Bangla was that it is the language spoken throughout Bangladesh, even among tribal communities who also have their own languages. Local dialects and colloquialisms are another aspects of the Bangla language that people use, especially in rural and remote areas. This was an important consideration during the analytical process. It should be mentioned that during the British Colonial rule, the Bangla language incorporated numerous English words into its vocabulary that are now used by everyone. Some of the most commonly used words even in rural areas are school, high school, husband, committee member, hospital, doctor, TV, radio, video, mobile, photo and light. Many of these words were used by participants during the interviews.

The analysis of bilingual information was a complex process. The most important decision that needed to be taken was whether or not to transcribe the information gained from the participants, that is, listen to the recordings and write the responses in text form using the exact wording used by the original speaker. A plethora of literature states that analysing interviews require the process of transcription followed by translation (Hammarberg et al., 2016; Liamputtong, 2019; Rossman & Rallis, 2017; Strauss & Corbin, 2015). These qualitative studies describe transcribing bilingual information as

lengthy and time consuming. Nevertheless, transcription is generally followed by translation of interviews into the target language (Malkani & Rose, 2018; Punch, 2014).

The Bangla translation of the English term inclusive education, according to Google Translator, is *shorbobaepee shikkha*. Translation of this term from Bangla to English results in 'united education', although in government legislation and policy documents the term used for inclusive education is *ekibhuto shikkha*. This demonstrates clearly that verbatim translations can have different meanings. Therefore, the process of transcribing interviews was intentionally avoided as details would have been lost, distorting the essence of the spoken words. Emphasis was placed on repeated listening before the spoken words were translated directly from Bangla to English text (Appendix M).

5.9 Ethical Considerations

All research studies must follow ethics and integrity guidelines regarding safe and acceptable researcher conduct. Keeping these guidelines and ethical considerations in mind, the study was carefully considered by weighing the risks and benefits to participants against the benefits for the larger community, and accepting whichever method seemed ethically reasonable and brought maximum outcomes.

Maximum attention was given to ensure the safety and wellbeing of participants and the researcher. The process involved respect for consent, confidentiality, anonymity, risks and harms, human dignity and rights, inclusiveness, marginalised people, power differential in relationships, document management, and health and safety (Cole, 2018; Doucet, 2019).

The interviews with rural people were conducted following the ethical approval of the study (Appendix P). Informed consent was obtained and confirmed at each subsequent contact. All participants were informed about the purpose of the research and their permission was sought before they were briefed about the risks and benefits involved, their rights, and information protection methods. After giving their verbal consent, participants signed a consent form. Then interviews were conducted. Participants were not pressured to participate in the research and to not take advantage of their kindness, their decision was respected at all stages of the interview (Powney & Watts, 2018).

The NHMRC (2007) research guidelines insist on safeguarding and protecting people's identities and respecting anonymity of respondents (National Health and Medical Research Council, 2007). For this study, confidentiality and anonymity was maintained by using pseudonyms for villages and abbreviations for group participants, and ensuring there were no identifying aspects in the analysis. By maintaining confidentiality, it was hoped that all participants would feel comfortable to speak freely, and provide open and honest responses.

It was essential to not belittle the rural Bangladeshi participants. Bangladeshi cultural norms of submissiveness, speaking in a low tone, being gentle and careful to use specific words when addressing participants, and using less direct language had to be observed.

Respect was shown by being polite, avoiding pressured participation and arguments, avoiding asking sensitive questions, making participants feel valued and knowledgeable and paying attention (Cole, 2018; Doucet, 2019). Participants were encouraged to speak naturally instead of using sophisticated Bangla. Informal Bangla was used during the interviews. This was necessary to provide the interview participants with the confidence to speak about their experiences without hesitation (Powney & Watts, 2018). Having to articulate formal Bangla words would have restricted spontaneous conversation.

Power and status was an important factor when engaging with these rural communities (Glas, 2021). I was aware that the participants may perceive me to hold a position of power. Making informal contact with rural Bangladeshis and observing rural customs was important to balance unequal power relationships. Holding casual conversations with rural people before the interviews helped develop a mutually respectful relationship.

From the cultural perspective of Bangladesh, one of the risks involved in this study pertained to addressing rural participants by their names and use of terms to address someone younger in age. The literature emphasises the need for researchers to preserve participants' dignity as human beings (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). To minimise harm by demeaning rural participants and giving rise to discomfort, use of culturally insensitive words and blending English and Bangla was avoided during conversations, and local practices were followed. To illustrate this point, even though it is socially and culturally acceptable in Bangladesh to address someone younger in age by

their first name and use an informal local term, preserving the dignity of young rural people by using the formal term normally applied to show respect to elders was observed.

The *National Statement on Ethical Conduct on Human Research* (National Health and Medical Research Council, 2007, p. 13) recommends that researchers empower individuals with capacity, and protect them. When researching rural people, it was important to take into account participants' vulnerabilities and minimise risks. This study adhered to the code of ethics endorsed by the NHMRC (2007).

5.10 Trustworthiness of the Research

Bailey (2007) states that, "trustworthiness does not mean that the reader necessarily has to agree with the researcher; rather it requires the reader to see how the researcher arrived at the conclusion he or she made" (p. 181). Providing a detailed methods section in research write-ups is necessary (Bailey, 2007). Rolfe (2004) argues that issues of validity in qualitative studies should be linked not to "truth" or "value," but rather to "trustworthiness," which becomes a matter of persuasion whereby the scientist is viewed as having made those practices visible, and therefore, auditable (p. 305). In this study, trustworthiness is enhanced using: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Credibility refers to researcher truthfulness and the amount of confidence in the achieved findings (Stahl & King, 2020). Credibility is promoted through using several sources of information or procedure from the field (Stahl & King, 2020). The study uses different methods to collect data. These methods include policy analysis and semi-structured interviews. In addition, three theoretical perspectives are applied to analyse data (Denzin, 1970). These are: 'What's the Problem Represented to Be' (WPR) approach, and the theories of Sen, Slee and Spivak. Another strategy to achieve credibility in qualitative research is as Shenton (2004, p. 65) states, "the development of an early familiarity with the culture of participating organisations before the first data collection dialogues take place". Consequently, my extensive experience in education administration and teaching enhances this strategy, which increases the credibility of this current study.

As an insider and outsider, I engaged in reflective practice that requires one to be 'self-critical, analyse what you think, feel, and do, and then learn from the analysis' to resolve

problems and biases for new learning experiences (Howe, 2009, p. 171). Additional techniques to establish credibility include the repeated reading of participant responses, analysing and theorising about them and revising the concepts (Korstjens & Moser, 2018, p. 122). These steps are applied and discussed in Chapter Five. Interviews with a range of participants allowed to cross-validate the information gained from different sources (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Patton, 2015). To enhance credibility participants were given the freedom to participate and provide any information they want, also giving them opportunities to refuse to participate and the right of withdrawal any time they want (Shenton, 2004).

Ensuring dependability in this study involved detailed reporting to facilitate replicability. The intent was not on generalisability, but a specific focus on children with disability in Bangladesh, particularly those in rural environments. To allow transferability, sufficient detail of the fieldwork, interviews, participants and methods used is provided to decide whether the findings can be applied to another setting, "thereby enabling a future researcher to repeat the work, if not necessarily to gain the same results" (Shenton, 2004, p. 71). To ensure confirmability, the methods used and the researcher's position is acknowledged and explained within the research (Shenton, 2004).

5.11 Limitations of the Study

While this study makes no claims with respect to generalisability, the policy analysis and the small number of interviews does contribute to knowledge. The small sample size does not support generalisability, nor does it address all aspects of inclusion and the perspectives of all rural Bangladeshis. However, as far as possible, the views of research participants were gathered and juxtaposed with the literature reviewed and theories employed.

5.12 Summary

This chapter has provided an overview of the research methodology for the study. This includes the methods used, the justification for the use of policy analysis and the theories and method for data collection. I outlined the significance of my positionality to the conduct of this research. The chapter introduces the theoretical approach undertaken in this research. The bringing together of policy analysis, the three theories and the

experiences of rural Bangladeshis in this research design enabled this study to undertake a critical analysis of the conceptualisation of inclusive education in Bangladesh. Having undertaken a detailed analysis of these three aspects, the next chapter now presents an analysis of the policy and interviews.

Chapter 6: Analysis

6.1 Introduction

Having explained and justified the methods employed to conduct this study in the previous chapter, I now present an analysis of educational policy in Bangladesh. In this chapter, the educational goals stated in the Bangladesh Constitution (1972) are presented, before a critical examination of the English translated version of the NEP10[19] by the Bangladeshi Ministry of Education is undertaken. This analysis investigates education policy for the inclusion of all children, in particular with children with disability living in Bangladesh. The policy findings are supplemented with analysis of the interviews conducted with rural Bangladeshis.

The theories of Sen, Slee and Spivak, introduced in Chapter 3, informs the analysis presented here to investigate how justice, rights, recognition and educational exclusion continue to affect children with disability in rural Bangladesh. In this chapter, I introduce the perspectives of Sen, Slee and Spivak, before returning in the following chapter to a discussion of how their theories enabled my research to investigate the conceptualisation of education in Bangladesh, with a specific focus on children with disability in rural Bangladesh. The NEP10 analysis is informed by Carol Bacchi's WPR policy analytical framework. As outlined in Chapter 5, three key questions from Bacchi's six WPR questions enabled me to probe deeply into the NEP10. My analysis identifies several shortcomings in the NEP10, including exclusionary language and limited acknowledgment of children with disability, or those living in rural Bangladesh. This chapter concludes that Bangladesh's conceptualisation of inclusive education does not go far enough to ensure truly inclusive education for all children in Bangladesh.

6.2 The Constitution

Bangladesh is a signatory to international declarations such as the Education For All objectives (Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, 2015) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As a signatory to international declarations, the Government

[19] The National Education Policy 2010 was the first education policy to be enacted by the Bangladeshi government ever since the country's independence in 1971.

of Bangladesh's constitutional obligation is to ensure education for all its citizens. The Bangladesh Constitution outlines the fundamental principles of education in the nation's state policy (Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, 2019). In support of the Constitution, the NEP10 (2010) was enacted by the Government of Bangladesh to fulfil its international commitment to SDG4: Quality education for all by 2030. The Constitution provides evidence of the Government of Bangladesh commitment to meeting individual needs, developing an awareness of human rights and a sense of justice, respecting people and human rights, and ensuring basic education for all. There are two key articles in the Constitution that address education and discrimination in Bangladesh. The first, Article 17, declares that the state shall adopt effective measures to:

> (a) Establishing a uniform, mass-oriented and universal system of education and extending free and compulsory education to all children to such stage as may be determined by law (b) Relating education to the needs of society and producing properly trained and motivated citizens to serve those needs, (c) Removing illiteracy within such time as may be determined by law.

The second, Article 28, prohibits the discrimination of all citizens:

> (1) The Government of Bangladesh shall ensure equality to all citizens regardless of their religion, ethnicity, sex, geographical location, physical challenges, or mental challenges;
>
> (2) Both men and women shall be treated equally in all spheres of the country (Bangladesh).
>
> (3) All citizens shall be treated equally on matters about access to public places, resorts and admission to educational institutions regardless of their religion, ethnicity, sex, geographical location, physical challenges or mental challenges.

The NEP10, signed in 2010, supports the Bangladesh Constitution, which was signed on 4 November 1972 (Legislative and Parliamentary Affairs Division, 2019). The NEP10 highlights the rights of all children, including children with disability and special needs to receive an education with a focus on inclusive education that the succeeding policies, as I have mentioned earlier in Chapter 2 (Section 2.2.5), have given less consideration.

6.3 National Education Policy 2010

The NEP10 emphasises equal opportunities for all children. It blends Dr. Kudrat-e-Khuda's[20] policy liberalism with the aspirations of modern Bangladeshi citizens. The policy introduces radical amendments to bring significant changes to the country's education system if implemented (Khan, 2018).

In brief, the overall aims of the policy (NEP10, p. 8) are to reflect the constitutional guarantee to provide education to all Bangladeshi citizens, eradicate social discrimination and respect human rights. Its goals are to:

1. provide free and compulsory education
2. develop a unified curriculum and mandatory syllabus for primary schools
3. promote patriotic feelings
4. encourage the growth of moral, spiritual and human values among all children to eradicate discrimination and superstitions
5. promote positive attitudes and behaviour, social awareness and life skills among all students
6. appoint primary school teachers and develop a favourable learning and teaching environment
7. promote vocational education from Class VI to Class VIII and prepare students with practical job skills
8. enhance student enrolment and retention
9. monitor primary schools in backward areas
10. promote learning in Indigenous languages for ethnic minorities.

In Bangladesh, primary school education involves eight years of study. Primary school education was made free for all children aged six to ten years with the enactment of the *Compulsory Primary Education Act 1990*. Then, the NEP10 introduced a mandatory elementary school cycle of eight years, followed by four years of secondary education, beginning in 2011. This raised the age of basic education for students in Class VIII, educating 13–14-year-olds from the previous Class V, which educated 10–11-year-olds.

[20] After the liberation of Bangladesh, the first education policy was prepared under the leadership of the renowned scholar, Dr Qudrat-e-Khuda in 1974. However, this education policy was shelved due to political issues.

Bangladesh is a developing country, and education is the foundation of its development (Trines, 2019). Of key importance for Bangladesh is a basic education system meeting individual needs, which include the performance of assigned roles both as a family member and society at large. Also, improving individual sensibility towards their responsibility as a Bangladesh citizen alongside nationalism, world humanity, patriotism, non-communality and respecting people and human rights. The NEP10 has several underlying assumptions that are highlighted in this chapter. The conceptualisation of inclusive education as evident in the policy have consequences for some children because central to the inclusion and exclusion of all children with disability arises from how policy perceives diversity and recognises the intended effects and the actual outcomes. One such conceptualisation is the continuous silencing of the views of vulnerable stakeholders in education policies (Oliver, 2018). The silences are identified in this analysis.

6.3.1 Carol Bacchi's WPR approach

As already outlined in Chapter 5, together with theory, Bacchi's approach underpinned the analytical approach in this thesis. For the purposes of this small-scale study, three of Bacchi's six questions are adapted to facilitate a critical reading of the NEP10, and the investigation of how inclusive education is conceptualised in Bangladesh. The questions are purposefully narrowed to focus the investigation on Bangladesh's National Education Policy 2010 document that address disability and inclusive education.

Choosing Bacchi's 'What's the Problem Represented to Be?' approach in this study is justified as it provides guidance in the examination of how a borrowed policy on inclusive education has been conceptualised in Bangladeshi. This study adapts and employs three questions of the WPR approach as the employment of all the six questions in the WPR approach was not relevant to the analysis of policy undertaken in this study. The overarching question under investigation is, "How is inclusive education conceptualised in Bangladesh?" This question requires international contextualisation of the policy. By contextualising the Bangladeshi policy within the international literature, the problematisation of the NEP10 policy is undertaken by an adapted version of the WPR approach. The three questions modified for this analysis were:

2. What presuppositions or assumptions underlie this representation of the "problem"?'

4. ‘What is left unproblematic in this problem representation? Where are the silences? Can the “problem” be thought about differently?’
5. ‘What effects are produced by this representation of the “problem”?’

These questions have been amended to the following:

1. What assumptions underlie this policy?
2. Where are the policy silences?
3. What are the consequences of these silences?

This analysis identifies several key foci from among the 30 objectives, see Appendix Q, in the NEP10[21], which enable an investigation of the research question,

‘How is inclusive education conceptualised in Bangladesh?’

Arguably, these objectives are included in the policy to imply an inclusive approach to education. My analysis shows that fostering, promoting or speaking to inclusion, the objectives themselves perpetuate exclusionary practices at a systemic and local level. In this chapter, I share these insights through my analysis and the supplementary interviews. I begin by providing the relevant six objectives in the NEP10 in the table below.

Table 6.1: Objectives of the NEP10 (MoE, 2010)

Objective Number	Objective	Page Number
08	To create unhindered and equal opportunities for education for all as per learners’ talents and aptitudes, irrespective of geographical, social and economic situations, to establish a society that is free from discrimination	1
15	To ensure a creative, favourable and joyful environment for the students at the primary and secondary levels for their proper protection and congenial development	2
17	To motivate the people to participate in the educational process at the primary, secondary and vocational levels	2
24	To ensure the education of the physically and mentally challenged learners	3
25	To create a society free from the curse of illiteracy	3
26	To initiate special measures to promote education in the areas identified as backward in education	3

[21] Please see Appendix Q (30 Objectives in NEP10)

NEP10 in Bangladesh has, for the last 12 years, continued to emphasise '*Ekhibhuto Shikkha*' (Inclusive education). The policy highlights non-discrimination and the rights of all children to education. It aims for inclusive and equitable quality education and to promote learning opportunities for all. This policy, that directs schools to provide education to all children marking the government's commitment to international social model of disability, was developed as part of international declarations. The inclusion agenda is embedded within the overarching policy in Section 18, and the intent is for schools to translate the policy into practice. As the concept of inclusion, as noted by others, can be confusing and a complex issue (Armstrong et al., 2011; Foreman & Arthur-Kelly, 2017; Slee, 2011, 2018), assumptions around inclusion in NEP10 may affect how these are translated into practice. I explore how these are portrayed in the NEP10 in the next section.

6.3.2 Assumptions

6.3.2.1 ***Understandings***

In the introduction (NEP10, p. 1), the policy underpins an education process that is oriented 'to creativity, practice, ability and productivity'. It then suggests the policy will 'fight the challenges of the world' (p. 2) and 'cultivate the humanistic values' (p. 5). A broader claim is that 'A nation-wide awakening will be created to achieve the goals of literacy' (p. 12) and that the policy aims to 'to fulfil the Constitutional obligations' (p. 12). A focus on literacy and learning and enabling students to develop human values and dignity are highlighted in these statements. These statements demonstrate the aim is to meet both the Constitutional objectives and education goals.

One of the assumptions Bangladesh construes about inclusive education is its being restricted to a certain group of children with disabilities. Despite the conceptualisation of a policy of rights to access and participate fully in education, little agreement among policy bureaucrats on strategies to translate inclusive theory into reality appears (Johannessen, 2019). There is a disconnect between theory, which is based on a social and human rights model and current practice, which is dictated by the medical model of disability being a problem with the child (Retief & Letšosa, 2018; Slee, 2013).

The use of negative and non-inclusive words and phrases is evident throughout Section 18, which has a focus on education for challenged learners, with its title 'Special

education' (NEP10, p. 43). Words used in this section include 'handicapped', 'incapable', 'physically and mentally handicapped' and 'acutely handicapped'. The word 'dumb' appears on multiple pages (i.e. pp. 43, 44, 58, 59) and is used in this policy to describe children with disability and special needs. The translation and interpretation of the words assigned to children with disabilities from Bangla is influenced by social and cultural norms and has been undertaken from the cultural perspective with Western values, but the detrimental labelling of children is apparent. The NEP10 labels those with disabilities as different, or a challenge for educators and marginalises them through a separate education system based on a unified and coordinated set of principles: 'As per necessity, a coordinated education system will be initiated in some selected schools for the education of the challenged children so that they can quickly receive it in company with the normal children' (p. 43). Slee (2011) emphasises the need to eliminate injustice by diverting policy focus from achievement and productivity to respecting individuals and inclusive values. He argues that tensions will arise as educators are required to follow policy guidelines of inclusion, which may conflict with their personal values and understandings of inclusion. The literature review confirms that confusing messages about inclusion can affect the beliefs and values of individuals and impact inclusive education (Boussaguet & Faucher, 2020; Carrington, et al, 2019; Slee, 2011).

The use of the terminology about children with disability in NEP10 illustrates that disability in Bangladesh is a 'social, cultural and emotional construction and interpretation' (Maguire, Braun, & Ball, 2015, p. 2). In view of this, the notions of inclusion in NEP10 clearly operate within the medical model of disability in which 'othering' children with disability is masked as a notion of inclusion but which places the responsibility on the child to adapt to the inflexible education system. The literature highlights that othering of people with disability arises from social and cultural beliefs, observations and myths that exist in Bangladeshi society (Olk, 2019, Rahaman, 2017; Thompson, 2020), and importantly, the lack of awareness about disability (Zuurmond, et al., 2015). Sadiki et al. (2021) in their recent study in rural South Africa, report on the existence of similar medicalised and oppressive views of disability that deter inclusion. Other studies also show that the understanding of inclusive education develop in terms of a country's specific educational system, and consideration of local circumstances, culture and history (Boyle & Anderson, 2020; Carrington et al., 2019; Muthukrishna & Engelbrecht, 2018; Zangmo, 2018). Hence, disadvantaged children are brought under

intervention programs, projects and alternative education such as, ROSC I, II and PEDP I, II, III, IV or special needs schools. Intervention programs in inclusive education reflect a set of assumptions, which translates into a set of specific program goals and drives policy bureaucrats' understanding (Jarvis & Henderson, 2014).

The underlying assumption here is that children with disability are assigned to categories of defectiveness, which I will shortly explore. Later policy documents make no change to this. For example, The National Children Policy 2011, Section 6.9, p. 9, mentions Special Programs for Autistic Children (Ministry of Women and Children Affairs. (2011).

Spivak (1988, 2012) vehemently challenges, among many other things, the human inclination to labelling subalterns, which she describes as colonised populations that are excluded from hierarchies of power. She equates labelling directly to unequal relationships and an attribute of subordination that leads to the denial of human rights. The language used in the NEP10 perpetuates the negative perception of children with disability, resulting in ongoing discrimination, social exclusion, marginalisation, their devaluation and belonging to the lower social strata. The implication is that we should 'accept wretchedness as normality' (Spivak, 1999, p. 310). Slee (2012) contends that 'labels are not neutral medical descriptors, they are political artefacts' (p. 29). Also, Sen (2011) alerts us to these issues that when labelling underlies social and cultural norms, it poses a risk for individual and social development. Labelling children with disability manifests prejudice. It casts a shadow over changes in thinking and practice. As can be seen, society handicaps and segregates, and, as a result, excludes and discriminates.

6.3.2.2 ***Disability and Rights***

The NEP10 emphasises the education of children with disability, by declaring that 'special education will be provided for those acutely handicapped children who cannot be enrolled in the general school system' (Section 18, p. 43). Further, the NEP10 declares that 'a coordinated education system will be initiated in some selected schools for the education of the challenged children so that they can quickly receive it in company with the normal children' (p. 43). I have already addressed the language of 'challenged children' and 'normal children' above but this statement also declares a commitment to only 'some selected schools', not the whole education system. Literature has shown that policies are not likely to be effective when support is absent in other levels of education,

for e.g. secondary, higher secondary, university and vocational training. The rural schools in this study demonstrate crucial disparities in access and resourcing for children with disability, but the study did not examine whether this was consistent for cohorts of students with other identified needs or requirements. Therefore, the adoption of inclusive education in Bangladesh places higher demands on pedagogical universities/colleges to produce teachers who are able to develop an inclusive curriculum and are prepared to teach an inclusive class.

Slee (2018) makes clear that segregation, the devaluation and non-recognition of those with disabilities expose an unequal social system. On several occasions, Slee (2004, 2013, 2018) argues that inclusive education based on segregated policy statements may hamper the self-worth of those with disabilities and access to mainstream schools. Within Slee's argument, the dignity and worth of a person without any kind of distinction is crucial. Finding practical solutions to problems and identifying exclusionary pressures that restrict the equal participation of all community members are essential to promoting inclusion.

In Section 18 (7), the NEP10 states that 'separate schools will be established according to special needs and given the differential nature of disabilities of the challenged children' (p. 43). The provision of separate educational institutions for 'challenged children' has shown to lead to wider inequalities as these children seem unable to satisfy academic and school performance 'in the hard world of performativity' (Ball, 2003, p.222). In addition, the importance of academic performance in NEP10 (p. 51) reflects policy bureaucrats' focus on segregation towards children with disability as the assumption is they are unable to achieve the desired results. Low expectations in regard to children with disability illustrates how inclusion is constructed within 'the contested nature of disability' and lead to 'processes of othering' (Mik-Meyer, 2016, p. 1356). They are seen as objects of pity and charity (Nachman & Brown, 2019) and to have less potential for academic achievement. These attitudes align with marginalisation and segregation in which children with disabilities are placed in intervention programs. This has major implications for overall educational policy. Such a conceptualisation means that current approaches towards inclusive education may well be getting in the way of improving rights and equal access for children with disability.

The existence of isolating options in NEP10, Sections 21 (4, 5, 6), represents an approach toward exclusion and the non-recognition of capabilities of children with disability because the traditional education system focuses on performance and the achievement of learners. Schuelka (2018) suggests that an increase in the diversity and learning outcomes, along with an increase in the variety of means that a student can achieve these learning outcomes, will facilitate the success of inclusive education (Gilmour, et al., 2019; Nelson, 2014). With regards to inclusive education, the literature found it vital that the education system support the learning and development need of every student (Knight & Crick, 2021) as the recognition of individuals is fast becoming a social and political milieu (Bonomo et al., 2017; Rizvi, 2017; Slee, 2019). An inclusive policy that impacts negatively on the provisions of children with disabilities has significant implications for inclusion, recognition, diversity and acceptance. It will endanger inclusion and will more likely allow schools to provide reasons for refusing to enrol children with disabilities and reinforce exclusion and segregation.

Sen (2005), Slee (2001a) and Spivak (1988) criticise segregation as a key factor that leads to high levels of inequity in society. They consider segregation inherently unequal and discriminatory from the perspective of social justice and human rights. They maintain that segregation allows those in power to maintain and enhance their advantage over the subaltern. In addition, the lack of support services in rural areas, lack of community engagement and insufficient communication efforts strengthens exclusion and allows injustice, unfairness and social exclusion to reign. Inequalities become stronger and more pronounced. The NEP10 contradicts the Government of Bangladesh's commitment to international declarations and the notion of what inclusive education entails. It erases human rights and social justice and places those with disability in a subordinated position.

6.3.2.3 ***Categorisation***

The principles of inclusive education require all schools to facilitate the learning of all children and to seek to respond to diversity. However, the categorisation of children with disability in the NEP10 (p. 43) indicates that disability is understood in terms of deficit or pathology. This approach positions the problems in NEP10 within the child, not the system that has failed to address the child's learning need in schools. Again, reflecting a medical rather than social and human rights model of disability. This perception starkly contradicts the intent of inclusion (Armstrong &Armstrong, 2019; Barton, 1997; Graham

& Slee, 2007; Power et al., 2020). For example: the policy states that, ‘A survey will be conducted to find out the exact number, and type of challenges and to categorize the handicapped population as per the degree of their disabilities’ (Section 18, p. 43). Then NEP10 mentions, ‘The education for the handicapped depends on their types and degrees of challenges. With the adoption of some necessary measures, many of them can be inducted into mainstream education’ (p. 43). This medical model of assessing disability appears throughout the NEP10 document. The social model propounds that disability is exclusively caused by environmental and social factors. The social model illustrates that solutions to exclusion and oppression lie in human rights, equality and justice and the celebration of diversity. The categorisation of people with disabilities has been shown in the literature to be policy bureaucrats ‘spoiled understanding about disabled people where disability is conflated with impairment’ (Slee, 2013, p. 903).

There is a strong emphasis on special education involving children with disability for whom the education system is not effective as the categorisation of disability determines a child’s opportunity for education in either a special school or the general education system:

> Special education will be provided to the acutely handicapped children who cannot fulfil the demands of daily life due to their physical or mental disabilities. These children are incapable of studying in the usual schooling system. Other than special education, they will be brought under an efficient remedial system, special care and nursing. (p. 43)

As the literature indicates (Slee, 2018, 2013), the tendency to categorise children according to their impairment leads to negative assumptions about the capabilities of children with disabilities. In Section 5, the NEP10 states, ‘Special attention will be given to the students with disabilities to ensure their participation in the vocational and technical education’ (p. 17). In line with these statements, the assumption is that the development of skills in trade work is more befitting for children with disability than it is for them to study in regular schools that may equip them for further education and the workplace.

There is an assumption about the career opportunities for students with disability in NEP10. Whereas, a recent study informs, ‘employability is not the main focus in inclusive education; other issues, such as support and making education accessible, take

precedence' (Collins, et al 2018, p. 1485). As Sen (2011) argues, one of the significant problems of policy is the narrow conceptualisation of individuals. Policy bureaucrats' narrow concepts of individuals lead to categorisation which affects equality, equity, rights, recognition, belonging, and contributes to political and individual insecurity. Although policy bureaucrats claim to be inclusive, power imbalance and the hierarchical society within Bangladesh can work to dehumanise individuals and lead to a fragmented society (King, 2016). Sen's (2011) view of categorisation shows that the lack of school participation by children with disability is characterised by discrimination, non-recognition and extreme exclusion. Discrimination against and the non-recognition of children with disability demonstrates social inequality, whereas, a just society acknowledges differences in human identities (Sen, 2011).

The NEP10's focus contradicts one of the major requirements of inclusion, that is, a violation of justice and the right for children with disability to belong, be recognised and be treated equally. In his arguments, Sen (1992, 2011) contends that equality is fundamental to establishing justice; and without impartiality, justice is improbable. Sen's (2011) idea of equal treatment reflects a 'universalist demand' (p. 117) where the concern and interests of every individual receive the same level of recognition and consideration. Sen (2011) maintains that education is marred by classification systems, and that classifying people in a world of profound inequalities will contribute to individual, social, political and economic insecurity and exclusion. Similarly, in arguing for social justice and human rights for education, Slee (2010, p. 172) claims that the conditions and rights of all students should support their learning instead of devaluing and 'othering' them.

The literature suggests that the dilemmas of differences through disability awareness refers to the education, and understanding of disability (Adugna et al., 2020). Inclusion is a modern concept representing a contemporary mixture of the values of rights, equality, recognition, respect and belonging. The dilemmas about disability can be seen to arise from ethical contemplations and practical limitations. The dilemma of difference involves a split between individual thoughts and social reasoning, having to choose from two equally problematic solutions in order to provide equitably for students with disabilities. This mix of values may lead to significant ambiguities in disability awareness and categorisation depending on individual needs. The distinction highlights the difference between inclusion based on social intention and social action (Felder,

2018). Terzi (2010) recognises this tension and informs that to make inclusion meaningful, Sen's (1999) capability approach needs to be considered as it values both individual and external factors. This approach can resolve the dilemma of difference which is labelling the person for their disability, or not providing enabling conditions for their development as (Mutanga, 2018).

Inclusion in Bangladesh is based on old and established values. The dichotomy in the management of ideologies such as individual values, the social system, in addition to the understanding of disability from the perspective of 'a medical model of disability' (Slee, 2013, p. 903) explains the dilemmas in differences, and why children with disability are categorised, marginalised and discriminated against in Bangladeshi society.

6.3.2.4 ***Borrowed Policies***

The NEP10 appears to be based on the assumption that inclusive education can be provided to all children in any school in Bangladesh, with little consideration of the specific context and locations of schools. The literature shows that when policies are borrowed, policy bureaucrats have to confront numerous challenges (Maguire et al., 2015). A borrowed policy for developing countries requires that the whole education system of that country aligns with Western thought and ideologies (Maguire et al., 2015; Rizvi, 2016; Tuia & Iyer, 2015). The view is that the blind borrowing of a policy without any consideration of the local context and culture can lead to policy complications and failures (Steiner-Khamsi, 2014; Tromp & Datzberger, 2019). On the other hand, the adaptation of a borrowed policy to the local context has shown to be more effective because not all contexts are similar (Slee, 2013). This evidence indicates that the adoption of an international policy must follow adaptation, as Western thoughts and ideologies influence a borrowed policy. In the absence of policy bureaucrats' commitment to contextualising policy and the imbalance of power, it could be argued that children with disabilities will continue to be excluded from full participation. For inclusive education to be equitable and advantageous for all, policy goals and objectives need to be compatible with the ideals and values of inclusion (Ainscow, 2020; Graham et al., 2020; Sen, 1999, 2002; Slee, 2011, 2018). Otherwise, inclusion will remain fragmented (Sen, cited in King, 2016).

Taking Sen's (1999, 2000) perspective, children with disability in Bangladesh are marginalised in terms of educational access as the policy assumes that inclusion is about providing measures. For example, the NEP10 advocates for remedial measures to be implemented for special children, such as provisions for the Braille system for blind students (p. 7). With this understanding of inclusive education, NEP10 caters to the needs of specific groups of children. There is no evidence of developing caring relationships with students who seemingly have 'no place in the hard world of performativity' (Ball, 2003, p. 222). The policy is geared toward selecting individuals (NEP10, p. 7, 8) demonstrating policy bureaucrats' conceptualisation of inclusive education remains the same within a culture that focuses on segregation.

Although NEP10 seeks to promote inclusion, except for teachers from ethnic minorities, there is no mention of the recruitment of teachers with disability: 'Measures will be taken to ensure the availability of teachers from ethnic groups' (NEP10, p. 8). This interpretation of inclusion does not promote equality and equity (Armstrong, 2005) and has resulted in the reproduction of wider inequalities. The assumption about people with disability in Bangladesh is, people without good physical condition, i.e with a disability, are unable to contribute to the society (Beutel et al., 2019; Chandan, 2020). Inclusive education system is considered as a pillar for the full participation of persons with disabilities in society. Yet, the exclusion of teachers with disabilities from the education system in Bangladesh can be viewed as a consequence of the social and cultural beliefs, ignorance of the people and myths that exist in Bangladeshi society (Olk, 2019, Rahaman, 2017; Thompson, 2020), and importantly, the lack of awareness about disability (Zuurmond, et al., 2015).

Slee's inclusion/exclusion theory emphasises the rights and recognition of those with disability and equal treatment of everyone in the education sector. However, children with disability are, in practice, not enjoying what is promised in the Constitution and provided in the NEP10.

6.3.3 Policy Silences

Policy silence, as Des Freedman (2010) sees it, refers to 'the options that are *not* considered, to the questions that are kept *off* the policy agenda, to the players who are *not* invited to the policy table, and to the values and interests that are seen as

unrealistic or undesirable by those best able to mobilize their policy-making power' (p. 355). Silence, as such, includes the circumstances in which certain policy issues, when they do appear on the agenda, are framed to the exclusion of others. It can be tied in with the official power policy bureaucrats have and the ideologies that influence their intent. The absence and underrepresentation of certain groups in policy, therefore, becomes a problem. According to Li (2021), policy silences are built into the political system of a country that omits recognition and participation. It is policy bureaucrats' 'conscious prioritizing' of one over another that perpetuates exclusion (Parthasharati, 2018, p. 147).

As a signatory to several international declarations, the Government of Bangladesh is committed to achieving inclusive education, yet a noteworthy absence is an intent in policy to prioritise children with disability and special needs in regular schools. The NEP10 takes a non-inclusive approach: the term 'inclusive education' does not appear in the document. One of the policy silences is reflected in the omission of this term. The NEP10 mentions 'inclusion' only four times to describe the 'inclusion of respective Indigenous communities' (p. 8), 'inclusion of MPO[22] for the teachers'(p. 18), 'inclusion of the concept of "climate change"' (p. 19), and 'inclusion of compulsory subjects' (p. 37). These different constructions of inclusion do not diverge from the philosophical and practical underpinnings of inclusive education. They do not even engage with the concepts for all students. Section 18 of the NEP10 is dedicated to special education but applies the term 'integration' instead of inclusion: 'An integrated education program at the primary level will be started at the district and *upazila*[23] levels for the blind, deaf and dumb and mentally and physically handicapped children' (p. 43). This points to policy silences and omissions by failing to address the ideals of inclusion. The policy falls short in making the concept of social inclusion explicit. It is only by addressing these major problems that inclusion can be advanced.

Further, the meaning of education for children with disability is compromised with policy appearing to be silent about the curriculum for children with disabilities in the following statement: 'uniform curricula and syllabus will be followed in some specific subjects at

[22] The Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE), pays salary to all non-government registered school teachers through the Monthly Pay Order system.

[23] The *upazilas* are the second lowest tier of regional administration in Bangladesh. The administrative structure consists of 8 divisions, 64 districts, 495 *upazilas* and Union Parishads (Rural council, which is the smallest administrative and local government unit).

the primary level in all schools across the country' (NEP10, p. 6). Having a uniform curriculum and syllabus itself continues little to support the diverse needs of students and their development through inclusive school practices. The emphasis is placed more to cater to the needs of children without disability than on children with disability. The curriculum excludes, as the values it depicts suggest. The conceptualisation of policy that is in opposition to diversity strengthens exclusion and can have a negative effect on the school enrolment of children with disabilities (Ainscow & Ainscow, 2010; Ainscow, et al, 2019). Their study demonstrates that policy bureaucrats shape the way educators engage with the participation of children with disabilities. NEP10, for example, reads, 'Stimulate the intellectual and practical qualities of the learners so that moral, human, cultural, scientific and social values are established' (p. 1). Further:

> In Classes I & II, there will be continuous assessments, while from Class III onwards, quarterly, half-yearly & yearly examination systems will be in place. On the completion of Class V, a terminal examination with an identical set of questions will take place at Upazila/Pourashava/Thana levels (of big cities) (p. 9).

Corbett (2001, p. 1) emphasises a, 'connective pedagogy' in which learning is differentiated to the individual needs of every learner and their learning style is connected to the curriculum (p.1). According to Corbett, differentiation is about valuing individuals. Corbett recognises individual capability rather than for every child to achieve the same level of competence. Another recent study (Ankam, et al., 2019) suggests an integrated disability curriculum that includes active classroom learning, clinical and research activities to ascertain the learning development of children with disability. It is therefore important that inclusive policy is conceptualised in terms of curriculum, assessment, pedagogy and diversity. However, the Bangladeshi education policy does not appear to recognise diversity in regular classrooms. Therefore, there is a risk that that regular schools will continue to discriminate and exclude children with disabilities, and society marginalise them if policy silences remain unquestioned. This is another police silence in NEP10.

Sen emphasises the transformative powers of policy for society and individual wellbeing (King, 2016). Sen (2011) and Slee (2014, 2018) point out that failure to fully acknowledge the rights and diverse needs of marginalised communities—as well as the expectations of education stakeholders as far as educational access and capability are concerned—will

hamper the educational inclusion and individual and social development that are crucial for promoting inclusive education.

Another issue identified by my analysis is that under the subheading 'Street children and other ultra-deprived children' (NEP10, p. 8), NEP10 is concerned with offering free, compulsory and equitable access to education by offering free admission, learning materials and lunch wherein some groups of children are acknowledged and their needs explicitly addressed but not children with disability.

Also, facility improvement is targeted 'to fulfill the special needs of the physically challenged learners.' In view of these statements, policy silences can be linked to what policy does not say. By identifying one group of disadvantaged Bangladeshi children, this policy appears to value that group as more worthy of education than another, or they are actually the most needy as they have no families to support or advocate for them. Another implication here is that the NEP10 puts more weight on facility improvement, resource allocation, integrated education and separate schools than on improving the protocols and practices of schooling that seems to have cultural formations and social structures:

> 'Special provisions like free admission, free education materials, free lunch at schools and stipends will be arranged to attract and retain these children in the schools. Effective measures will be taken for their safe protection within the schools' (p. 8).

The NEP10 policy makes specific mention of specific groups of severely disadvantaged Bangladeshi children including challenged children, street children and ultra-deprived children. Mentioning these groups specifies their inclusion in education. However, children from other groups are not identified which is ultimately problematic, but not the fault of those children who fit within these categories. When policy is silent in this way doubt and questions are raised about many issues. Children of all backgrounds and with and without disability should feel recognised and included (Slee, 2018). They should have access to education that is inclusive and capability oriented. Claiming to offer inclusive education when the policy focus is on including only certain groups will likely continue to produce exclusion.

The NEP10 does not directly use disability phrases such as, 'the inclusion of children with disability' or 'inclusive education' or state the intent of inclusion. The NEP10 mentions providing access to education to all children regardless of their gender, social

status, class, mental challenges, physical challenges and ethnic backgrounds but no specific provision is made to meet their needs. It states to guarantee education for children who speak languages other than Bangla. In addition, the policy mentions catering to special education as well as mainstream education, yet it is unclear as to what adjustments are to be made and how. Along with government initiatives and intervention programs for reducing dropouts and enrolling children with disability for delivering inclusive education, policy consideration that involves accountability, are more likely to promote inclusion (United Nations, 2019). Accountability systems which are highlighted as a disability inclusion policy focus by the United Nations (United Nations, 2019) are important points for educators to consider when they interact with parents having children with disability and decide on whom to exclude (Hulvershorn & Mulholland, 2018).

Within the NEP10 policy framework, the aims and objectives of inclusive education offer hope of reducing school dropouts through free education, free books and free lunch. Although these initiatives will lead to an increase in school enrolment, these incentives can fail to attract children with disability. There is no indication that schools adjust to learners' individual needs to motivate children with disability and drive up inclusive education. Specifically, policy silence for children with disability and special needs appears to be characterised, as Parthasharati (2018) reminds us, is the conscious prioritisation of what matters more to policy bureaucrats. Policy silences and omissions that continue to single out children with disabilities instead of promoting equal rights, recognition, belonging and equity (Armstrong, 2005; Armstrong & Armstrong, 2019, Sen, 2011, Spivak, 1988). Within NEP10 there is no recognition that children with disability are individuals with different capabilities. Policy silence on this issue not only makes inclusive education difficult but the focus is shifted toward charity from social inclusion and human rights perspective.

As Slee (2011, p. 164) puts it, 'Reforming education is a manifold and complex task'. He reminds us that major considerations are needed to achieve a fully inclusive approach. In NEP10, there is no mention of Individualised Education Plans, which have been shown to provide examples of good practice in supporting students with disability in developing countries (Agran et al, 2020; Elder et al., 2018). This is an area that is inconsistent in the policy document, suggesting that not all students can access the same level of learning support. With a view to promoting inclusion, the role of policy bureaucrats to ensure equal educational access, participation and outcomes for all students is critical in policy

conceptualisation. A lack of attention in the policy to a flexible curriculum and assessment processes that address diversity, inclusive education will not be successful. Inclusive education in Bangladesh does not appear to be concerned with diversity, whether rising from disability, gender, poverty, culture, social standing or any other flexible structures and practices to accommodate all students are absent to expand educators' thinking absent. My analysis shows that if the Bangladeshi government is to develop an inclusive education structure, policy conceptualisation in responding to the needs of diverse students, the context, as well as capabilities is crucial. Without recognition, enabling resources and consideration of individual capability, the aims and objectives of the policy will be difficult to meet. NEP10 demonstrates silence in the omissions of many considerations for inclusive education. This is a significant deficiency in a policy that purports to focus on providing education for all.

This study has identified three key consequences of these silences that I now address.

6.3.4 The Consequences of Policy Silences

The consequences of policy omissions are:

1. The Government is Seen to Satisfy International Obligations.
2. Children with Disability are Even More Excluded.

6.3.4.1 The Government is Seen to Satisfy International Obligations

Significant reforms in the education system were undertaken by the Government of Bangladesh after the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) was signed to support inclusive education and the rights of people with disability. The NEP10 does not sufficiently address the need for schools to educate children with disability and their access rights and appears to have prioritised its obligation to international conventions.

The conceptualisation of NEP10 raises several concerns. While the policy aims to create an inclusive education system, the term inclusion is not defined in the policy. Obviously, this leaves the meaning up for interpretation and perhaps misappropriation. Importantly, the NEP10 does not mention the protection of children with disability from harm, although the welfare of ‘street children and other ultra-deprived children’ (p. 8) is stated. These absences in the policy demonstrate the Government of Bangladesh’s intention does

not articulate a clear vision and a commitment toward the achievement of its goals. A lack of attention to issues of inclusion and inclusive education as argued by Li (2021) suggests that the NEP10 is more occupied with political and obligatory level factors than it is with the content and quality of services for children with disability.

Slee (2018, 2019) argues that a policy driven by political motivation will continue to pathologise, consider and treat children with disability as different, even if categories are not explicitly applied. They will continue to be discriminated against and segregated, and exclusionary practices at schools will continue to prevail. In short, the policy will fail them.

6.3.4.2 *Children with Disability in Rural Bangladesh are Even More Excluded*

The consequence of policy silence for people in rural areas is that nothing will change, nothing will improve and they will be no more informed about their rights. There is no incentive for the government to make changes other than those that meet international obligations because it is necessary to break down socio-cultural and hierarchical barriers that operate in Bangladeshi society to support educational reform towards inclusion. Children with disability suffer more and are even more excluded than are other community members, as they are excluded from their rights. Further, support services are not recognised as a social investment, but as a charity (Thompson, 2020). In this context, individual, social and economic development is hindered.

When considering exclusion for development, Sen (1999) emphasises that we should strive to 'lead the kind of lives we have reason to value', rather than the usual focus on rising GDP, technical progress or industrialisation (p. 285). Socio-cultural issues are vital for Sen (1999), Slee (2011, 2018, 2019) and Spivak (1988) because they affect human capability and exclude the subaltern from their rights to know and participate. From this perspective, education is crucial beyond its role in production. It increases human capability and therefore choice. When policy in regard to reducing socio-cultural and hierarchical barriers does not adequately meet the needs of children with disabilities, schooling will continue to produce exclusion, and inclusion will remain a policy rhetoric (Slee, 2001d). Fundamental to rights and social justice is the freedom of people to lead the lives they have reason to value and to improve the choices they have.

Investigating the practical implementation of the NEP10 was a key aspect of this research to gain some insight into rural communities' understandings and the implementation of education for children with disability. The next section analyses interviews collected from participants in this study to supplement policy analysis in addressing the research question.

6.4 Interviews

A small-scale interview was conducted with 12 participants. Interviews enabled me to gain additional knowledge and add to the findings of NEP10 about the conceptualisation of inclusive education. These were introduced in Chapter 5. Four themes emerged from the interviews. The themes are reported in detail in this chapter, as follows:

> Theme 1: The understanding of inclusive education and disability is tied with education stakeholders' personal experiences
>
> Theme 2: Inclusive education in Bangladesh does not appear to be conceptualised for all Bangladeshi children.
>
> Theme 3: Bangladeshi inclusive education policy is symbolic.
>
> Theme 4: Bangladesh's policy exclude stakeholder perspectives

In Chapter 5, I outlined the roles of participants in this study. To maintain their confidentiality, I allocated an abbreviation that indicated the participants' role. I reproduce these in Table 6.2 as a reminder of the rural Bangladeshi participants interviewed for this research and their roles.

Table 6.2: Abbreviation of Roles for the Interviewees

Abbreviation	Informant Source
RPCD	Rural parent, children with disability
RPCWD	Rural parent, children without disabilities
CSM/CSF	College student male/college student female
RTM/RTF	Retired teacher male/retired teacher female
MCM	Managing committee member

6.4.1 Theme 1: The understanding of inclusive education and disability is tied with education stakeholders' personal experiences

From the interviews in this study, four codes relating to the definition and understanding of inclusive education were identified. These codes fall into two categories. The first are factors related to infirmity, the perceived cause of exclusion from education. The other definitions presented are based on the individual mindsets.

When asked to define disability, most of the interviewees viewed it as infirmity, thus categorising those individuals, for example:

> children who lay in bed all day and are unable to read or write, move, speak, hear. (RPCWD)

> people who do not have the ability to behave like ordinary people and have trouble studying … The word might refer to someone who is not that intelligent, blind or someone who is missing a limb. That is what I understand by the word. (RT)

> Disability means someone who is physically damaged. It can refer to someone who cannot hear properly or cannot see properly or even someone who is one-legged. (RPWCD2)

> Disability can come in different forms. We can refer to someone who does not have a limb as disabled. Even people who wear glasses also fall under that category. But in villages, disabilities usually refer to when someone is missing a limb or a finger or someone who cannot physically move alone. (MCM)

To rural Bangladeshis, including the teachers and the school management committee member interviewed for this study, the term *ekibhuto shikkha* (inclusive education) appeared ambiguous. Participants demonstrated little understanding of the concept of inclusive education from a policy perspective. Their understanding of inclusive education mostly implied 'coeducation'. Inclusive education was interpreted by the participants as a learner's ability to perform, or capability to achieve. Most participants viewed inclusive education as an educational environment in which students with mild and moderate disability can study with others. Students identified as having mild disability included those who were, 'intelligent disabled children, 'cannot talk,', 'cannot hear properly' and 'cannot see properly'. However, for the most part, the participants response to

understanding of inclusive education and disability arose from personal experiences, as can be seen from their comments:

> I do not have much idea, but I understand a bit about it now after reading the Information to Participants provided to me by you. (CSF)

> There are no disabled children in our schools and therefore, I do not have any idea. (RTM)

> I do not have a clear idea, but I can tell you a bit about it. The way the current government has expanded education policy into villages by including women and character development in the education might fall under the inclusive education policy. (RTF)

Other participants, particularly rural parents with or without children with disability suggested that inclusive education meant:

> Every Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Buddhist, disabled and healthy people should get the same education. (RPWCD2)

> Disabled children will study together with the ordinary children and play together. They will spend their time in the same environment, at school and live together. (RPCD)

> Boys and girls studying together. (RPCWD1)

> Everyone studying together. (RPCWD3)

Interviews indicated a consistent understanding of education as a human right and the need for all students to be treated equally. In their responses, participants emphasised equal rights for children with disability to access and receive an education. Their perspectives of inclusive education as a human right underpin the notion of rights, equality, equity and recognition in promoting equal access in society:

> They are also human beings. They also want to socialise with others, learn new things and be part of the society. Disabled kids should also have the same rights as everyone else. (RTM)

> They are cared for and taught in schools in the same way as other children. (CSM)

> They have equal rights in the society in which they were born. (RTM)

A consistent message from participants was their desire for children with disability to be treated equally and have the same opportunities as everyone else to support them to achieve a productive life. For these participants, equal rights for all included every child in society. They believed that all children, including those with disability, were citizens of Bangladesh and must have the same rights as other citizens:

> In my opinion, everyone has the same right. There is no difference between anyone when it comes to education. (RPCWD2)

The complexity of the lives of children with disability and their parents was evident as participants shared their perspectives. Many said those with disability in rural communities faced a constant struggle to access schools, healthcare services and social events. Interviews demonstrated the social, cultural and political realms that those with disability were unable to negotiate as they faced systemic barriers, a lack of knowledge and little guidance.

Interviews showed that the inclusion of children with disability had benefits for all children in the classroom. However, their perspectives depended on the type of disability and the willingness of the school principal, teachers and parents of children without disability to accept them in classrooms. They were uncertain about the inclusion of children with limited mobility and communication problems and reported:

> Disabled kids who cannot talk or move properly might find it difficult to attend mainstream schools. (RTM)

It appeared from the interviews that equitable access to education for children with a disability could occur if positive attitude of all education stakeholders existed in Bangladeshi society. Further, inclusive education was possible if teachers and students without disability empathised with children with disability instead of ridiculing them:

> They are neglected by everyone in the schools and also laughed at. The teachers also have a hard time explaining things to them. (CSF)

Based on the participants' responses, it can be assumed that empathy, recognition, inclusive values and the acceptance of differences are crucial to establish rights, social justice and promote inclusive education.

> There are people who do not accept disabled children as being equal members of our society. If they change that opinion and start treating disabled children as normal human beings, then they might be able to participate. (RPCWD4)

The absence of *shomaan odheekaar* (equal rights) for children with disability and rural people resonated throughout the interviews with the participants:

> '*Oder shomaan odhikaar aache, kintu pai na*' (They have equal rights but do not get them) (RTM/RPCD/RPCWD1/RPCWD2/RPCWD3/RPWCD5/CSF).

Another participant identified access in terms of equal rights and equity, asserting that,

> '*Gramei ebong shohor-e protibondhi der shomaan odheekaar pawo ucheet*' or 'children with disability living in rural and urban areas should have equal rights' (RPCWD).

The rights of children with disability and the choice available to their parents is compromised when parents believe there is no point in attending school meetings, with one such parent declaring that she was unsure:

> Who will listen to us? (RPCWD1)

Participants also wanted to assert their right to make decisions about their communities and participate in discussions:

> It is important that we also hear what they are discussing so that we can also ask questions about the policy if necessary. (RPCWD3).

> Villagers can let the government know how to encourage and help children with disability attend school rather than staying home. (RTF)

From the perspective of Sen (2000) regarding human rights, removing physical and social barriers and bringing about attitudinal change is necessary to ensure fairness in participation. Fairness is viewed by Sen as the major determinant of acceptability. His concept of fairness focusses directly on the consideration of an individual's ability to convert available resources and address deprivations that stem from local and country contexts. One participant said that they did not want special treatment, they just wanted their rights to be recognised so that their children could live in society with others, not in

isolation. To this participant fairness was the most important determinant of acceptability, access, recognition and equality:

> I want my child to have the benefits like others. I want him to study with other children and have equal rights to education. (RPCD)

The analysis of the interviews found that the lack of recognition and not acknowledging the rights of rural people seems to constitute a political, cultural and social bias. The absence of subaltern rights demonstrates that inclusion remains an ideal for parents with children with disability and it is necessary to examine inclusion policy on closing the gaps between children, their rights to education and justice.

Slee (2011) argues that policy needs to be developed 'with a clear understanding of exclusion across the different sectors of the government' (p. 171). A commitment to adapting, adopting and aligning policy with the aims, objectives and ideals of inclusion to encourage organisations to be innovative and develop effective programs is important. In this way, an inclusive policy will align with the theories of inclusion and help achieve positive educational outcomes for all children

6.4.2 Theme 2: Inclusive Education in Bangladesh does not appear to be conceptualised for all Bangladeshi children.

The concepts of inclusion implies that all children should have access, can participate and be supported to succeed within regular school settings. The aspiration of the Bangladeshi government to promote inclusive education and develop a more inclusive system and practices is evident, for example in the projects promoted by the Ministry of Education (ROSC I and II, and PEDP I, II, III and IV). These projects encourage schools to work collaboratively, rethinking practices and school autonomy to respond to all students.

Participants demonstrated that positive attitude of all education stakeholders is very important to support the inclusion of children with disability in mainstream schools and in society. Negative behaviour such as bullying and teasing by children and neglect by school principals and teachers discourage children with disability from coming to school. A participant mentioned:

> They are bullied by other children due to which they distance themselves further from society. As such, the opportunity to grow is ruined by the decisions they make. (RTM)

The profound effect of negative attitudes on families with children with disability was also evident from other interview comments. Another interviewee reported experiencing exclusion and being the subject of stigma, fear, ignorance and prejudice:

> There are a lot of barriers. Some people do not accept children with disability as equal members of society. Families are scared about what other people in the society will think about their children having a disability. (RPCWD4)

Another comment revealed that negative attitudes create psychological pressure for children with disability as they are stereotyped and treated differently:

> They feel ashamed because they see themselves as completely different people. (RTF)

The prevalence of negative attitudes and misconceptions about disability restricted a child's development and sense of belonging. Parents with children with disability stressed the importance of the government's role to create equal opportunities to enable children with disability to access education:

> If the government thinks children with disability should get equal opportunities to receive education, then parents with children with disability will find the courage to send their children to school. (RPCD)

The development of a community's positive attitude towards children with disability was a common issue raised in regard to reducing social barriers and helping promote inclusive education. Further, school administrators and teachers made claims that children with disability have equal rights to education, however, their responses also revealed an attitude that reflects segregated education. One such comment was:

> Actually, disabled children need different types of education and activities. (MCM)

Similar negative attitudes were also discernible from other participant comments:

> The school principal told us to enrol our child in a special school. (RPCD)

Based on the participants' comments, the educational rights of children with disability appear to be hindered by a social system that tends to exclude them. Negative attitudes, unequal treatment, institutionalised discrimination, domination by the powerful and undemocratic practices were evident. Little variation in the inclusion of children with disability in rural schools was detected, although the education minister emphasises in

the Foreword to the NEP10 (p. vii) that, 'Basic changes need to be implemented in the examination methods or evaluation of the standard of learning'.

A lack of resources was found to hinder inclusive education in the villages of Sonali and Rupali[24]. Other reasons included limited teaching resources, and importantly, an education system that did not address the diverse needs of every student in classrooms. Referring to the availability of resources, one participant commented:

> Education facilities and resources provided in village schools are not on par with schools in the cities. (CSM)

The unavailability of resources and trained teachers in special education needs also characterised how children with disability were treated and rejected from schools:

> They require more specialised education compared to ordinary children. Even if they are taught in the same school, every disabled child needs to be taught separately because they learn by using different techniques. For example, blind children and intelligent, disabled children study in completely different ways. However, it is not possible to implement different teaching strategies in our schools due to the lack of resources and special needs teachers. (RTM)

Here, the government has failed to not only ensure resources and funds are available for rural schools, but key ways to address inclusion, marginalisation and exclusion have been ignored. Further, drawing on their personal experiences, participants reported a lack of medical and social services and facilities in schools for children with disability:

> I have to go to Dhaka quite often for my child's treatment. So, I had to withdraw my child because the school principal said if my child does not attend school regularly, he cannot participate in exams and will fail. (RPCD)

This comment showed that resources were not the only major barrier for children with disability to access local government schools. Several other factors were inadequate such as medical support services, a lack of empathy and consideration, an inflexible curriculum and a rigid assessment system. This focus on the rural Bangladeshi context has revealed

[24] Pseudonyms for villages

a need for NEP10 to consider autonomy and equality and equity in the provision of support to reduce the widening gap between all children.

The NEP10 states that children with disability and special needs 'will be allowed to follow a flexible curriculum' (NEP10, p. 43). Despite this clear policy statement, the parent comment above reveals an inflexible rigidity in the education system and a non-inclusive approach. This policy leads to a form of teaching-learning process and accessibility consideration which focuses on school subjects and learner achievement, thereby overlooking and thus excluding those children who cannot and do not achieve what is expected regarding their school performance. The managing committee member implied that little attention was given to support the learning and services for children with disability. His comment reinforces the non-inclusive aspect of NEP10 and points to the significant finding that facilities, opportunities and funding affected the rate of school dropout:

> Since the government is unable to do anything for these children, the families of children with disability usually move to the cities in search of better facilities and opportunities. They do not want to stay in the villages anymore as no proper arrangements have been made for them. (MCM)

Furthermore, these findings strongly imply immense disparity between rural and urban schools. They demonstrate the government's lack of proactive response to minimise the inequity gap so that children with disability in rural areas can participate in learning and develop their capabilities.

6.4.3 Theme 3: Bangladeshi inclusive education policy is symbolic

Participants' views of children with disability who could not and did not attend local government schools, pointed to social, cultural, organisational and policy barriers. For instance, one participant cited:

> Children who can move around face no obstacles. Those who are not able to move on their own are completely out of the question. (RPCD)

This comment illustrates that access for children without mobility to local government schools was not only challenging, but impossible. Their opportunity to learn with others

was compromised because schools were inaccessible and the policy had little capacity to meet their needs. This identifies a policy that is symbolic. A lack of shared inclusive education philosophy, effective strategies to address the needs of the learner cohort and decision-making processes shared between the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education and Ministry of Social Welfare also emerged. When a teacher was asked to share their personal views about inclusive education policy, their response showed an education system that was segregated by student abilities:

> I did not have any disabled children during my 30 years of teaching. (RTM)

This comment, in particular, along with other participant responses, attested to long-standing and widespread evidence of education exclusion. This raises questions about bureaucratic and political mechanisms at play in the Bangladeshi administrative.

A significant indicator from the participant accounts was an outdated and irrelevant education program that has accentuated the complexities of inclusion and poorly enacted policy. When participants were asked about the success of women's education in Bangladesh, their observations affirmed that the enhancement of women's education was the result of effective strategies adopted by the government. Participants highlighted the view that inclusive education policy and its implementation strategies were prepared without adequate consideration given to the causes of failure of previous policies and plans, and learning from successes. Their perspectives provide clear evidence of established exclusionary practices in the education sector in rural Bangladesh. This attests to the findings that inclusive education appears only in official policy scripts. This policy is symbolic as it continues to exclude children with disability.

> ..since not many programs happen in my village. (CS)

> I have seen some in towns but did not see any shows like that in my area. I did not see any interest in disabled kids either in my area. (RPCWD5)

Sen (2000) and Slee (2004, 2011) point out that human diversity and the differences between rural and urban areas create pitfalls for policies. Careful planning is critical to avoid conflict with the ideals of inclusive practices and issues of justice and rights. This involves the development of context-specific policy and practical solutions to problems for all children with disability living in rural areas in accessing regular schools. For

example, solutions to problems that work in urban areas may not work in all rural areas. Because of the wide differences between rural and urban conditions and between each rural area, numerous policies and measures need to be considered for inclusive education to succeed and be sustainable (Ainscow, 2005; Albright, 2018; Bonomo et al., 2017).

6.4.4 Theme 4: Bangladesh's policy exclude stakeholder perspectives

The interviews showed that the participating rural Bangladeshis were eager to assist policy bureaucrats to align policy intentions with local needs. Participants repeatedly emphasised the importance of communication to achieve effective policy outcomes. Multiple methods of communication were identified: formal meetings with parents, informal meetings on *haat* days (an open-air market that occurs on weekends or on holidays), *jatra*[25] (popular folk theatre that occurs on weekends, festivals and holidays) and posters. These communication methods mainly focussed on conversations and visual representations:

> I think villagers should participate in policy planning because every village is different. For example, one village may have more people than the other. If everyone collaborates, they'll know what will work better for each village. (RPWCD)

> We can help determine the strategies required for our schools and colleges if there are any proposals from the MoE. But the government needs to guide us first. (MCM)

An implicit assumption derived from participants was that communication with all education stakeholders was crucial for inclusion. Effective communication not only recognises acceptance and participation but also privileges excluded communities (Slee, 2011). Further, marginalised people or their representatives can resolve arguments, collaborate and discuss feedback with others. Negotiating was identified by participants as a vital strategy for the success of inclusive education. In addition, learning from those

[25] *Jatra* is a popular open-air folk-theatre. It is spread throughout most of Bengali speaking areas of the Indian subcontinent, including Bangladesh and Indian states of West Bengal, Bihar, Assam, Orissa and Tripura. *Jatra* performances include plays, music and dance.
https://www.britannica.com/topic/yakshagana

with practical experience and to connect with various people with different personalities were the dominant point of views raised.

A level of unhappiness was discerned during the interviews regarding how those from rural areas were treated. Such as, not being visible, and being regarded as passive participants by the government. The response from RPCWD6, '*Aamra ki korte paree*?' (What can we do?), when asked whether villagers should participate in policy discussions with the government demonstrated defeat for not being recognised.

In describing the challenges of communication, interviews highlighted practices of exclusion by those in power, in particular, the political culture and hierarchal social structure prevented consultation with rural education stakeholders and their right to participate in dialogues. A lack of communication brings forth a social system that operates on hierarchies of class (Spivak, 1988).

Sen (1999), Slee (2011, 2018, 2019) and Spivak (1988) warn against the dangers of exclusion and a class-based social system that can generate despair and have a demoralising effect on individuals' dignity, capability, development and identity. Interviews showed that communication with rural education stakeholders and policy bureaucrats did not occur and had never ensued. Being deprived of the opportunity to communicate, rural education stakeholders are unable to express any concerns or opinions directly and thus remain deprived of agency. This practice reinforces the message of bureaucratic power in Bangladeshi society, which shows that partnership between the government and all education stakeholders is absent. The exclusion of local education stakeholders contributes significantly to discrimination, non-recognition and marginalisation by those in power. Marginalised people perceive themselves to be considered unworthy. The lack of social inclusion and the non-inclusive attitudes mean that excluding the perspectives of local education stakeholders is culturally sanctioned.

Given that valuing subaltern perspectives is crucial, ignoring or denying active participation will lock out further learning and individual development. Denial indicates the absence of democratic practices. Such actions are discriminatory and unjust, and can 'strangle' inclusive education by privileging the powerful over marginalised communities (Slee, 2008, p. 109). Conversely, developing social connections and sharing understanding is vital to produce a sense of belonging and, as recommended by

Slee (2019), ‘to dismantle the forces that exclude’ (p. 909). Further, shared knowledge can lead to individual development. The knowledge gained can influence sustainable policy outcomes (Slee, 2019).

Interviews show that social exclusion is entrenched in the everyday practices of the government, community and individuals. To include marginalised communities, social choice ‘requires public discussion and a democratic understanding and acceptance’ (Sen, 1999, pp. 78–79). This signals an inclusive shift towards collaboration, participation, engagement and the development of relationships with all education stakeholders. The evidence more widely shows that networking and continuous engagement with all education stakeholders is vital to address recognition, acceptance and belonging.

The need for networking and collaboration indicates a focus on social inclusion strategy that cannot be resolved simply by a policy focussed on resource distribution, funding allocations and infrastructure development. Connection, collaboration and cooperation are required to challenge beliefs and practices in societies and the values that members of every community possess. Engaging with education stakeholders can also be a powerful means of widening opportunities for all children and allowing schools to respond more effectively to the needs of children with disability. However, Sen (1999, 2000, 2002) and Spivak (1988, 1990, 2015) caution that social inclusion requires systemic changes and transformation in how society operates to make everyone feel included.

Findings from interviews informed that ineffective communication obstructed the development of inclusive cultures. Conversely, providing opportunities to communicate, being part of decision making and giving opinions can broaden the understanding of inclusion. Importantly, marginalised people can play an effective role in shaping policies (Yanow, 2017). In *The Irregular School*, Slee (2011) argues that exclusion is nurtured and sustained through collective indifference. For inclusion to be successful, dialogues with different stakeholders is vital as policy that considers stakeholder knowledge can support sustainable local change and overcome the visible inequity that exists between rural and urban people.

6.5 Summary

This chapter has outlined how the policy and interviews were analysed. The interview was small with only twelve participants, but the insights supplemented the findings of the policy. The perspectives/theories of Sen, Slee and Spivak demonstrate that while the policy of inclusive education in rural Bangladesh is trailing behind urban areas, solutions are possible. This is discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 7: Discussion

7.1 Introduction

This study aimed to investigate how inclusive education is conceptualised in Bangladesh. The research was undertaken in three parts: in the first instance, a rigorous investigation of international literature was undertaken, followed by an analysis of education policy in Bangladesh. These desktop investigations of Bangladeshi education policy were supplemented with a small-scale interviews undertaken with 12 participants to examine inclusive education in rural areas. This chapter draws together the findings from each part to address the overarching research question:

How is inclusive education conceptualised in Bangladesh?

It is vital in developing countries for inclusive education 'to reaffirm inclusion as a rights issue' and for social justice to prevail (Sen, 2000, 2005; Slee, 2011, p. 14, 2014; Spivak, 1988). Underpinning this research are Carol Bachhi's WPR approach to policy analysis, Sen's theory of social justice, development and capability, Slee on inclusive education, and Spivak's subaltern theory. Bacchi's approach and the three theories offer a unique perspective about inclusion in Bangladesh and reveal that the conceptualisation of inclusive education does not truly incorporate justice, rights, recognition and belonging. These theories have enabled this research to examine inclusive education from a human rights and social justice perspective and to view policy as an issue not solely about students with disability. Sen, Slee and Spivak's perspectives were valuable to help understand the policy of inclusion in education in a developing country. It helped to understand inclusive education from marginalised stakeholder perspectives, identify policy conceptualisation for rural areas, and how rural communities are recognised. The theories enabled the research to look into values and practices that perpetuate marginalisation and exclusion, either directly or indirectly.

The findings from this study demonstrate that the key factors influencing the conceptualisation of inclusive education in Bangladeshi educational policy align with the medical model of disability and sharply contrast with the ideals of inclusion. The strategic objectives to provide equal access to education to all children is apparent in the policy. However, the understanding of the principles of inclusive education has not necessarily

translated into a more empathetic understanding of disability or the accommodating the diverse learning needs of learners in mainstream classrooms leading to a policy that is symbolic. This has a negative effect on school principals' attitudes toward accepting children with disability having diverse needs in schools. Interviews indicate the significant deviation of education stakeholders' understanding of inclusive education from what the policy precepts of the model of inclusion is based on, which is the medical model of disability. The policy does not incorporate the social model and the human rights model that Lawson and Beckett (2021) has highlighted as important with the current emphasise on human rights. In the conceptualisation of policy, they argue to approach the problem of disability by complementing the social model with the human rights model of disability. Drawing upon Foucault's technologies of power, they point out that 'the human right model is a model of disability policy, whereas the social model is a model of disability' (Lawson & Beckett, 2021, p. 364). In policy conceptualisation, the models need to be working together as the subject-matter and focus of each is distinct and as each model operates differently. Seven key points were identified through this research on how inclusive education is conceptualised by rural Bangladeshis. These are:

1. Policy Without Rights and Justice
2. Education Policy: Political Not Practical
3. Policy is Symbolic
4. Conceptual Understanding of Inclusive Education and Inclusion
5. Curriculum and Assessment
6. Social Exclusion
7. *Shomaan Odheekaar* (Equal rights)

7.2 Policy Without Rights and Justice

Human rights and social justice aim to eliminate discrimination, marginalisation and exclusionary practices. A critical analysis of the NEP10 reveals a policy that addresses the legal obligation of educational opportunities for children with disability in regular schools. Human rights implications of not addressing the specific needs of all children is absent and cannot ensure that every child has the freedom to access and study in regular schools with resources that cater to their abilities. The analysis echoes national and international research that shows gaps in human rights and social justice for all children. This is particularly evident for children with disability in rural Bangladesh.

As identified in the international literature, a democratic theory of inclusive education must ensure freedom to choose, equality, equity, acceptance, recognition and non-discrimination (Ainscow, 2005, 2020; Armstrong & Armstrong, 2019; Vargas, 2017). The NEP10 does not truly support the notion of democratic learning, the philosophy of inclusion or international policy statements about inclusive education. The assumption that the policy framework supports inclusive education and is appropriate for all children continues to dominate NEP10, whereas the policy has shown to omit, segregate, pathologise and marginalise children with different kinds of disability (Li, 2021).

As integration speaks to segregation and non-recognition, rather than inclusion and acceptance, it produces a hostile context for inclusive practices as those with disability are required to adjust to school requirements. Inclusion involves the vision to provide all students 'with an equitable and participatory learning experience and environment' (Slee, 2018, p. 24). It appears that segregation may have been conceived from a cultural and individual perspective as a way to avoid using the term inclusion. This may have been acceptable when the NEP10 was written 12 years ago but with the 2030 EFA goals, the SDGs and implementation of the UNCRPD, the importance of inclusion of all students have become even more of a focus of the United Nations in regard to disability inclusion (United Nations, 2019). The NEP10 does not conceptualise the differences between exclusion, segregation, integration and inclusion, and a human rights-based approach to disability to achieve equality of outcomes, nor does it foster an inclusive culture within the UN system.

Analysis of the policy show that the policy is not based on the notions of inclusion as generally understood over the last 10-15 years in Western contexts. Inclusion as a model of human rights and social justice seen, unveils that for rights, justice and recognition to prevail in the development of an inclusive education policy, the policy must ensure families who have children with disability have the freedom to enrol their children in any school of their choice. In addition, the education system must provide the necessary support for children with disability to develop their skills and capabilities with available resources that meet their individual needs (Eryong & Xiuping, 2018; Sen 1999). Further, the policy fails to recognise equal participation for all its people. The research found evidence of a political and social system that is systematically unfair and deprives some of its most marginalised citizens from being empowered and to contribute to the country's

growth. This inequitable practice will affect Bangladesh's efforts to achieve inclusive education and the 2030 EFA goals.

While Bangladesh has formally embraced inclusive education policy in its legislative framework, it became evident through this research that policy understandings were based on the medical model of disability, rather than a social and human rights model which significantly has affected how inclusive education is conceived. The NEP10 refers to the problem of special treatment for students with disability at all levels of education through their labelling. The labelling excuses failures and has placed constraints on individual rights and preferences. Labelling has led to the categorisation of individuals and resulted in a culture of low expectations.

7.3 Education Policy: Political Not Practical

The analysis of Bangladesh's education policy, supplemented by a small number of interviews, identified notable challenges in the conceptualisation of inclusive education policy. It revealed the policy that aimed to promote inclusive education has created space for integration rather than inclusion. These arose due to policy bureaucrats' 'conscious prioritizing' of one aspect over another non-recognition, the lack of a context-specific policy, lack of communication, a hierarchical social structure and the attitude of those in power (Li, 2021; Parthasharathi, 2018, p. 147). The findings highlight that Bangladesh's aim is similar to many other countries which is, 'to focus more on what is doable politically than practically' (Fullan, 2015, p. 21). In particular, Bangladesh appears to have a lack of well-thought-out policy, limited and uneven distribution of resources, and a limited understanding of inclusion.

Scholars (Haq et al., 2020; Mahembe & Odhiambo, 2017) argue that the Persons with Disability Welfare Act 2001 and the NEP10 was driven by the political necessity to comply with international obligations for funding. This is understandably an attractive option for a developing country like Bangladesh but fails to address the specific needs of the country. Consequently, inconsistencies are evident, as expressed by the participants, who reported a lack of direction and support from the government. Although the signing of international declarations by the Government of Bangladesh signals a willingness to move towards a more inclusive society, inclusive education policy excludes and remains

largely inequitable. This finding is consistent with recent research in the area of borrowed policy in developing countries that borrowed policies are not value free. A borrowed policy is influenced by the values of developed countries from which it is borrowed (Tromp & Datzberger, 2019; Zangmo, 2018). One consequence of this is that policy conceptualisation may be challenging, as it may have a significant impact on the beliefs and practices in a country's education system (Slee, 2011). It emerged from policy analysis that the borrowing of an inclusive education policy for Bangladesh can be challenging.

Sen, Slee and Spivak's theoretical perspectives show unequitable access to education in rural schools contradicts the notion of human rights and social justice for children with disability. The conceptualisation of inclusive education and disability in Bangladesh remain linked to segregation, integration and non-recognition instead of equality, equity, rights and the recognition of individual needs and capabilities. In meeting the vision of EFA goals and the SDGs by 2030 (United Nations, 2018; UNESCO, 2017b), this policy shortcoming in this country's national policy might be perceived to adversely influence children's education in rural areas, and may be responsible for shaping policy bureaucrats seemingly uncompromising attitude towards children with disability and their parents. Limited opportunities reduce the chances for children with disability to belong. Barriers arise not only because the opportunity is inadequate but also from shortcomings in policies that perpetuate inequalities (Sen, 1999; Slee, 2001c, 2018, Spivak, 2012a).

7.4 Policy is Symbolic

This research suggests that inclusive education policy in Bangladesh has stemmed from the requirement to fulfil the political agenda of the government, rather than achieving its goals and objectives. Evidence from policy analysis indicates that the Government of Bangladesh's current efforts towards inclusion are impeded by a lack of understanding of inclusive education and misappropriation of the term. This has affected the international momentum towards achieving the EFA 2030 goals. Further, an inflexible curriculum and assessment requirements shows that access to regular schools for children with disability has not been prioritised by the Government of Bangladesh. The policy frequently make reference to the need for creating access to education but without any further specifications of what this entails and mandating it in the policy. In the absence of

specifications and a mandatory policy, NEP10 works against the individual needs of children with disability and excludes them.

It also emerged from this research that inclusive education for all children has not been prioritised in the policy. Given the argument that inclusive education policy documents must make clear reference to the diverse needs of every child and ways to meet these through conceptualisation as one of the components of ensuring universal and equitable access to education, the Bangladeshi NEP10 fails to prioritise inclusive education in the policy and provide more detailed specifications. Given the discussion above, it may be insufficient for these to be mentioned implicitly, and it would be preferable for these policies to make more explicit what is required in order to ensure access to universal and equitable education. This emphasises that such a policy is symbolic as it does not aim for public actions (Akyeampong & Fofack, 2019; Ball, 2015; Oando & Akinyi, 2019).

7.5 Conceptual Understanding of Inclusive Education and Inclusion

This research indicates an ongoing lack of understanding of inclusive education. Although international legislation has been signed, insufficient changes have been made to policy documents that enable inclusion of all students in education. This can be seen as a lack conceptual understanding by Bangladesh of inclusive education and what inclusion involves. Therefore, the concept of inclusive education needs to be expanded from a disability-focussed notion to a wider definition endorsed by The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) that involves systematic reforms to facilitate the inclusion of all children, especially children with disability. Aligning the country's definitions of disability and inclusive education with international frameworks would help bring a more contemporary understanding of inclusive education.

Policy bureaucrats who have a limited understanding of inclusive education can act as a significant barrier to the success of an education policy (Chandan, 2020). Different understandings of inclusion can also have varying implications and consequences for action. Successful inclusion is about valuing diversity and encouraging differentiation in individual learning outcomes and teaching rather than uniformity and curriculum commonality (Ankam, et al., 2019; Florian et al., 2016).The imperative therefore is for policy bureaucrats to possess the knowledge and to develop skills, competencies and

capabilities to address inclusion more effectively in policy (Mphahlele, 2020). Not only is a cohesive policy crucial for policy sustainability (Ball et al., 2012; Chandan, 2020), awareness about the issues of inclusion to promote human rights and social justice in governance and help develop a realistic and useful inclusive education policy is necessary (Adugna et al., 2020). Among the implications are the need to inform everyone about the human right to education, and diverse definitions and understandings thereof, by discussing its meanings and its potential consequences for all children (Krischler et al., 2019).

Using the WPR approach (Bacchi, 2012) in this study has laid bare the narrow understanding of inclusive education in Bangladeshi education policy that is reflected in such reduced progress. Misconceptions and inadequate understanding of inclusive education demonstrate systemic deficiency and suggest that the Government of Bangladesh has taken an insular engagement with the issue and its conceptualisation. This may account for the Government of Bangladesh's limited attention to disseminate information to rural areas or practical support of the policy confirming Slee's (2019) argument that sometimes 'the policy is good, it just went wrong in practice' (p. 909).

7.6 Curriculum and Assessment

NEP10 and interviews highlight an inflexible curriculum and assessment process and these justifications are provided by school principals to refusing to enrol children with disability. At the end of each grade, students are expected to achieve class and subject-wise attainable competencies by participating in quarterly, half-yearly & yearly examination (NEP10, p. 9) instead of modification of student needs and providing flexibility on case-based learning, problem-based learning, or team-based learning (Ankam, et al., 2019). Although an integrated disability curriculum will require significant resources, within policy, the right level of funding is crucial to allow children with disability access to education and for governments to achieve the 2030 EFA goals (Dubin, 2019; Jiménez-Ramírez et al., 2020; UN, 2018). While this research did not directly analyse Bangladeshi economic policy, based on UNESCO (2017a) recommendation, the government does not seem to comply with international requirements to redirect 25 per cent of the national budget to education. As a result, parents of children with disability feel excluded and discriminated against as the learning of their children is not supported by the policy.

Slee (2019) contends that an inclusive education system is expected to have an inclusive curriculum and resources that meet the individual needs of all children. The availability of an inclusive curriculum is not only a means to establish human rights and social justice, and make more academic opportunities available for the excluded population. Rather, an inclusive curriculum can be adjusted to meet the needs of individual students and allow students to be assessed according to their abilities. Goldberg's (2019) study reveals that justice, equality and fairness can prevail if an individual's potential is acknowledged and appropriate support to learn is provided to marginalised children. She emphasises differentiated and individualised support-based learning according to the abilities and interests of students. Studies carried out in developed countries have also shown that individual education planning for students with disability is a good practice to cater to their needs (Agran et al., 2020; Cologon, 2019; Elder et al., 2018).

Impractical policy makes inclusion unattainable (Slee, 2019). Successful inclusion requires a preparedness to meet the challenges of policy; for example, supporting the needs of all children with disability in their environment to ensure their participation in mainstream classes. The understanding of equality does not necessarily mean treating everyone the same way. Rather, a truly inclusive approach recognises differences in ability and ensures that diversity is catered for so that conditions of rights and justice can be realised. In contrast, a lack of sincere national commitment to inclusive education and the cultural interpretation of disability will strongly affect inclusion.

This study has described how inclusion represents an understanding of social, cultural, historical and political norms to eliminate injustice, discrimination and exclusion (Sen, 2000; Slee, 2004, 2011, 2018; Spivak, 1988, 2012). To facilitate inclusion a recent study recommends that the World Health Organization International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health be used as a tool to build disability concepts into active learning instead of a competency-based curriculum. Policy needs to bring curricular changes to enhance student performance in the clinical management of people with disabilities (Ankam, et al., 2019). In the context of Bangladesh, the policy and the education system does not provide the necessary support for all students to learn and to be empowered. It reflects a system that animates the ideals of inclusion, equality, equity and non-discrimination only in words, not in practice.

7.7 Social Exclusion

Social exclusion means depriving groups or communities in the social and development process of a country (Sen, 2000). To achieve inclusion and individual development, the NEP10, fulfils the Constitutional obligations' (p. 12) by protecting certain social groups and communities. It also directs the state to take various measures to remove the different forms of discrimination and inequality and there by helps to eradicate social exclusion. The state should ensure social justice to all the deprived communities such as scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, other backward classes (castes), religious minorities, women and disabled. Social exclusion emerged in this study as an important issue confronting children with disability and their parents. For children with disability, isolation and exclusion were found to have a profound impact on self-worth and self-esteem. A rural parent of a child with disability reported on the extraordinary efforts required to ensure opportunities and facilities for children with disability. Rejection, exclusion, non-recognition and ignorance by school authorities and the community were reported.

The study found that social exclusion is deeply embedded in Bangladeshi culture. The participation of rural education stakeholders in decision-making processes does not exist, reflecting an elitist society in which diversity is ignored. Further, equal rules do not apply and therefore considerable gaps in rural and urban areas regarding social and economic development pose a threat to the reform efforts made by the Government of Bangladesh to achieve the 2030 EFA goals.

Advocating for the social inclusion of marginalised people in developing countries require those in power to create opportunities for inclusion and representation (Sen, 1985, 2000; Slee, 2019; Spivak, 1988). When policies marginalise, they highlight institutionalised discrimination and social exclusion. Marginalisation not only offends human dignity, self-respect and wellbeing, but also denies human rights—especially the right to belong and live effectively as an equal citizen (Sen, 1999; Slee, 2018; 2019; Spivak, 1988, 1999). The explicit expectations about *shomaan odheekaar* (Equal Rights) illustrate that rural Bangladeshi's views on human rights and social justice mainly relate to equality, equity, respect, acceptance, recognition, representation and belonging. I discuss *shomaan odheekaar* in the next section.

7.8 *Shomaan Odheekaar* (Equal Rights)

Although NEP10 emphasises equality, the policy of inclusion reflects segregation. A recent study has shown that ending segregation is critical towards promoting inclusive education (Cologon, 2019). It involves valuing the contribution of each student and building inclusive relationships. Also, ensuring that policy facilitates the equitable participation of every child without segregating and marginalising a child because of their differences will require policy bureaucrats' to act consciously. Instead of being tempted to giving in to easy demands, a commitment to uphold inclusive values is essential (Cologon, 2019; Nachman & Brown, 2019; Thompson, 2020).

Interviews demonstrated that not having *shomaan odheekaar* to engage in discussion and express their opinions constitutes a political, cultural and social bias and a lack of equity. Even though international organisations such as UNESCO and UNICEF, and almost all international policy documents emphasise the need for collaboration with all education stakeholders, this has not occurred in Bangladesh.

Collaboration with children with disability and their parents, to a large extent, clearly underpins inclusive practice and is crucial for the effectiveness of inclusive education policy in all developing and developed countries (Cologon, 2019; Otieno & Onyango, 2018). Less focus of vulnerable people from policy, can be considered discrimination. Further, it contravenes the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (United Nations, 2006, p. 3) and other international human rights conventions to which Bangladesh is a signatory. The interviewees were univocal in raising the necessity for communication and for their rights to be acknowledged. Ignorance towards vulnerable people was evident in the policy. Interviews have reinforced this finding. Being unaware of rights demonstrates the government's failure to fully acknowledge citizen rights and diverse needs of marginalised communities. Although the education of children with disabilities is covered by international treaties, their textual invisibility has shown to be problematic. The inattention to rural needs demonstrates a conscious avoidance and a lack of initiative to prioritise policy focus in favour of another issue (Parthasharati, 2018). Therefore, consideration for rural areas is kept *off* the policy agenda (Freedman, 2010, p. 355).The implication is that the NEP10 does not support stakeholder involvement and does not acknowledge *shomaan odheekaar*.

This study identified that collaboration with subalterns underpins inclusive values and would negate discriminatory practices and policy failures (Sen, 1999; Slee, 2013; Spivak, 2012a). A disregard for stakeholder participation and collaboration signifies an undemocratic representation as it deprives individuals of their right to connect with others. This exemplifies a deeply rooted hierarchical social structure that affects connections with subalterns, families and marginalised communities (Sen, 1990; Slee, 2011, 2018, 2019; Spivak, 1988, 1990).

Although more than half of Bangladesh's population live in rural areas, limited access to information, especially about the education for children with disability, has been revealed in this research. Community knowledge, experiences and good practices that are crucial to gather reliable information and design effective action plans are not reflected in NEP10 (Ball, 2017). Positioning the needs of stakeholders is neither valued to ensure the success of a policy (Otieno & Onyango, 2018). Specifically, a lack of information and collaboration has been shown to inevitably affect inclusive values because it perpetuates inequalities in society (Cologon, 2019; Li et al., 2019).

It can be concluded that this research has highlighted a poorly conceptualised inclusive education policy. NEP10 demonstrates a lack of a coherent and comprehensive approach by the Bangladeshi government. Inadequate consideration of the local context and needs of people and children with disability living in different parts of Bangladesh continues to produce exclusion (Slee, 2001). The practice of having separate education acts and policies (the *Persons with Disability Welfare Act 2001*, *Disability Welfare Act 2013* and the *NEP10*), and the responsibility for policy being vested upon two separate ministries can also be seen as a social and political system that discriminates. This highlights the need for rational policy and plans and a suitable system for their implementation. In conclusion, I offer a way forward with some suggestions for improvement.

7.9 A Way Forward

It has been 15 years since Bangladesh ratified The *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (CRPD) in 2007. Despite recommendations and guidance given in the convention and by many international organisations, Bangladesh continues to conceptualise segregated settings as consistent with the UNCRPD. It supports, maintains and funds separate decision-making arrangements and segregated settings and facilities

through its law, policy and practice frameworks. Bangladesh is yet to take a serious stance on supported decision-making mechanisms and the absence of these mechanisms perpetuates the segregation of children with disability. Although Bangladesh has developed a comprehensive body of legislation that upholds disability rights, particularly through positive action, many of these have not been effective. The government's commitment to disability compared with other highly successful issues, such as women's education, remains low in terms of conceptualisation.

This study has revealed that to promote the true meaning of inclusive education, the concept of inclusive education being a welfare issue and the concept of special schools for children with disabilities who are unable to succeed academically needs to be dismantled. The analysis of Bangladeshi NEP10 policy highlighted the broad nature of the reference made to vulnerable groups, with a lack of detailed specifications of different needs of different children and the context. This is confirmed in the NEP10 mention being for 'universal' (p.1, 4, 5, 10).

This research demonstrates how inclusive education policy for children with disability must ensure every child's meaningful participation. The active participation of children with disability in community programs and education stakeholders having children with a disability needs to be encouraged to promote the development of more positive attitudes toward children with disability. Interviews demonstrated the need for a better engagement with relevant stakeholders of policy. More inclusive education awareness campaigns to include all children and taking up the problem of exclusion as a fundamental curriculum concern was highlighted. A consideration of these factors, for e.g., building knowledge on what works may help to develop a better understanding of inclusive ideals.

The conception of human rights such as the right to choose, economic rights and cultural rights is related to equal access to educational opportunities for all. Article 3 of the Bangladesh Constitution points out that basic education should be provided to all children, youth and adults. To this end, 'basic education services of quality should be expanded and consistent measures must be taken to reduce disparity' (UNESCO, 1990, Article III, p. 3). The declaration further reiterates that for basic education to be equitable, all children, youth and adults must be allowed to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of learning (UNESCO, 1990). The most urgent priority is given to ensuring access to, and removing every barrier that hampers active participation.

If the opportunity arose to speak directly to government policymakers in Bangladesh, the findings from this research suggest that:

- Schools in urban and rural areas must not refuse to enrol a child under any unlawful pretext and treat every child equally regardless of their ability, disability, social status, ethnic group or physical or mental challenges that affect their educational performance and social skills development.
- Equal access to education, medical and social services to all children, especially children with disability living in rural villages is ensured.
- Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are adapted to student needs and capabilities and are required in formal reporting processes.
- Planning for community participation, social justice and human rights are targeted and interventions developed to facilitate inclusive school reform.

It emerged from the study that to achieve EFA by 2030 will require policy bureaucrats' meaningful understanding of the concept of inclusive education so that it is reflected in policy. The emerging findings of this study reveal that social, cultural and individual perceptions and beliefs affect the understanding of inclusive ideals and values and perhaps the reason why the country lacks a truly inclusive education policy. Policy bureaucrats' narrow understanding of inclusive ideals and position of power accentuates the exclusion of children with disability from accessing regular schools.

Interview accounts of the lack of awareness-raising campaigns about disability, compared with women's education, show that the understanding of inclusive education can lead to attitude improvement and the success of the policy. Information from interviews about the absence of community engagement in policy discussions, access to resources and medical services for children with disability and the rural-urban gap reveal conceptual lacking to reducing barriers embedded within the Government of Bangladesh's policy. The study also found that the lack of context-specific policy can be perceived as a key challenge to the success of inclusive education. Most importantly, the study has unveiled a powerful picture of a policy that is symbolic and silent, particularly about the extent to which the curriculum and support services contribute to single out a group of children with disability for special attention instead of recognising diversity, and their right to belong, be recognised and be treated equally.

7.10 Summary

This chapter has presented a discussion of the findings concerning the overarching research question that guided the study. The discussion focussed on rights, justice and inclusive practices and the lack of government support for inclusive education policy in rural Bangladeshi schools.

This investigation has highlighted key aspects required for success in policy to reduce exclusion for children with disability in Bangladesh schools. The study highlighted the effectiveness of a partnership approach in policy conceptualisation and the importance of consultation with rural communities to address the serious gaps in knowledge about the contexts, causes and consequences of exclusion.

I argue here that in the right to attend regular schools for all children with disability in Bangladesh is not supported by policy. The research suggests that the lack of an effective education policy as well as a symbolic policy impacts the education of all children with disability. Inclusive education policy is incongruent with the promotion of diversity. The study identified Bangladeshi inclusive education policy reflects segregation and integration rather than inclusion through its failure to critically conceptualise the notions of what constitutes inclusive education. It has become evident that the government policy does not explicate *shomaan odheekaar* (equal rights) to facilitate sustainable outcomes. This serves to endorse institutionalised practices rooted in low expectations, and a policy that is silent because of the lack of understanding of the multiple perspectives of inclusive education. The result further indicates that policy bureaucrats' reliance on the medical model of disability and their conceptualisation of low expectations explain why children with disability are labelled, discriminated against and excluded from regular schools in Bangladesh even now. The adoption by the Government of Bangladesh of an education policy do not reflect the conceptions of rights and justice. The NEP10 fails to conceptualise that for children with disability, equality equity and the recognition of diversity are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of all human rights and fundamental freedoms. The study found that the true meaning of human rights, social justice and inclusion in Bangladesh is silenced in the policy. When this is prioritised, the discrepancy between the visions of inclusive education and policy conceptualisation goals may be reduced.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

The focus of this study was investigating how inclusive education is conceptualised in Bangladesh. To address the research question, Carol Bacchi's 'What's the Problem Represented to Be?' approach was utilised to analyse policy. Interviews with a small number of participants supplemented this focus on policy. Therefore, the major focus was on policy analysis. The WPR approach and the theories allowed me to understand how inclusion and inclusive education policy is conceptualised from different perspectives. The three theories that link to human rights, subaltern recognition, equality, equity and inclusion was pivotal to undertake this investigation. The following section summarises the major policy findings about the conceptualisation of inclusive education.

8.1 Unveiling the Issues

> *My project has become more and more not only to study the subaltern, but to learn from them.*
>
> ———(Spivak, 2005, p. 482)

The study investigated how inclusive education is conceptualised in Bangladeshi educational policy. The research began with an analysis of international literature to understand inclusive education and borrowed policy. This led to the recognition of the need to investigate the conceptualisation of inclusive education in Bangladesh.

The study has revealed that although the Government of Bangladesh has made substantial progress towards having an inclusive education policy, the right to education for all children with disability remains unmet. Findings from the policy analysis include that discrimination and symbolic methodologies sustain the unequal and inequitable access to education. Not having access to education highlights the absence of rights, equality, equity and recognition. Exclusion remains a challenge for children with disability and their families.

In the conceptualisation of inclusive education policy, this study has identified the exclusion of children with disability in regular Bangladeshi rural schools. Running counter to social justice, inequity and inequality in policy conceptualisation accelerate the

exclusion of different groups of children with disability causing an imbalance in who is able to access education. Children with disability continue to face the risk of not being included, supported and recognised. Efforts to achieve sustained national progress requires a just social system for the educational empowerment of Bangladesh's citizens, emphasising greater commitment in action rather than mere words.

Inequality and inequity in policy has been found to be the result of ignorance, giving in to demands over values and a lack of understanding about the required support by Bangladeshi policy bureaucrats. Engelbrecht (2020) and Slee (2011) are in agreement with the effects of ignorance and a lack of understanding of policy bureaucrats in the success of a policy. Given inclusive education's broad equity agenda, alongside the establishment of a democratic and just society, they explain the critical importance of informed thinking for increasing equitable rights and access to education in the understanding and conceptualisation of inclusive education policy.

The conceptualisation of inclusive education show a lack of initiative to advocate for all schools in Bangladesh, along with inadequate welfare and logistic support for children with disability, which has profound implications for their educational attainment. Thus, to allow facilities to be allocated according to individual needs and the geographical location of schools as a priority policy response needs to be addressed by the Government of Bangladesh.

Bangladeshi inclusive education policy shows insufficient conceptualisation and a lack of vision about required support to contextualise the policy. Marginalised children, such as those with disability, are disadvantaged because they are either forced to drop out or unable to access public schools, and are thus deprived of their constitutional right to education. The policy has opened up the possibility of denying others this right. As this research has demonstrated, the government's responsibility to manage and provide equal access to education to a diverse range of children with disability, need to continue advancing conceptually to respond to the contemporary, expanded perspective of conceptualising inclusive education as the removal of that which excludes and marginalises (Slee, 2011).

Social justice and rights have been identified as a prerequisite to creating an inclusive environment. Inclusive education is explicitly mandated in Bangladeshi legislation, yet

for children with disability the NEP10 is characterised by exclusionary and discriminatory ideologies. Such discrimination has been identified in this thesis to stem from the ways in the ideals of inclusion is conceptualised within the government education policy. This practice undermines social justice and poses a human rights concern. Similarly, the practice of ignoring education stakeholders and the providing equal support services in all schools reinforces social and institutionalised discrimination by the *khomotabun* (the powerful), which substantially influences policy outcomes.

The human right to education for those with disability is undervalued. My analysis of policy and interviews highlights a social hierarchy system and a power structure that continues to permeate policy conceptualisation. Deep-rooted cultural barriers stemming from an intent to remain silent in the face of authority seem to further contribute to the denial of fundamental human rights and social equality.

Even though the Bangladeshi policy upholds the ideals of inclusion, the separation of powers between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Welfare to provide education to children with disability is premised on deficit thinking. Alternative opportunities for learning exist for vulnerable children but they are scarce outside urban areas and unevenly distributed between groups. As this research shows, a holistic approach is more aligned with inclusion ideals and values to provide access to education to children from all backgrounds and with diverse needs. Unequal power relationships exist in many countries, including developed countries (Carrington et al., 2019; Davie, 2015), yet for Bangladesh, segregated schools have been perpetuated by a non-transparent, inflexible and politicised power structure, which has been shown to have powerful impacts on shaping educational policy.

The global move towards inclusive education provides an impetus to reconceptualise the current educational system in Bangladesh to successfully promote an inclusive education policy. Drawing on Slee's questions (2018) 'Who's in?', 'Who's out?' (p. 112) and a rural participant's '*Aamader kotha ke shunbe*?' (Who will listen to us?), this study found that the reasons for inequality appeared because recognising diversity and the context was overlooked in policy conceptualisation. Exclusion was heightened by labelling and categorising, a symbolic policy, a culture of non-recognition and the adoption of a non-pragmatic and unrealistic policy conceptualisation.

Three theorists, Amartya Sen's social justice, development and capability theory, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's subaltern theory and Roger Slee's inclusion/exclusion theory underpinned this study. Although inclusive education is enshrined in Bangladesh's legislation, the core values of inclusion embraced in developed countries, such as rights, equality, equity, recognition, representation and belonging, have yet to be adopted by Bangladesh. This study draws attention to the absence of an inclusive environment and communities striving to belong and be treated equally. This suggests for a better conceptualisation of policy, emphasising greater accountability in addressing the issue, rather than symbolic presentation in official documents.

The research has also shown how engaging in informed constructive discourse with the often-ignored education stakeholders can be a powerful tool for policy bureaucrats to conceptualise mechanisms through which a supportive learning environment can be created and exclusion reduced for children with disability. The research has established that the focus of Bangladeshi policy should be on managing diversity in the conceptualisation of inclusive education. This study concludes that conceptualisation affects not only the effectiveness of inclusive policy but also highlights the labelling of disability in society as a whole. Segregation and integration, if reflected in policy conceptualisation, will continue to exclude and marginalise children with disability as they do not uphold democratic values upon which inclusive education ideals are built.

References

Abdalla, M. M., Oliveira, L. G. L., Azevedo, C. E. F., & Gonzalez, R. K. (2018). Quality in qualitative organizational research: Types of triangulation as a methodological alternative. *Administração: ensino e pesquisa*, *19*(1), 66-98.

Adugna, M.B., Nabbouh, F., Shehata, S., & Ghahari, S. (2020). Barriers and facilitators to healthcare access for children with disabilities in low and middle income sub-Saharan African countries: a scoping review. *BMC Health Services Research*, *20*(15). https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-019-4822-6

Ahmed, A.U. (2006). Evaluating The Reaching Out-of-School Children Project in Bangladesh: a Baseline study. International Food Policy Research Institute https://ebrary.ifpri.org/digital/api/collection/p15738coll2/id/126933/download

Aiello, J., & Nero, S. J. (2019). Discursive dances: Narratives of insider/outsider researcher tensions. *Journal of Language, Identity & Education, 18*(4), 251-265.

Ainscow, M. (1999). *Understanding the development of inclusive schools*. Falmer Press.

Ainscow, M. (2005). Looking to the future: Towards a common sense of purpose. *Australasian Journal of Special Education, 29(2),* 182–186. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1030011200025355

Ainscow, M. (2020). Promoting inclusion and equity in education: Lessons from international experiences. *Nordic Journal of Studies in Educational Policy: A School for All*, *6*(1), 7–16. https://doi.org/10.1080/20020317.2020.1729587

Ainscow, M., & Miles, S. (2008). Making Education for All inclusive: Where next? *Prospects, 38*(1), 15–34. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11125-008-9055-0

Ainscow, M., Slee, R., & Best, M. (2019). Editorial. The Salamanca statement: 25 years on. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 23(7–8), 671–676. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2019.1622800

Akyeampong, K. (2019, 14–16 September). *How can we move education systems in a more inclusive direction?* [Conference chair's welcome]. UKFIET Conference, Oxford, England. https://www.ukfiet.org/2019/how-can-we-move-education-systems-in-a-more-inclusive-direction/

Akyeampong, E., & Fofack, H. (2019). Special issue on 'Africa and China: Emerging patterns of engagement'. *Economic History of Developing Regions*, *34*(3), 251–258. https://doi.org/10.1080/20780389.2019.1684691

Albright, A. (2018, 25 July). *Marginalised children are too often excluded from the classroom. Here's how we can change that.* World Economic Forum. https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/07/the-promise-of-inclusive-education/

Ali, A. F. I., Khan, A. U., Sharmin, Z., & Hossen, M. A. (2015). Occupation, income, education and modernization among the Horijon community of Bangladesh: A sociological profile. *Asian Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities*, *4*(3), 59–72. http://www.ajssh.leena-luna.co.jp/AJSSHPDFs/Vol.4(3)/AJSSH2015(4.3-06).pdf

Allan, J. & Slee, R. (2008). *Doing inclusive education research*. Sense. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789087904197

Al-Mubarak, T. (2015). Commemorating the International Mother Language Day: Resisting 'Banglish'. *Islam & Civilisational Renewal, 6*(2). 257- 260. https://doi.org/10.12816/0019172

Al Noor, M. (2017). Education System and Its Importance in the Context of Bangladesh Education System. *Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal*, *4*(15) 36-45. DOI:10.14738/assrj.415.3499.

Alur, M. (2009). Key Elements for Successful Inclusive Practice: Policy change on a Macro Sustainable Level. In M., Alur & V., Timmons (Eds.) (2009). *Inclusive Education Across Cultures: Crossing Boundaries, Sharing Ideas* (pp. 83-93). Sage.

Anis, F., & Ahmmed, M. (2009). *Paradigm shift: Exclusion to inclusion*. Badhon.

Anis, F., & Akhter, E. (2011). Challenges of inclusive education and changing patterns of teaching for mainstream school teachers in Bangladesh. *National Academy for Education Management Journal, 6*(12), 118-126.

Anis, F., & White, J. (2017). The Meena Communicative Initiative in Bangladesh: From gender to disability. In V. Plows & B. Whitburn (Eds.), *Inclusive education: Making sense of everyday practice* (pp. 61–76). Sense. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-6300-866-2_5

Ankam, N. S., Bosques, G., Sauter, C., Stiens, S., Therattil, M., Williams, F. H., Atkins, C.C., & Mayer, R. S. (2019). Competency-based curriculum development to meet the needs of people with disabilities: a call to action. *Academic Medicine, 94*(6), 781-788. https://jdc.jefferson.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1039&context=rmfp

Anyebe, A. A. (2018). An overview of approaches to the study of public policy. *International Journal of Political Science*, *4*(1), 8-17.

Appiah, E. N. (2017). The effect of education expenditure on per capita GDP in developing countries. *International Journal of Economics & Finance*, *9*(10), 136–144. https://doi.org/10.5539/ijef.v9n10p136

Apple, M. W. (2019). On Doing Critical Policy Analysis. *Educational Policy*, *33*(1), 276–287. https://doi.org/10.1177/0895904818807307

Armstrong, A. C., Armstrong, D., & Spandagou, I. (2010). Inclusive education: International policy and practice. Sage. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446221990

Armstrong, D. (2005). Reinventing inclusion: New Labour and the cultural politics of special education. *Oxford Review of Education*, *31*, 135–151. https://doi.org/10.1080/0305498042000337237

Armstrong, D., & Armstrong, A. C. (2019). Human rights, inclusive education and inter-cultural competence. In M. J. Schuelka, C. J. Johnstone, G. Thomas, & A. J. Artilles (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of inclusion and diversity in education*, 76-88. Sage. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781526470430.n9

Armstrong, D., Armstrong, A., & Spandagou, I. (2011). Inclusion: By choice or by chance? *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *15*(1), 29–39. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2010.496192

Asaduzzaman, E. A. M., & Iqbal, S. (2018, 14 June). Bangladesh's School of Hope for Autistic Children. *HAARETZ*. https://www.haaretz.com/world-news/impact-journalism-day-2018/bangladesh-s-school-of-hope-for-autistic-children-1.6124853

Asongu, S., Nnanna, J., & Acha-Anyi, P. N. (2020). Finance, inequality and inclusive education in sub-Saharan Africa. *Economic Analysis & Policy*, *67*, 162–177. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3655319

Audenhove, L. V., & Donders, K. (2019). Talking to people III: Expert interviews and elite interviews. In *The Palgrave handbook of methods for media policy research* (pp. 179-197). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

Baboo, N. (2016). *The case is clear for financing inclusive education for children with disabilities* [Online forum post]. Global Partnership for Education. https://www.globalpartnership.org/blog/case-clear-financing-inclusive-education-children-disabilities

Bacchi, C. (2009). *Analysing policy: What's the problem represented to be?* Pearson Education.

Bacchi, C. (2012). Why Study Problematizations? Making Politics Visible. *Open Journal of Political Science*, *2*(1), 1-8. http://dx.doi.org/10.4236/ojps.2012.21001

Bacchi, C., Goodwin, S. (2016). Making Politics Visible: The WPR Approach. In: *Post structural Policy Analysis.* 13-26, Palgrave Pivot. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-52546-8_2

Bailey, C. A. (2007). *A guide to qualitative field research* (2nd Ed.). Pine Forge Press.

Baldwin, J. R., Pingault, J. B., Schoeler, T., Sallis, H. M., & Munafò, M. R. (2022). Protecting against researcher bias in secondary data analysis: challenges and potential solutions. *European Journal of Epidemiology*, *37*(1), 1-10.

Ball, S. J. (1990). *Politics and policymaking in education*. Routledge.

Ball, S. J. (1994). *Education reform: A critical and post-structural approach*. Open University Press.

Ball, S.J. (2003). 'The Teacher's soul and the terrors of performativity.' *Journal of Education Policy*, *18*(2), 215-228.

Ball, S. J. (2015). What is policy? 21 years later: Reflections on the possibilities of policy research. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, *36*(3), 306–313. https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2015.1015279

Ball, S. J. (2017). *The education debate* (3rd ed.). The Policy Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1t893tk

Ball, S. J., McGuire, M., & Braun, A. (2012). *How schools do policy: Policy enactments in secondary schools*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203153185

Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics. (2015). *Population and housing census, Zila Report: Munshiganj*. Ministry of Planning, Bangladesh. http://203.112.218.65:8008/WebTestApplication/userfiles/Image/PopCenZilz2011/Zila_Munshiganj.pdf

Banks, L. M., Kuper, H., & Polack, S. (2017). Poverty and disability in low- and middle-income countries: A systematic review. *PLoS One*, *12*(12), 929–956. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal. pone.0189996

Barton, L. (1997). Inclusive education: Romantic, subversive or realistic? *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *1*(3), 231–242. https://doi.org/10.1080/1360311970010301

Begum, H. A., Perveen, R., Chakma, E., Dewan, L., Afroze, R. S., & Tangen, D. (2018). The challenges of geographical inclusive education in rural Bangladesh.

International Journal of Inclusive Education, *23*(1), 7–22. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2018.1514729

Bell, J., & Waters, S. (2014). *Doing your research project: A guide for first-time researchers* (6th ed.). Open University Press.

Bell, L. A. (2016). Theoretical foundations for social justice education. In *Teaching for diversity and social justice* (pp. 3-26). Routledge.

Beutel, D., Tangen, D., & Carrington, S. (2019). Building bridges between global concepts and local contexts: Implications for inclusive education in Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *23*(1), 109–124. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2018.1514763

Bhattacharya, K. (2017). *Fundamentals of qualitative research: A practical guide*. Taylor & Francis.

Bin Wares, S. (2019, 18 July). A tale of street children. *Dhaka Tribune*. https://www.dhakatribune.com/opinion/op-ed/2019/06/18/a-tale-of-street-children

Blondel, J. (2016). *Comparative Government Introduction*. Routledge.

Bonomo, M., de Souza, L., Epifanio, P. Z., & Trindade, Z. A. (2017). Social representations and rural sociability among farmers of a rural community. *Psico-USF*, *22*(2). https://doi.org/10.1590/1413-82712017220204

Bonvin, J. M., & Laruffa, F. (2018). Deliberative democracy in the real world, the contribution of the capability approach. *International Review of Sociology*, *28*(2), 216–233. https://doi.org/10.1080/03906701.2018.1477101

Booth, T., & Ainscow, M. (1998). *From them to us: An international study of inclusion in education*. Routledge.

Booth, T., & Ainscow, M. (2011). *Index for inclusion: developing learning and participation in schools*. Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education (CSIE).

Boussaguet, L., & Faucher, F. (2020). Beyond a 'gesture': The treatment of the symbolic in public policy analysis. *French Politics*, *18*, 189–205. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41253-020-00107-9

Bowen, G. A. (2009). Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method. Qualitative Research Journal, 9(2), 27–40. https://doi.org/10.3316/QRJ0902027

Boyatzis, R.E. (1998). Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development. Sage.

Boyle, C., & Anderson, J. (2020). The justification for inclusive education in Australia. *Prospects*, *49*, 203–217. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11125-020-09494-x

Bozalek,V. & Zembeylas, M. (2017). Towards a response-able pedagogy across higher education institutions in post-apartheid South Africa: An ethico-political analysis. *Education for Change*, 21(2), 62-85. http://dx.doi.org/10.17159/1947-9417/2017/2017

Braun, A., Ball, S. J., Maguire, M., & Hoskins, K. (2011). Taking context seriously: Towards explaining policy enactments in the secondary school. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, *32*(4), 585–596. https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2011.601555

Brennen, B. S. (2017). *Qualitative research methods for media studies*. Taylor & Francis

Breton, E., & De Leeuw, E. (2011). Theories of the policy process in health promotion research: a review. *Health promotion international*, *26*(1), 82-90. https://doi.org/10.1093/heapro/daq051

Browne, J., Coffey, B., Cook, K., Meiklejohn, S., & Palermo, C. (2019). A guide to policy analysis as a research method. *Health promotion international*, *34*(5), 1032-1044. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Jennifer-Browne-5/publication/327020382_A_guide_to_policy_analysis_as_a_research_method/links/5b7a1589a6fdcc5f8b55a879/A-guide-to-policy-analysis-as-a-research-method.pdf

Buetow, S., & Zawaly, K. (2022). Rethinking researcher bias in health research. *Journal of Evaluation in Clinical Practice*, *28*(5), 843-846. https://doi.org/10.1111/jep.13622

Burdett, N., & O'Donnell, S. (2016). Lost in translation? The challenges of educational policy borrowing. *Educational Research*, *58*(2), 113–120. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131881.2016.1168678

Butenko, H., Goncharova, N., Saienko, V., Tolchieva, H., & Vako I. (2017). Physical condition of primary school children in school year dynamics. *Journal of Physical Education and Sport*, *17*(2), 543-549. DOI: 10.7752/jpes.2017.02082

Cairney, P., & Jones, M. D. (2016). Kingdon's multiple streams approach: what is the empirical impact of this universal theory? *Policy Studies Journal*, *44*(1), 37-58. http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/psj.12111/full.

Carol Bacchi (2012). Introducing the 'What's the Problem Represented to be?' approach. In: A. Bletsas & C. Beasley (Eds.), *Engaging with Carol Bacchi: Strategic Interventions and Exchanges*, 21-24, University of Adelaide Press.

Carrington, S., Tangen, D., & Beutel, D. (2019). Inclusive education in the Asia Indo-Pacific region. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *23*(1), 1–6. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13603116.2018.1514727

Carroll, L. (1871). Through the looking-glass. *Decoded. Philosophical*.

Census and Economic Information Center. (2020). *Bangladesh population*. https://www.ceicdata.com/en/indicator/bangladesh/population

Centre for Research and Information. (2019). *Bangladesh Towards Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education*. https://cri.org.bd/publication/2019/Aug/quality-education19/Bangladesh%20-%20Towards%20Inclusive%20and%20Equitable%20Quality%20Education%202019.pdf

Chand, D. & Karre, S. (2019). Equal opportunity in education: A perspective from below. *Contemporary Voice of Dalit*, *11*(1), 55–61. https://doi.org/10.1177/2455328X18821452

Chandan, Md. S. K. (2020, 19 June). Education policy: Excellent on paper. *The Daily Star*. https://www.thedailystar.net/supplements/25th-anniversary-special-part-3/education-policy-excellent-paper-211432

Chang, E. C., & Kerr, N. N. (2017). An insider–outsider theory of popular tolerance for corrupt politicians. *Governance*, *30*(1), 67-84.

Charema, J. (2010). Inclusive education in developing countries in the Sub-Saharan. *International Journal of Special Education*, *25(*1), 87–93.

Chowdhury, M. S., & Chakma, P. (Eds.) (2019). *Human rights report 2018 on Indigenous peoples in Bangladesh*. Kapaeeng Foundation. https://www.academia.edu/42053987/HUMAN_RIGHTS_REPORT_2018_on_Indigenous_Peoples_in_Bangladesh

Chowdhury, R., & Sarkar, M. (2018). Education in Bangladesh: Changing contexts and emerging realities. In: R. Chowdhury, M. Sarkar, F. Mojumder, & M. Roshid (Eds.), *Engaging in educational research: Revisiting policy and practice in Bangladesh* (Vol. 44, pp. 1–18). (Education in the Asia-Pacific Region, Vol. 44). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-0708-9_1

Clarke, V. & Braun, V. (2017) Thematic analysis, The Journal of Positive Psychology, 12(3), 297-298, http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2016.1262613

Clough, P., & Corbett, J., (2000). *Theories of inclusive education*: *A student's guide*. Sage. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446220436

Clough, P., & Nutbrown, C. (2007). *A student's guide to methodology: Justifying inquiry* (2nd ed.). Sage.

Cole, G. (2018). 'But if locals are poorer than you, how would you justify additional help?': Rethinking the purpose of sensitive interview questions. *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, *37*, 328–352. https://doi.org/10.1093/rsq/hdy010

Cologon, K. (2019). *Towards inclusive education: A necessary process of transformation*. Report for Children and Young People with Disability Australia. https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2019-10/apo-nid265286_1.pdf

Corbett, J. (2001). *Supporting Inclusive Education* (1st ed.). Routledge.

Corbett, M. (2016). Rural futures: Development, aspirations, mobilities, place and education. *Peabody Journal of Education*, *91*(2), 270–282. https://doi.org/10.1080/0161956X.2016.1151750

Corbin, J. & Strauss, A. (2008). Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory (3rd ed.). Sage.

Cornwell, J. F., Franks, B., & Higgins, E. T. (2017). How the" truth" self relates to altruism: When your problem is mine. *Social Cognition*, *35*(2), 204-226. https://www0.gsb.columbia.edu/mygsb/faculty/research/pubfiles/25968/How_the_Truth_Self_Relates.pdf

Crabtree, B. F., & Miller, W. L. (1999) Doing Qualitative Research, Sage.

Creswell, J.W. (2005). Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research (2nd ed.). Pearson.

Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2nd ed.). Sage.

Creswell, J.W., & Creswell, J.D. (2018). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (5th ed.). Sage.

Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). Sage.

Cruwys, T., Berry, H. L., Cassells, R., Duncan, A., O'Brien, L. V., Sage, B., & D'Souza, G. (2013). *Marginalised Australians: Characteristics and predictors of exit over ten years 2001–2010*. University of Canberra, Australia. https://melbourneinstitute.unimelb.edu.au/assets/documents/hilda-bibliography/other publications/2013/Cruwys_etal_marginalised_Australians.pdf

Cruz, R. A., Lee, J. H., Aylward, A. G., & Kramarczuk Voulgarides, C. (2020). The effect of school funding on opportunity gaps for students with disabilities: Policy and context in a diverse urban district. *Journal of Disability Policy Studies*. 33(1), 3-14. https://doi.org/10.1177/1044207320970545

Datzberger, S. (2018). Why education is not helping the poor. Findings from Uganda. *World Development*, *110*, 124–139. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2018.05.022

Davie, A. (2015). *Engaging young people in regional, rural and remote Australia*. Australian Clearing House for Youth Studies. https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/young_people_in_regional_rural_and_remote_australia.pdf

De Brún, T., O'Reilly-de Brún, M., Van Weel-Baumgarten, E., Burns, N., Dowrick, C., Lionis, C., O'Donnell, C., Mair, F. S., Papadakaki, M., Saridaki, A., Spiegel, W., Van Weel, C., Van den Muijsenbergh, M., & MacFarlane, A. (2017). Using participatory learning & action (PLA) research techniques for inter-stakeholder dialogue in primary healthcare: An analysis of stakeholders' experiences. *Research Involvement & Engagement*, *3*(1), 1-25. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40900-017-0077-8.

de Bruin, K. (2019). The impact of inclusive education reforms on students with disability: An international comparison. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *23* (7–8), 811–826. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2019.1623327

Deng, M., & Guo, L. (2007). Local special education administrators' understanding of inclusive education in China. *International Journal of Educational Development*, *27*, 697–707. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2007.02.005

Denzin, N. K. (1970). *The research act: A theoretical introduction to sociological methods*. Aldine.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (2018). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (5th ed.). Sage.

Directorate of Primary Education. (2020). *Reaching Out of School Children (ROSC, PhaseII).*https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/565381568289204587/pdf/Bangladesh-Second-Reaching-Out-of-School-Children-Project-A-Second-Chance-to-Education.pdf

Directorate of Primary and Mass Education. (2019). *Annual primary school census*. Directorate of Primary Education, Government of the People's Republic of

Bangladesh. http://dpe.gov.bd/sites/default/files/files/dpe.portal.gov.bd/publications/321eaeb8_454d_4fd0_8a55_02462faf1520/Draft%20APSC_2019_PDF.pdf

Diwan, R. (2015). Small schools in rural India: 'Exclusion' and 'inequity' in hierarchical school system. *Policy Futures in Education, 13*(2), 171–186. https://doi.org/10.1177/1478210315579971

Donaldson, T., & Walsh, J. P. (2015). Toward a theory of business. *Research in Organizational Behavior, 35*, 181-207. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0191308515000088

Dooley, L. M. (2002). Case Study Research and Theory Building. *Advances in Developing Human Resources, 4*(3), 335–354. https://doi.org/10.1177/1523422302043007

Doucet, F. (2019). *Centering the margins: (Re) defining useful research evidence through critical perspectives*. William T. Grant Foundation. http://wtgrantfoundation.org/library/uploads/2019/12/Fabienne-Doucet-2019-WTG-Digest.pdf

Dubin, A. D. (2019). *Children, disabilities and poverty: Enforcing the human right to inclusive education in sub-Saharan Africa*. https://repositorio.comillas.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/11531/39601/Inclusive%20Education_Africa_Justice_Dubin2019.pdf?sequence=1

Dunn, W. N. (2015). *Public policy analysis*. Routledge.

Dunn, W. N. (2018). *Public policy analysis: An Integrated Approach (6th Ed)*. Taylor & Francis.

Duque, E., Gairal, R., Molina, S., & Roca, E. (2020). How psychology of education contributes to research with social impact on the education of students with special needs: The case of successful educational actions. *Frontiers in Psychology, 11*(4), 439. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00439

Dwyer, S. C., & Buckle, J. L. (2009). The space between: On being an insider–outsider in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 8*(1), 54–63. https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690900800105

Dye, T. R. (1984). *Understanding public policy*. Prentice-Hall.

Edelman, M. J. (1985). *The symbolic uses of politics*. University of Illinois Press.

Elder, C. D., & Cobb, R. W. (1983). *The political uses of symbols*. Longman Publishing Group.

Elder, B. C., Rood, C.E., & Damiani, M.L. (2018). Writing strength-based IEPs for students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms. *International Journal of Whole Schooling, 14*(1), 116-153.

Ellis, S., & Rowe, A. (2020). Literacy, social justice and inclusion: A large-scale design experiment to narrow the attainment gap linked to poverty. *Support for Learning*. *35*(4),418-439. https://nasenjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/1467-9604.12324

Erdocia, I. (2022). Participation and deliberation in language policy: the case of gender-neutral language. *Current Issues in Language Planning, 23*(4), 435-455. https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2022.2077352

Eryong, X., & Xiuping, Z. (2018). Education and anti-poverty: Policy theory and strategy of poverty alleviation through education in China. *Educational Philosophy & Theory, 50*(12), 1101–1112. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2018.1438889

Eunice, L. A., Nyangia, E. O., & Orodho, J.A. (2015). Challenges facing implementation of inclusive education in public secondary schools in Rongo Sub-County, Migori County, Kenya. *Journal Of Humanities & Social Science, 20*(4), 39–50.

Felder, F. (2018). The value of inclusion. *Journal of Philosophy of Education, 52*(1), 54-70.

Fischer, F., & Miller, G. J. (Eds.). (2017). Handbook of public policy analysis: theory, politics, and methods. Routledge.

Fletcher, A. J. (2017). Applying critical realism in qualitative research: methodology meets method. *International journal of social research methodology, 20*(2), 181-194.

Flick, O. (2015). *Introducing research methodology*. Sage.

Florian, L., Black-Hawkins, K., & Rouse, M. (2016). *Achievement and inclusion in schools*. Routledge.

Flyvbjerg, B. (2006). Five misunderstandings about case-study research. *Qualitative Inquiry, 12*(2), 219–245.

Foreman, P., & Arthur-Kelly, M. (2017). *Inclusion in action*. Cengage AU.

Forester, J. (1993). *Critical theory, public policy, and planning practice*. SUNY Press.

Frank, N. (2018). Making the grade: The contribution of education expenditure to economic growth. *Undergraduate Economic Review, 14*(1). Art. 11, 1-15.

Freebody, P. (2003). Qualitative research in education: Interaction and practice. Sage.

Freedman, D. (2010). Media Policy Silences: The Hidden Face of Communications Decision Making. The International Journal of Press/Politics, 15(3), 344–361. https://doi.org/10.1177/1940161210368292

Freire, P. (2014). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (30th anniversary edition). Bloomsbury Publishing.

Fuchs, C. (2015). Critical theory. In M. Gianpietro, (Ed.), *The international encyclopedia of political communication* (pp. 240–251). John Wiley & Sons.

Fullan, M. (2015). *The NEW meaning of educational change.* Teachers College Press.

Gettleman, J., & Raj, S. (2018, 17 November). 'Tell everyone how we scalped you!' How caste still rules in India. *The New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/17/world/asia/tell-everyone-we-scalped-you-how-caste-still-rules-in-india.html

Gilmour, A. F., Fuchs, D., & Wehby, J. H. (2019). Are students with disabilities accessing the curriculum? A meta-analysis of the reading achievement gap between students with and without disabilities. *Exceptional Children*, *85*(3), 329-346.

Glas, A. (2021). Positionality, power, and positions of power: reflexivity in elite interviewing. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, *54*(3), 438-442.

Global Education Report. (2013). *Basic education*. https://dfat.gov.au/aid/topics/investment-priorities/education-health/education/Documents/basic-education-foundation-level.pdf

Goldberg, P. (2019). *Is inclusive growth an oxymoron?* [Online forum post]. World Bank. https://blogs.worldbank.org/developmenttalk/inclusive-growth-oxymoron

Graham, L. J., Medhurst, M., Tancredi, H., Spandagou, I., & Walton, E. (2020). Fundamental concepts of inclusive education. In L. J. Graham (Ed.), *Inclusive education in the 21st century*: *Theory, policy and practice*. 27-51. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003116073

Graham, L., & Slee, R. (2007). An illusory interiority: Interrogating the discourse/s of inclusion. *Educational Philosophy & Theory, 40*, 277–293. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-5812.2007.00331.x

Graham, L., & Spandagou, I. (2011). From vision to reality: Views of primary school principals on inclusive education in New South Wales, Australia. *Disability & Society*, *26*(2), 223–237. https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2011.544062

Guerrina, R., & Murphy, H. (2016). Strategic silences in the Brexit debate: Gender, marginality and governance. *Journal of Contemporary European Research*, *12*(4), 872–880.

Guha, R. (2020, 13 March). The two Bengals—West Bengal can now learn a few things from Bangladesh. *The Telegraph*. https://www.telegraphindia.com/opinion/the-two-bengals-west-bengal-can-now-learn-a-few-things-from-bangladesh/cid/414845

Haile, S. (2020). Voices to be heard?: Reflections on refugees, strategic invisibility and the politics of voice. In E. Fiddian-Qasmiyeh (Ed.), *Refuge in a Moving World: Tracing refugee and migrant journeys across disciplines* (pp. 32–40). UCL Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv13xprtw.9

Hammarberg, K., Kirkman, M., & de Lacey, S. (2016). Qualitative research methods: When to use them and how to judge them. *Human Reproduction*, *31*(3), 498–501. https://doi.org/10.1093/humrep/dev334

Haug, P. (2017). Understanding inclusive education: Ideals and reality. *Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research*, *19*(3), 206–217. https://doi.org/10.1080/15017419.2016.1224778

Haq, M. U., Shamim, N., & Luqman, M. (2020). Foreign aid, political institutions and economic freedom: Empirical evidence from selected developing countries. *The Lahore Journal of Economics*, *25*(1), 153–178. https://doi.org/10.35536/lje.2020.v25.i1.a6

Hoare, Q. & Nowell Smith, G. (1971). *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci, edited and translated*. The Electric Book Company Ltd.

Hodgson, H. (2010). Theories of distributive justice: Frameworks for equity, *Journal of the Australasian Tax Teachers Association*, 5(1), 86–116.

Holloway, I. (1997). Basic concepts for qualitative research. Wiley-Blackwell.

Horkheimer, M. (1982). *Critical theory: Selected essays*. Continuum Pub. Corp.

Hornberger, N. H. (2015). Selecting appropriate research methods in LPP research: Methodological rich points. In F. M. Hult & D. C. Johnson (Eds.), *Research methods in language policy and planning*, pp. 9–20, John Wiley.

Hossain, Md. A. (2017). Bureaucratic system in Bangladesh. *Review of Public Administration & Management*, *5*(2). https://doi.org/10.4172/2315-7844.1000214

Howe, D. (2009). *A brief introduction to social work*. Palgrave.

Hudson, B., Hunter, D., & Peckham, S. (2019). Policy failure and the policy–implementation gap: Can policy support programs help? *Policy Design & Practice*, *2*(1), 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1080/25741292.2018.1540378

Hulvershorn, K. & Mulholland, S. (2018). Restorative practices and the integration of social emotional learning as a path to positive school climates. *Journal of Research in Innovative Teaching & Learning*, *11*(1), 111- 123.

Ingraham, C. (2018, 6 February). How rising inequality hurts everyone, even the rich. *Washington Pos*t. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2018/02/06/how-rising-inequality-hurts-everyone-even-the-rich

International Disability and Development Consortium. (2013). *Make the post-MDG framework inclusive of persons with disabilities*. https://iddcconsortium.net/sites/default/files/resources-tools/files/mdg_position_paper_ida_iddc_oct2012_final.pdf

Islam, T. (2021, 14 August). How colonial rules shape Bangladesh. *Rising Bangladesh*. https://www.risingbd.com/english/campus/news/81606

Islam, N., Islam, S. A., Haque, M. I., & Ahmed, A. I. M. U. (Eds.) (2014). Beware, the middle class is being hijacked by the World Bank. *Bangladesh e-Journal of Sociology*, *11*(2), 1–142.

Islam, S.N.R. (2020, 02 January). Achievements and challenges in Bangladesh education. *The Financial Express*. https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/views/reviews/achievements-and-challenges-in-bangladesh-education-1577975979

Jackson, A. Y., & Mazzei, L. A. (2012). *Thinking with theory in qualitative research: Viewing data across multiple perspectives*. Routledge.

Jagtap, S. (2022). Co-design with marginalised people: designers' perceptions of barriers and enablers. *CoDesign*, *18*(3), 279-302.

Jarvis, J.M., & Henderson, L. (2014). Defining a coordinated approach to gifted education. *Australasian Journal of Gifted Education*, *23* (1), 5-14. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/307928828_Defining_a_coordinated_approach_to_gifted_education/stats

Jiménez-Ramírez, M., Luzón, A., Pereyra, M. A., & Torres, M. (2020). Social inclusion/exclusion of youth and rhetorical and symbolic illusions of social

change in recent Spanish education policy. In G. Fan & G. Popkewitz T. (Eds.), *Handbook of education policy studies* (pp. 131–163). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-8347-2_7

Johannessen, L. E. (2019). Negotiated Discretion: Redressing the Neglect of Negotiation in "Street-Level Bureaucracy". *Symbolic Interaction*, *42*(4), 513-538.

Kandulu, J., Wheeler, S., Zuo, A., & Sim, A. (2019). The impact of microcredit loans on school enrolment in Bangladesh. *The Journal of Development Studies*, 56(9), 1725–1744. https://doi.org/10.1080/00220388.2019.1703954

Kern, F., & Rogge, K. S. (2018). Harnessing theories of the policy process for analysing the politics of sustainability transitions: A critical survey. *Environmental innovation and societal transitions*, *27*, 102-117. https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/131364749.pdf

Khan, A. R. (2016). Policy implementation: Some aspects and issues. *Journal of Community Positive Practices*, *16*(3), 3–12.

Khan, M. H. (2018). Political settlements and the analysis of institutions. *African Affairs*, *117*(469), 636–655. https://doi.org/10.1093/afraf/adx044

Khan, T. A., Rahman, M. M., Hornby, G., Sutherland, D., Everatt, J., & Greenwood, J. (2015, 15 March). Inclusive education in Bangladesh: Challenges and recommendations. *The Daily New Nation*. http://thedailynewnation.com/news/46305/inclusive-wducation-in-bangladesh--challenges-and-recommendations.html.

Kiger, M. E., & Varpio, L. (2020). Thematic analysis of qualitative data: AMEE Guide No. 131. *Medical teacher*, *42*(8), 846-854.

King, L. (2016, 10 May). Sen explores how narrow concepts of identity imperil global security. *Emory News Center*. https://news.emory.edu/stories/2016/05/er_amartya_sen_coverage%20/campus.html

Knight, C., & Crick, T. (2021). A New model for an inclusive curriculum: The coherence of special educational needs and national curriculum reform in wales. In *American Educational Research Association (AERA) Annual Meeting*. *ECNU review of Education*, 1-26.

Korstjens, I., & Moser, A. (2018). Series: Practical guidance to qualitative research. Part 4: Trustworthiness and publishing. *European Journal of General Practice*, *24*(1), 120-124.

https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/13814788.2017.1375092?needAcce

Krischler, M., Powell, J. J., & Pit-Ten Cate, I. M. (2019). What is meant by inclusion? On the effects of different definitions on attitudes toward inclusive education. *European Journal of Special Needs Education, 35*(4), 632-648. https://doi.org/10.1080/08856257.2019.1580837

Kuper, H., Saran, A., & White, H. (2018). *Rapid evidence assessment (REA) of what works to improve educational outcomes for people with disabilities in low- and middle-income countries.* International Centre for Evidence in Disability. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/738206/Education_Rapid_Review_full_report.pdf

Labuschagne, A. (2003). Qualitative research: Airy fairy or fundamental? *The Qualitative Report, 8*(1), Article 7. http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR8 1/labuschagne.html.

Lamichhane, K., & Kawakatsu, Y. (2015). Disability and determinants of schooling: A case from Bangladesh. *International Journal of Educational Development, 40,* 98-105.

Larsen, T. C., Holloway, J., & Hamre, B. (2019). How is an inclusive agenda possible in an excluding education system? Revisiting the Danish dilemma. *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 23*(10), 1049-1064. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2019.1626497

Laruffa, F. (2019). What is a capability-enhancing social policy? Individual autonomy, democratic citizenship and the insufficiency of the employment-focused paradigm. *Journal of Human Development & Capabilities, 21*(1), 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1080/19452829.2019.1661983

Lawson, A., & Beckett, A. E. (2021). The social and human rights models of disability: towards a complementarity thesis. *The International Journal of Human Rights, 25*(2), 348-379.

Legislative and Parliamentary Affairs Division (2019). *The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh* (ACT NO. OF 1972). http://bdlaws.minlaw.gov.bd/act-367.html

Le Guin, U. K. (1969). *The left hand of darkness.* ACE Books.

Li, L. (2021). How to think about media policy silence. Media, Culture & Society, 43(2), 359–368. https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443720948004

Li, X., Andersen, T. J., & Hallin, C. A. (2019). A Zhong–Yong perspective on balancing the top-down and bottom-up processes in strategy-making. *Cross Cultural & Strategic Management*, *26*(3), 313–336. https://doi.org/10.1108/CCSM-01-2019-0018

Liamputtong, P. (2019). *Qualitative research methods* (5th ed.). Oxford University Press.

Maguire, M., Braun, A., & Ball, S. (2015). 'Where you stand depends on where you sit': The social construction of policy enactments in the (English) secondary school. *Discourse*, *36*(4), 485–499. https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2014.977022

Mahembe, E. & Odhiambo, N. M. (2017). On the link between foreign aid and poverty reduction in developing countries. *Revista Galega de Economia*, *26*(2), 113–132. https://doi.org/10.15304/rge.26.2.4456

Mahlo, D. (2017). *Teaching learners with diverse needs in the foundation phase in Gauteng Province, South Africa*. *SAGE Open, 7*(1). https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244017697162

Malkani, R., & Rose, R. (2018). Learning from the voices of first generation learners in a remote community of Maharashtra, India. *International Journal of Whole Schooling*, *14*(2), 104–127.

Martinus, K., & Reilly, B. (2020). To boundary or not: The structural bias of 'fair representation' in rural areas. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 79, 136-144. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2020.08.039

Mason, J. (2017). *Qualitative researching*. Sage.

Mazur, A. G. (1996). *Gender bias and the state: symbolic reform at work in fifth republic France*. University of Pittsburgh Pre.

McCulloch, D. (2020). Foreign aid boosted by Pacific virus funds. *The Young Witness*. https://www.youngwitness.com.au/story/6958401/foreign-aid-boosted-by-pacific-virus-funds/

McKay, C. (2018). The value of contact: Unpacking Allport's contact theory to support inclusive education. *Palaestra*, *32*(1), 21–25.

McMillan, J. H., & Schumacher, S. (2014). *Research in education: Evidence based Inquiry*. Pearson Education

Megan, L. (2015). Symbolic policy and the educational myth of biculturalism. *Knowledge Culture*, *3*(5), 49–60.

Mendonca, S. T. (2018). Poverty as lack of capabilities: An analysis of the definition of poverty of Amartya Sen. *PERI*, *9*(2), 125–148.

Meng, X., & Ryan, J. (2010).Does a food for education programe affect school outcomes? The Bangladesh Case. *Journal of Population Economics*, 23 (2), 415-447. https://www.jstor.org/stable/i20685322

Merriam, S.B. (2009). Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation. Jossey-Bass.

Messiou, K. (2019). The missing voices: Students as a catalyst for promoting inclusive education. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *23*(7–8), 768–781. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2019.1623326

Mik-Meyer, N. (2016). Othering, ableism and disability: A discursive analysis of co-workers' construction of colleagues with visible impairments. Human Relations, 69(6), 1341–1363. https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726715618454

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. Sage.

Miller, G. (2018). *Rise: Life lessons in speaking out, standing tall & leading the way*. Canongate.

Ming, N. C., & Goldenberg, L. B. (2021). Research worth using: (Re) framing research evidence quality for educational policymaking and practice. *Review of Research in Education*, *45*(1), 129-169.

Ministry of Education. (2010). *The National Education Policy 2010*. Government of Bangladesh. https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/02.National-Education-Policy-2010-English.pdf

Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs. (2019). *The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh*. http://bdlaws.minlaw.gov.bd/print_sections_all.php?id=367

Ministry of Primary and Mass Education. (2007). *Education for All: National Plan of Action II*. Government of Bangladesh.

Ministry of Primary and Mass Education. (2015). *EFA 2015 national review*. Government of Bangladesh.

Ministry of Social Welfare. (2001). *The Bangladesh Persons with Disabilities Welfare Act 2001*. BG Press.

Ministry of Women and Children Affairs. (2011). *National children policy 2011*. http://ecd-bangladesh.net/document/documents/National-Children-Policy-2011-English-04.12.2012.pdf

Mitchell, R. (2017). Inclusive education in sub-Saharan Africa. In E. Sarton, M. Smith, & D. Were (Eds.). *Inclusive education in Uganda: Examples of best practice*, 17-34. Enable-Ed.

Mizunoya, S. (2018). *Progress in measuring global school enrolment gaps for children with disabilities* [Online forum post]. UNICEF. https://blogs.unicef.org/evidence-for-action/progress-in-measuring-global-school-enrollment-gaps-for-children-with-disabilities/

Moore, M. (2020). *Share of rural population in Bangladesh from 2009 to 2018*. Statista. https://www.statista.com/statistics/760934/bangladesh-share-of-rural-population

Mostowlansky, T., & Rota, A. (2020). Emic and etic. In F. Stein, S. Lazar, M. Candea, H. Diemberger, J. Robbins, A. Sanchez & R. Stasch (Eds.). *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Anthropology*. http://doi.org/10.29164/20emicetic

Mousumi, A. M., & Kusakabe, T. (2020). School education in Bangladesh. *Handbook of Education Systems in South Asia*, Global Education Systems. Springer, Singapore. *1*(36), 443-477. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-3309-5_11-1

Mphahlele, L. (2020). Context-specific inclusive education: A local perspective on the enterprise. *Educational Research & Reviews*, *15*(5), 210–213. https://doi.org/10.5897/ERR2020.3951

Mueller, B. (2020). Why public policies fail: Policymaking under complexity. *Economica, 21*(2), 311–323. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econ.2019.11.002

Munger, F., McLeod, T., & Loomis, C. (2016). Social change: Toward an informed and critical understanding of social justice and the capabilities approach in community psychology. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *57*(1–2), 171–180. https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12034

Mura, G., Alcaraz, A. O., Aleotti, F., Cobo, O. M., Gomez, M. R., & Diamantini, D. (2020). Inclusive education in Spain and Italy: Evolution and current debate. *Journal of Inclusive Education in Research & Practice*, 1(1), 1–23.

Murmu, K. S. (2019). *Human rights report 2018 on Indigenous peoples in Bangladesh*. Kapaeeng Foundation. https://www.kapaeengnet.org/category/human-rights-report/

Mutanga, O. (2018). Inclusion of students with disabilities in South African higher education. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*, *65*(2), 229-242. https://doi.org/10.1080/1034912X.2017.1368460

Muthukrishna, N. & Engelbrecht, P. (2018). Decolonising inclusive education in lower income, Southern African educational contexts. *South African Journal of Education, 38*(4), 1–11. https://doi.org/10.15700/saje.v38n4a1701

Mutua, J. N., & Kiruhi, T. M. (2021). Village Elders' Participation in Public Governance in Kenya: A Phenomenological Study. *Open Journal of Leadership, 10*(2), 110-128. https://doi.org/10.4236/ojl.2021.102008

Nachman, B. R. & Brown, K.R. (2019). Omission and Othering: Constructing Autism on Community College Websites, *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, *44*(3), 211-223.

National Health and Medical Research Council (2007). *NHMRC Privacy Policy*. https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/privacy

Nazeer, A. (2018). *Education for all and international assistance: A case study of Bangladesh and Pakistan*. IBON International and IDRAC. https://www.academia.edu/36547240/Education_for_All_and_International_Assistance_-_The_Cases_of_Bangladesh_and_Pakistan

Nesterova, Y., & Young, G. (2020). *Education Policies, Systems, and Progress in Africa and Asia: A comparative analysis of 12 cities in six countries*. Centre for Sustainable, Healthy and Learning Cities and Neighbourhoods. http://www.centreforsustainablecities.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Education-Policies-Systems-and-Progress-in-Africa-and-Asia.pdf

Nguyen, V. H., & Obaidul, M. H. (2015). Educational policy borrowing in a globalised world: A case study of common European framework of reference for languages in a Vietnamese university. *English Teaching: Practice & Critique*, *14*(1), 60–74. https://doi.org/10.1108/ETPC-02-2015-0014

Nisa, Zeb-un, Mustafa, G. , Zahid Yaseen, Z., Muhammad Arslan, M., & Muhammad Imran, M. (2021). Theoretical Approaches to Study Public Policy: An Analysis of the Cyclic/Stages euristic Model. *PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt / Egyptology, 18*(10), 1307-1321. Retrieved from https://archives.palarch.nl/index.php/jae/article/view/10010

Niyonkuru, F. (2016). Failure of foreign aid in developing countries: A quest for alternatives. *Business Economics Journal*, *7*(3), 1-9. https://doi.org/10.4172/2151-6219.1000231

Nozick, R. (1974). Distributive justice. In D. Matravers & J. Pike (Eds.), *Debates in contemporary political philosophy: An anthology* (pp. 73-81). Routledge.

Nuri, R.P., Ghahari, S., Aldersey, H.M., & Huque, A.S. (2020). Exploring access to government-led support for children with disabilities in Bangladesh. *PLoS ONE 15*(7), e0235439. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0235439

Nussbaum, M. C. (2006). *Frontiers for justice: Disability, nationality, species, membership*. The Tanner Lectures on Human Values. Harvard University Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv1c7zftw

Nussbaum, M. C. (2011). *Creating capabilities: The human development approach.* The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. https://doi.org/10.4159/harvard.9780674061200

Nzinga, K., Rapp, D. N., Leatherwood, C., Easterday, M., Rogers, L. O., Gallagher, N., & Medin, D. L. (2018). Should social scientists be distanced from or engaged with the people they study?. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *115*(45), 11435-11441. https://www.pnas.org/doi/full/10.1073/pnas.1721167115

Oando, S. & Akinyi, C. (2019). Discrimination in education of children living with disability: Tales of gender based experiences in Homa Bay County. In A. J. Jaworski (Ed.), *Advances in sociology research* (Vol. 27, pp. 129–146). Nova Science Publishers.

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2012). *Equity and quality in education: Supporting marginalised students and schools*. https://www.oecd.org/education/school/50293148.pdf

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2019). *Inequality hurts economic growth, finds OECD research*, https://www.oecd.org/newsroom/inequality-hurts-economic-growth.htm

Okeowhor, D., Okoh, J. O., Baakel, A., & Okolo, O. J. (2019). Poverty: A major challenge to the African rural educational system development and the way forward. *Asian Journal of Education & Social Studies*, *3*(3), 1–7. https://doi.org/10.9734/ajess/2019/v3i330098

Okwayn, A., & Kamusiime, A. (2017). Foregrounding the tensions and silences in education policies for student-mothers in Uganda and Kenya. *Childhood in Africa*, *4*(1), 57–69.

O'Leary, Z. (2017). *The essential guide to doing your research project*. Sage.

Olk, S. (2019). *Education for children with disabilities in Bangladesh*. Borgen Project. https://borgenproject.org/education-for-children-with-disabilities-in-bangladesh/

Oliver, M. (2018). *Understanding disability: From theory to practice*. Bloomsbury.

Olson, K. (2016). *Essentials of Qualitative Interviewing*. Taylor & Francis.

Opoku, M. P., Badu, E., Amponteng, M., & Agyei-Okyere, E. (2015). Inclusive education at the crossroads in Ashanti and BrongAhafo regions in Ghana: Target not achievable by 2015. *Disability, CBR and Inclusive Development*, *26*(1), 63-78 https://doi.org/10.5463/dcid.v26i1.401

Otieno, O. S., & Onyango, W. P. (2018). Influence of socio-culture on the empowerment of persons with disabilities in Rachuonyo South—Homa-Bay County, Kenya. *IOSR Journal of Humanities & Social Science*, *23*(8), 81–103.

Parpart, J. L., & Parashar, S. (2019). Rethinking the power of silence in insecure and gendered sites. In J. L. Parpart & S. Parashar (Eds.), *Rethinking silence, voice and agency in contested gendered terrains: Beyond the binary* (pp. 1-15). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315180458

Patrón, P. (2019). Power and deliberative participation in Sen's capability approach. In D. Clark, M. Biggeri, & A. Frediani, (Eds.), *The capability approach, empowerment and participation* (pp. 55-74) (Rethinking International Development series). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-35230-9_3

Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice*. Sage.

Peters, B. G. (2021). *Advanced introduction to public policy*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

Phasha, N., Mahlo, D., & Dei, G. J. (2017). Inclusive schooling and education in African contexts. In N. Phasha, D. Mahlo, & G. Dei (Eds.), *Inclusive education in African contexts* (Vol. *5*, pp. 1–17). Sense. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-6300-803-7_1

Potter, S. (2019). Music, identity and national cohesion in Mali: The role of music in the post-colonial era. *Contemporary Voices*: *The St Andrews Journal of International Relations*, *1*(3), 51–74. https://doi.org/10.15664/jtr.1489

Poveda, S., & Roberts, T. (2018). Critical agency and development: Applying Freire and Sen to ICT4D in Zambia and Brazil. *Information Technology for Development*, *24*(1), 119–137. https://doi.org/10.1080/02681102.2017.1328656

Power, S., Newton, N. & Taylor, C. (2020). 'Successful futures' for all in Wales? The challenges of curriculum reform for addressing educational inequalities. *The Curriculum Journal*, *31*(2), 317–333. https://doi.org/10.1002/curj.39

Powney, J., & Watts, M. (2018). *Interviewing in educational research*. Routledge.

Provision, 2022. *In Collins English Dictionary.com*. *Retrieved May 31, 2022, from* https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/provision

Price, R. (2018). *Inclusive and special education approaches in developing countries* (K4D Helpdesk Report 373). Institute of Development Studies. https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/20.500.12413/14284

Punch, K. F. (2014). *Introduction to social research* (3rd ed). Sage.

Rahaman, M. M. (2017). *Inclusive education aspirations: Exploration of policy and practice in Bangladesh secondary schools* [Unpublished PhD thesis]. University of Canterbury, New Zealand. https://doi.org/10.26021/9661

Rahman, M. (Ed.) (2020). *Four years of SDGs in Bangladesh: Non-state actors as delivery partners*. Centre for Policy Dialogue. http://hdl.handle.net/11540/11540

Rahman, Md. S., & Tosun, J. (2018). State bureaucracy and the management of climate change adaptation in Bangladesh. *Review of Policy Research*, *35*(6), 835–858. https://doi.org/10.1111/ropr.12289

Rahman, N.E. (2018). Traditional Bureaucratic Culture as an Impeding Factor in Implementing New Public Management in Bangladesh, *South Asian Journal of Social Studies and Economics*, 1(1), 1-6. https://journalsajsse.com/index.php/SAJSSE/article/view/25773/48222

Rana, S. M. M. (2019, 20 February). Language Movement of 1952: Birth of Bangladesh. *Daily Asian Age*. https://dailyasianage.com/news/164394/language-movement-of-1952-birth-of-bangladesh

Rawls, J. (1999). *A theory of justice*. Harvard University Press. https://doi.org/10.4159/9780674042582

Rawls, J. (2001). *Justice as fairness: A restatement*. Belknap Press.

Reid, K. (2020). *Rohingya refugee crisis: Facts, FAQs, and how to help*. World Vision. https://www.worldvision.org/refugees-news-stories/rohingya-refugees-bangladesh-facts

Retief, M. & Letšosa, R., (2018) Models of disability: A brief overview. HTS Teologiese Studies/ Theological Studies, *74*(1), a4738. https://doi.org/ 10.4102/hts.v74i1.4738

Rieser, R. (2017). *Inclusive education in Bangladesh*. The Alliance for Inclusive Education. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315208602-9

Rizvi, F. (2016). *Privatisation in education: Trends and consequences* (Education Research & Foresight series, No. 18). UNESCO. https://en.unesco.org/node/262287

Rizvi, F. (2017). *Globalization and the neoliberal imaginary of educational reform* (Education Research & Foresight Working Papers series, No. 20). UNESCO. https://en.unesco.org/node/262287

Rizvi, F. & Lingard, B. (2010). *Globalizing education policy*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203867396

Robinson, O. C. (2014). Sampling in interview-based qualitative research: A theoretical and practical guide. *Qualitative research in psychology*, *11*(1), 25-41.

Rolfe, G. (2004). Validity, trustworthiness, and rigor: Quality and the idea of qualitative research. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, *53*(3), 304–310.

Rose, R. (2017). Seeking practice informed policy for inclusive education in India. *Asian Journal of Inclusive Education*, *5*(1), 5–22.

Rossman, G. B., & Rallis, S. F. (2017). *An introduction to qualitative research: Learning in the field* (4th ed.). Sage. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781071802694

Rouf, A. (2021). Ten Years of the National Education Policy in Bangladesh: Examining the Policy Directions and Implementation Gaps. *Jagannath University Journal of Arts*, 11 (2). 221-232.

Roy, P. (2018). Effects of poverty on education in India. *Journal of Emerging Technologies & Innovative Research*, *5*(8), 331–336. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3640322

Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (2014). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data* (4th ed.). Sage.

Rudolph, N. (2017). Hierarchies of knowledge, incommensurabilities and silences in South African ECD policy: Whose knowledge counts? *Journal of Pedagogy*, *8*(1), 77–98. https://doi.org/10.1515/jped-2017-0004

Ruud, A.E. (2020). The mohol: The hidden power structure of Bangladesh local politics. *Contribution to Indian Sociology*, *54*(2), 173-192, Sage. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0069966720914055

Sabatier, P. A., & Weible, C. M. (Eds.). (2014). *Theories of the policy process*. Westview press.

Sadiki, M.C., Watermeyer, B. & Abrahams, N.T. (2021). 'Transitioning to a life with disability in rural South Africa: A qualitative study', *African Journal of Disability, 10*(0), a697. https://doi.org/10.4102/ajod.v10i0.697

Sakellariou, M., Strati, P., & Anagnostopoulou, R. (2019). The role of social skills throughout inclusive education implementation. *East African Scholars Journal of Education, Humanities & Literature*, *2*(10), 633–641.

Sarker, D. (2020). Discrimination against people with disabilities in accessing microfinance. *Alter*, *14*(4), 318–328. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.alter.2020.06.005 https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-31816-5_3883-1.

Sarker, M. N. I., Wu, M., & Hossin, M. A. (2019). Economic effect of school dropout in Bangladesh. *International Journal of Information & Education Technology*, *9*(2), 136–142. https://doi.org/10.18178/ijiet.2019.9.2.1188

Schroeder, E. (2020). The impact of microcredit borrowing on household consumption in Bangladesh. *Applied Economics, 52*(43), 4765–4779. https://doi.org/10.1080/00036846.2020.1743815

Schuelka, M. J. (2018). Implementing inclusive education. *K4D Helpdesk*. https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/bitstream/handle/20.500.12413/14230/374_Implementing_Inclusive_Education.pdf?sequence=1

Scott, D., Terano, M., Slee, R., Husbands, C., & Wilkins, R. (2016). *Policy transfer and educational change*. Sage. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781473957824

Seidman, I. (2006). *Interviewing as qualitative research: a guide for researchers in education and the social sciences* (3rd ed.). New York.

Selwyn, B. (2011). Liberty limited? A sympathetic re-engagement with Amartya Sen's development as freedom. *Economic & Political Weekly*, *46*(37), 68–76.

Sen, A. (1979, 22 May). *Equality of what?* The Tanner Lectures on Human Values. Stanford University. http://www.ophi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Sen-1979_Equality-of-What.pdf

Sen, A. (1985). Well-being, agency and freedom. The Dewey lectures, 1984. *The Journal of Philosophy*, *82*(4), 169–221. https://doi.org/10.2307/2026184

Sen, A. (1992). *Inequality re-examined*. Harvard University Press.

Sen, A. (1993). Capability and wellbeing. In M. C. Nussbaum & A. Sen (Eds.), *The quality of life* (pp. 30–53). Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/0198287976.003.0003

Sen, A. (1999). *Development as freedom*. Oxford Paperbacks.

Sen, A. (2000). *Social exclusion: Concept, application and scrutiny* (Social Development Paper No. 1). Office of Environment and Social Development. Asian Development Bank. https://www.think-asia.org/bitstream/handle/11540/2339/social-exclusion.pdf

Sen, A. (2002). *How to judge globalism*. The American Prospect. http://prospect.org/article/how-judge-globalism

Sen, A. (2003, 29 October). The importance of basic education. *The Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/education/2003/oct/28/schools.uk4.

Sen, A. (2005). Human rights and capabilities. *Journal of Human Development & Capabilities, 6*(2), 151–166. https://doi.org/10.1080/14649880500120491

Sen, A. (2011). *The idea of justice*. Belknap Press. https://doi.org/10.5840/socphiltoday20112717

Sen, A. & Tasioulas, J. (2018). Capabilities, development and human rights: A conversation with Amartya Sen. *ABC Religion and Ethics, ABC News*. https://www.abc.net.au/religion/conversation-with-amartya-sen/10599038.

Shai, P. N. (2020). A local researcher's experiences of the insider–outsider position: An exercise of self-reflexivity during ethnographic GBV and HIV prevention research in South Africa. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 19,* 1–4. https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406920938563

Shaeffer, S. (2019). Inclusive education: a prerequisite for equity and social justice. *Asia Pacific Educ. 20* (2), 181–192. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12564-019-09598-w

Shaikh, A. A. (2019). *Inclusive education: An introduction.* Leonard Cheshire Disability. https://www.academia.edu/34481373/Inclusive_Education_An_Introduction.

Sharma, U., Loreman, T., & Macanawai, S. (2016). Factors contributing to the implementation of inclusive education in Pacific island countries. *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 20* (4), 397–412. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2015.1081636

Shebba, J. & Ainscow, M. (1996). International developments in inclusive schooling: Mapping the issues. *Cambridge Journal of Education, 26*(1), 5–18. https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764960260101

Shenton, A. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for Information, 22* (2), 63-75.

Silva-Pena, I., Thomas, A. P., O'Brien, V., & Jara, C. (2020). Far away, but yet so close. Urban teacher education and rural schools: Directors' point of view. *International*

Journal of Inclusive Education, Published online June 2020. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2020.1772892

Silverman, D. (2016). *Qualitative research*. Sage

Singal, N. (2016). Education of children with disabilities in India and Pakistan: Critical analysis of developments in the last 15 years. *Prospects, 46,* 171–173. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11125-016-9383-4

Skocpol, T. (1988). Comparing National Systems of Social Provisión: A Polity Centered Approach. *ponencia presentada en la Reunión Anual de la Asociación Internacional de Ciencia Política en Washington, DC*.

Slee, R. (2001a). *The inclusive school*. Falmer.

Slee, R. (2001b). Driven to the margins: Disabled students, inclusive schooling and the politics of possibility, *Cambridge Journal of Education*, *31*(3), 385–397. https://doi.org/10.1080/03057640120086620

Slee, R. (2001c). Social justice and the changing directions in educational research: The case of inclusive education. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *5*(2/3), 167–177. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603110010035832

Slee, R. (2001d). Inclusion in practice: Does practice make perfect?. *Educational Review*, *53*(2), 113–123. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131910120055543

Slee, R. (2004). Inclusive education: A framework for school reform. In V. Heung & M. Ainscow (Eds.), *Inclusive education: A framework for reform* (pp. 29-66). Hong Kong Institute of Education.

Slee, R. (2006). Limits to and possibilities for educational reform, *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *10*(2–3), 109–119. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603110600578372

Slee, R. (2008). Beyond special and regular schooling? An inclusive education reform agenda. *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, *18*(2), 99–116. https://doi.org/10.1080/09620210802351342

Slee, R. (2011). *The irregular school: Exclusion, schooling and inclusive education*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203831564

Slee, R. (2012). The labelling and categorisation of children with EBD: A cautionary consideration. In *The Routledge International companion to emotional and behavioural difficulties* (pp. 42-51). Routledge.

Slee, R. (2013). Meeting some challenges of inclusive education in an age of exclusion. *Asian Journal of Inclusive Education, 1*(2), 3–17. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2011.602534

Slee, R. (2014). Beyond special and regular schooling? An inclusive education reform agenda, *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, *18*(2), 99–116. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09620210802351342

Slee, R. (2018). *Inclusive education isn't dead, it just smells funny*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429486869

Slee, R. (2019). Belonging in an age of exclusion. *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 23*(9), 909-922. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2019.1602366

Slee, R., & Allan, J. (2001). Excluding the included: A reconsideration of inclusive education. *International Studies in Sociology of Education, 11*(2), 173–192. https://doi.org/10.1080/09620210100200073

Slee, R., Weiner, G. & Tomlinson, S. (1998). *School effectiveness for whom? Challenges to the school effectiveness and school improvement movements*. Falmer.

Smit, E. & Nel, V. (2018). Spatial divided campus: Divided spatial subculture. *International Planning Studies*, *23*(3), 239–249. https://doi.org/10.1080/13563475.2018.1439369

Smogorzewska, J., Szumski, G., & Grygiel, P. (2020). Theory of mind goes to school: Does educational environment influence the development of theory of mind in middle childhood? *PLoS One*, 15, e0237524. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0237524

Somekh, B., & Lewin, C. (Eds.). (2005). *Research methods in the social sciences*. Sage.

Spivak, G. C. (1988). Can the subaltern speak? In C. Nelson & L. Grossberg. (Eds.), *Marxism and the interpretation of culture* (pp. 271–313). Macmillan Education. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-19059-1_20

Spivak, G. C. (1990). Question of multiculturalism. In G. C. Spivak & S. Harasyn (Eds.), *The post-colonial critic: Interviews, strategies, dialogues* (pp. 59–66). Routledge.

Spivak, G. C. (1999). *A critique of postcolonial reason: Toward a history of the vanishing present.* Harvard University Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvjsf541

Spivak, G. C. (2005). Scattered speculations on the subaltern and the popular. *Postcolonial Studies*, *8*(4), 475–486. https://doi.org/10.1080/13688790500375132

Spivak, G. C. (2012a). *An aesthetic education in the era of globalization.* Harvard University Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv1n1bsfh

Spivak, G. C. (2012b). The Political Economy of Women as Seen by a Literary Critic. In E. Weed (Ed.), *Coming to Terms: Feminism, Theory, Politics* (pp. 218-229). Routledge.

Spivak, G. C. (2015). Can the subaltern speak. In P. Williams & L. Chrisman. (Eds.), *Colonial discourse and post-colonial theory: A reader* (pp. 67–111). Columbia University Press.

Stahl, N.A., & King, J. R. (2020). Expanding Approaches for Research: Understanding and Using Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research. *Journal of Developmental Education*, 44(1), 26-28. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1320570.pdf

Steiner-Khamsi, G. (2014). Cross-national policy borrowing: understanding reception and translation. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, *34*(2), 153-167.

Steiner-Khamsi, G. (2016). New directions in policy borrowing research. *Asia Pacific Education Review*, *17*(3), 381–390. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12564-016-9442-9

Strauss, A. L., & Corbin, J. (2015). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (4th ed.). Sage.

Tamayo, M., Rebolledo, J., & Besoain-Saldana, A. (2017). Monitoring inclusive education in Chile: Differences between urban and rural areas. *International Journal of Educational Development*, *53*, 110–116. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2017.01.002

Tan, C. (2016). Tensions and challenges in China's education policy borrowing. *Educational Research*, *58(*2), 195–206. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131881.2016.1165551

Tawell, A., & McCluskey, G. (2022). Utilising Bacchi's what's the problem represented to be? (WPR) approach to analyse national school exclusion policy in England and Scotland: a worked example. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*, *45*(2), 137-149.

Tazrian, A. S. (2020). *Bangladesh: Caste on the streets: Dhaka's street cleaners, many of them Dalits, faced a grim future even before the pandemic*. Europe Solidaire Sans Frontières. http://www.europe-solidaire.org/spip.php?article54293

Terry, G., Hayfield, N., Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2017). Thematic analysis. *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research in psychology*, *2*, 17-37.

Terzi, L. (2010). *Justice and equality in education: A capability perspective on disability and special educational needs*. Continuum International Publishing Group.

Terzi, L. (2014). Reframing inclusive education: Educational equality as capability equality. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, *44*(4), 479-493.

The World Bank. (2010). *Bangladesh: Reaching Out-of-School Children*. https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2010/05/04/reaching-out-to-school-children

The World Bank (2016). *In Bangladesh, Children Get a Second Chance at Education*. https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2016/10/05/bangladeshi-children-get-a-second-chance-at-education

The World Bank. (2020). *Globally Bangladesh is a model for poverty reduction*. https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2020/01/29/globally-bangladesh-is-a-model-for-poverty-reduction-world-bank

Thompson, S. (2020). *Bangladesh Situational Analysis*. Disability Inclusive Development. https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/bitstream/handle/20.500.12413/15525/DID%20SITAN%20Bangladesh%20Version%20II%20June%202020.pdf?sequence=1

Thompson, I., McCluskey, G., Cole, T., Daniels, H., & Tawell, A. (2022). Exclusion from school in Scotland and across the UK: Contrasts and questions. *British Educational Research Journal*, *45*(6), 1140–1159. https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.3555

Tierney, W. G., Sabharwal, N. S., & Malish, C. M. (2018). Inequitable structure: Class and caste in Indian higher education. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *25*(5), 471–481. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800418817836

Timothy, S. & Agbenyega, J.S. (2019): Insider perspectives on catalysing the development and use of individualised education plans. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *26*(2), 160-174. DOI: 10.1080/13603116.2019.1642401

Tincani, M., & Travers, J. (2019). Replication Research, Publication Bias, and Applied Behavior Analysis. *Perspectives on Behavior Science*, *42*(1), 59–75. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40614-019-00191-5

Trines, S. (2019). Education in Bangladesh. *World Education News & Reviews.* https://wenr.wes.org/2019/08/education-in-bangladesh

Trivelli, C., & Morel, J. (2020). *Rural youth inclusion, empowerment and participation* (IFAD Research Series 45). https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3520627

Tromp, R. E. & Datzberger, S. (2019). Global education policies versus local realities. Insights from Uganda and Mexico. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative & International Education, 51*(3), 356-374. https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2019.1616163

Tsokova, D., & Becirevic, M. (2015). Current developments with inclusive education policy and practice in Bulgaria and Bosnia and Herzegovina. *Hungarian Educational Research Journal*, *5*(2), 1–17.

Tuia, T. T., & Iyer, R. (2015). Samoa's education policy: Negotiating a hybrid space for values. *The International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives, 14*(2), 125–133.

Ministry of Primary and Mass Education. (2014). *EFA 2015 national review: Bangladesh*. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000230507

United Nations. (2006). *Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities and optional protocol*. http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convoptprot-e.pdf

United Nations. (2014). *The Millennium Development Goals report*. http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/MDGReport2014_PR_Global_English.pdf

United Nations. (2015a). *Transforming our world: The 2030 agenda for sustainable development* (UN Doc. A/70/L.1). https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/21252030%20Agenda%20for%20Sustainable%20Development%20web.pdf

United Nations. (2015b). *Universal declaration of human rights*. http://www.un.org/en/udhrbook/pdf/udhr_booklet_en_web.pdf

United Nations. (2016). *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. General Comment No. 4, Article 24: Right to Inclusive Education, Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). https://www.right-to-education.org/sites/right-to-education.org/files/resource-attachments/CRPD_General_Comment_4_Inclusive_Education_2016_En.pdf

United Nations. (2017). *Bangladesh: Taking action for sustainable development*. https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/wpcontent/uploads/2017/07/Bangladesh_GenderEquality.pdf

United Nations. (2018). *2018 Revision of world urbanization prospects*. Department of Economics and Social Affairs. https://www.un.org/development/desa/publications/2018-revision-of-world-urbanization-prospects.html

United Nations. (2019). *Disability inclusion strategy*. https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2019/03/UNDIS_20-March-2019_for-HLCM.P.pdf

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. (2002). *Biwako millennium framework for action towards an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based society for persons with disabilities in Asia and the Pacific*. http://undocs.org/E/ESCAP/APDDP/4/REV.1

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (1990, 5-9 March). *Meeting basic learning needs: A vision for the 1990s* [Background document]. World Conference on Education for All. Meeting Basic Learning Needs, Jomtien, Thailand. http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0009/000975/097552e.pdf

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (1994). *The Salamanca statement and framework for action on special needs education.* https://www.right-to-education.org/sites/right-to-education.org/files/resource-attachments/Salamanca_Statement_1994.pdf

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2000). *The Dakar framework for action.* Office of the Assistant Director-General for Education. http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001211/121147e.pdf

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2006). *The right to education for persons with disabilities: Towards inclusion, a flagship under the Education for All program*. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000137873

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2009). *Policy guidelines on inclusion in education*. http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0017/001778/177849e.pdf

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (2017a). *Funding Gap for education growing, according to new figures by UNESCO*. http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/in-focus-articles/funding-gap-for-education-growing-according-to-new-figures-released-by-unesco-study-also-proposes-ways-to-close-it/

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2017b). *Muscat global meeting calls for a strong education goal in the development agenda for post-2015*. http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/in-focus articles/ muscat-global-meeting-calls-for-a-strong-education-goal-in-the-development-agenda-for-post-2015/

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2018a). *World Heritage Convention, The Sundarbans*. https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/798.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2018b). *Education and disability: Analysis of data from 49 countries* (Information Paper No. 49). http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/ip49-education-disability-2018-en.pdf.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2019). *International Mother Language Day*. https://en.unesco.org/commemorations/motherlanguageday

United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund. (1989). *Convention on the rights of the child*. https://www.unicefirc.org/portfolios/crc.html

United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund. (2016). *Education for all? Measuring inequality in education outcomes among 15-year-olds across 39 industrialised nations*. https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/IWP_2016_08.pdf

United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund. (2017). Inclusive Education: Understanding Article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. https://www.unicef.org/eca/sites/unicef.org.eca/files/IE_summary_accessible_220917_0.pdf

United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund. (2021). *Disability-Inclusive Education Practices in Bangladesh*. https://www.unicef.org/rosa/media/16986/file/Country%20Profile%20-%20Bangladesh.pdf

Unterhalter, E. (2013). *Education targets, indicators and a post-2015 development agenda: Education for All, the MDGs, and human development* (The Power of Numbers: A Critical Review of MDG Targets for Human Development and Human Rights, Working Paper series). https://cdn2.sph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/114/2017/12/Education-MDGs-Draft-4_Working-Paper.pdf

Vargas, C. (2017). *Lifelong learning from a social justice perspective* (Education Research and Foresight Working Papers series, No. 21). UNESCO. https://en.unesco.org/node/268820

Verger, A., Novelli, M., & Altinyelken, H. K. (2018). Global education policy and international development: A revisited introduction. In A. Verger, M. Novelli & H. K. Altinyelken (Eds.), *Global education policy and international development: New agendas, issues and policies* (2nd ed., pp. 1–34). Bloomsbury. https://doi.org/10.5040/9781474296052.ch-001

Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee. (2007). *Terms of reference*. https://www.vu.edu.au/sites/default/files/vuhrec-terms-of-reference_2020.pdf

Walford, G. (2012). Researching the powerful in education: A re-assessment of the problems. *International Journal of Research and Method in Education, 35*(2), 111- 118.

Wang, Y. (2018). Bargaining matters: An analysis of bilateral aid to developing countries. *Journal of International Relations & Development, 21*, 1–21. https://doi.org/10.1057/jird.2016.8

Webster, A. A. (2018). Translating theory to practice for principals working within inclusive education policy. In K. Trimmer, R. Dixon & Y. S. Findlay (Eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Education Law for Schools* (pp. 257-280). Palgrave Macmillan.

Weir, K. (2017). Power play. *APA, Monitor on Psychology*. *48*(4), 40. https://www.apa.org/monitor/2017/04/power-play

Williams, S. (2018). Overcoming the barriers to recruitment of underrepresented minorities. *Clinical Researcher*, *32*(7). 5-13 https://acrpnet.org/2018/08/14/overcoming-the-barriers-to-recruitment-of-underrepresented-minorities/.

Wolf, S. O. (2017). Not all were celebrating: Pakistan's 70 years of independence and its forgotten victims. *South Asia Democratic Forum*. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/355228989_Not_all_were_celebrating_Pakistan%27s_70_years_of_independence_and_its_forgotten_victims

Wood, T. (2020). The impact of Covid-19 on Australian foreign aid to Southeast Asia and the Pacific. *Journal of Australian Political Economy, 85,* 115–120.

World Health Organisation. (2015). *Immunisation*. http://www.searo.who.int/entity/immunization/topics/polio/eradication/bangladesh-home-grown-polio-solutions/en/

World Population Review. (2019). *Population of cities in Bangladesh.* http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/bangladesh-population/cities/

Wu, J. X., & He, L. Y (2017). Urban–rural gap and poverty traps in China: A prefecture level analysis. *Applied Economics*, *50*(30), 3300–3314. https://doi.org/10.1080/00036846.2017.1420890

Wykstra, S. (2019). *Microcredit was a hugely hyped solution to global poverty*. What happened? VOX. https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/2019/1/15/18182167/microcredit-microfinance-poverty-grameen-bank-yunus

Yan, Q., Li, C., Zhang, J., Ma, Z., & Luo, F. (2018). Uneven distribution of primary and middle schools: A case study of Changchun, China. *Frontiers of Education in China*, *13*(4), 633–655. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11516-018-0032-y

Yanow, D. (2017). Qualitative-interpretive methods in policy research. In *Handbook of public policy analysis* (pp. 431-442). Routledge.

Yin, R. K. (1994). Case study research: Design and methods (2nd ed.). Sage.

Yin, R. K. (2015). *Qualitative research from start to finish*. Guilford Publications.

Yunus, M. (2010). *Building social business*. Perseus Books Group.

Zangmo, Z. (2018). *Educational policy borrowing in the Bhutanese education system*. [Unpublished master's thesis]. Queensland University of Technology. https://doi.org/10.5204/thesis.eprints.122873

Zembylas, M. & Bozalek, V. (2014). A critical engagement with the social and political consequences of human rights: the contribution of the affective turn and posthumanism. *Acta Academica*, *46*(4), 29-47. https://journals.ufs.ac.za/index.php/aa/article/view/1471/1448

Zulfiqar, B., Hossain, M.K., Shahinujjaman, Md., &Hossain, N., Md. (2018). Inclusive Education in Bangladesh: Digging Deeper into Educational Prospects of Children with Disabilities in Bangladesh. *European Journal of Education*, *1*(1), 36-48.

Zuurmond, M. A., Mahmud, I., Polack, S., & Evans, J. (2015). Understanding the lives of caregivers of children with cerebral palsy in rural Bangladesh: Use of mixed methods. *26*(2), 5- 21. http://dspace.bracu.ac.bd/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10361/5230/6.%20Understanding%20the%20Lives%20of%20Caregivers%20of%20Children.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

Appendices

Appendix A: Flyer in English

BE BOLD.

BE HEARD.

AN INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH INTERVIEW

THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

WHEN: DECEMBER 2016- 2017

BY: FERDOUSI ANIS

Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia

BANGLADESH MOBILE: 01552495678, EMAIL: FERDOUSI07@GMAIL.COM

Appendix B: Flyer in Bangla

সাহসী হও

সোচ্চার হও

গবেষণার জন্য সাক্ষাৎকারে অংশ নিতে আমন্ত্রন

আয়না দিয়ে দেখা

Through The Looking Glass

কখন : ডিসেম্বর ২০১৬ - জানুয়ারি ২০১৭

সাক্ষাৎকারগ্রহণকারী : ফেরদৌসী আনিস

ভিক্টোরিয়া বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, মেলবোর্ন, অস্ট্রেলিয়া

ফোন (বাংলাদেশ) : ০১৫৫২৪৯৫৬৭৮, Email : ferdousi07@gmail.com

Appendix C: Information to Participants

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY
MELBOURNE AUSTRALIA

INFORMATION TO PARTICIPANTS INVOLVED IN RESEARCH

You are invited to participate

You are invited to participate in a research project entitled:
Through the Looking Glass: Inclusive education in rural Bangladesh

This project is being conducted by a student researcher, **Mrs Ferdousi Anis**, as part of a PhD degree at Victoria University under the supervision of:
Dr Julie White
Senior Research Fellow
Victoria Institute for Education Diversity and Lifelong Learning, Australia.

Project explanation

Inclusive education is a priority strategy to meet the Education for All goals by 2018 and combat poverty. In response to global reception, inclusive education has been increasingly gaining currency in government policies and initiatives for education in Bangladesh (Podder, 2011). To promote the policy of inclusive education, the Bangladeshi government has enacted The Disability Welfare Act on 4 April 2001, with a focus to promote the rights of people with disability to receive education in any primary school in Bangladesh (MOPME, 2011). A National Action Plan was formulated on 24 September 2006, to take actions for people with disabilities. In 2007, Bangladesh ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CPRD) followed by the signing of CPRD's Optional Protocol in May 2008 and International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention on Discrimination in Employment and Occupation. The government has prioritised inclusive education in the National Education Policy (2010) and to ensure education for all the children.

These initiatives indicate the commitment of the government to create a disability-inclusive society based on the principle of promoting human rights and equal opportunities. Study by Malak and Khanam (2011) show the implementation of inclusive education in Bangladesh is at a nascent stage. A similar research on the implementation of inclusive education policy show that enactment of policies is affected by insufficient articulation and clarification of inclusive education policy and initiatives taken to encourage inclusive education (Ahsan et. al., 2011). This suggests that policy implementation strategies are important to achieve a successful outcome. It points to the need for policy planners to design strategies that are applicable to the local context. Policies that may prove to be applicable in the urban areas may not be as effective when they are applied in the rural areas. Similarly, the availability and use of physical, human and material resources in the urban and rural areas will need special consideration. The socio-economic condition, level of literacy and attitudes of those living in the urban and rural areas are important factors that warrant thoughtful delivery of information to the public.

Rural people constitute nearly 80 per cent of the total population. Little is known about what occurs in the rural areas in regards to the implementation of inclusive education. Children with disability in the rural areas face barriers, have restricted social mobility and limited employment prospects. To support the Bangladesh government achieve the post Education for All (EFA) goals, it is critical to build the capacity of the rural population. An enhancement of disability awareness issues will help develop knowledgeable citizens, increase the acceptance of all children in mainstream society and promote inclusive education.

The aim of this study is:

1. To investigate how Inclusive Education is enacted in rural Bangladesh.
2. To investigate what rural Bangladeshis report about Inclusive Education policy and its enactment.

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY
MELBOURNE AUSTRALIA

What will I be asked to do?

- Sign a consent form after the purpose of the research has been explained.
- Participate in an interview at a mutually convenient time and place.
- Contact the researcher for any enquiries related to the research.

What will I gain from participating?

- You will contribute to the Bangladesh government's initiatives to achieve the Education For All goals.
- You will be a contributory member to an international study on inclusive education.
- You will gain new knowledge to implement inclusive education policy that reflects the views of the rural people.

How will the information I give be used?

Information will be used for research purpose and other published studies by me.

What are the potential risks of participating in this project?

This is a medium risk project approved by Human Research Ethics Committee, Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia.

How will this project be conducted?

This study is funded by Victoria University, Australia. It involves interview with the rural people from up to two villages in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Transnational and national document analysis will be done.

Who is conducting the study?

Dr Julie White
Senior Research Fellow
Victoria Institute, Australia
Contact No:+ 61 3 9919 7156

Mrs Ferdousi Anis
Student Researcher, Victoria University, Australia.
Contact No: + 61 0422 879 705

Any queries about your participation in this project may be directed to the Chief Investigator listed above.
If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Ethics Secretary, Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee, Office for Research, Victoria University, PO Box 14428, Melbourne, VIC, 8001, email researchethics@vu.edu.au or phone (03) 9919 4781 or 4461.

Appendix D: Consent Form

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY
MELBOURNE AUSTRALIA

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS INVOLVED IN RESEARCH

INFORMATION TO PARTICIPANTS:
I would like to invite you to be a part of a study into, **Through The Looking Glass: Inclusive Education in rural Bangladesh**. Human Research Ethics Committee, Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia has approved this project. This study will adhere to, 'The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN General Assembly, December 1984)' and National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007) guidelines. This study does not involve any physical or psychological harm/stress. Data from interviews and document analysis will be reported truthfully.

CERTIFICATION BY SUBJECT

I, _____

of _____

certify that I am at least 18 years old* and that I am voluntarily giving my consent to participate in the study:
Through The Looking Glass: Inclusive education in rural Bangladesh
being conducted by: **Dr Julie White, Senior Research Fellow, Victoria Institute for Education Diversity and Lifelong Learning, Australia.**

I certify that the objectives of the study, together with any risks and safeguards associated with the procedures listed hereunder to be carried out in the research, have been fully explained to me by:

Mrs Ferdousi Anis

and that I freely consent to participation involving the below mentioned procedures:

- The research project has been discussed with Ferdousi Anis, student researcher.
- The title of the research may be amended/changed and the school/I be informed about it.
- Information from me will be used for research purpose and other published studies by the researcher.
- Findings may be reported, on request.
- Ferdousi Anis and/or Dr Julie White can be contacted on mobile/email for any enquiries about the research.

I certify that I have had the opportunity to have any questions answered and that I understand that I can withdraw from this study at any time and that this withdrawal will not jeopardise me in any way.
I have been informed that the information I provide will be kept confidential.

Signed:

Date:

Any queries about your participation in this project may be directed to the researcher
Dr Julie White
Senior Research Fellow, Victoria Institute for Education Diversity and Lifelong Learning
Contact No:+ 61 3 9919 7156

If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Ethics Secretary, Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee, Office for Research, Victoria University, PO Box 14428, Melbourne, VIC, 8001, email Researchethics@vu.edu.au or phone (03) 9919 4781 or 4461.

[*please note: Where the participant/s are aged under 18, separate parental consent is required; where the participant/s are unable to answer for themselves due to mental illness or disability, parental or guardian consent may be required.]

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY
MELBOURNE AUSTRALIA

গবেষণায় অংশগ্রহণকারীদের সম্মতিপত্র

অংশগ্রহণকারীদের জন্য তথ্য:

আমি আপনাদেরকে গবেষণা কার্যক্রমে অংশীদার হতে আমন্ত্রন জানতে চাই।

গবেষণার বিষয়: **Through the Looking Glass: Inclusive Education in Rural Bangladesh** – আয়না দেখা : গ্রামীণ বাংলাদেশে একত্রীভূত শিক্ষা

অস্ট্রেলিয়ায় অবস্থিত ভিক্টোরিয়া বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের **Human Research Ethics Committee** এই গবেষণা কার্যক্রম অনুমোদন করেছে। এই গবেষণা জাতিসংঘের আন্তর্জাতিক মানবাধিকার সনদ যোষণা 'The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN General Assembly Declaration 1991)' এবং জাতীয় মানব গবেষণা কার্যক্রমের 'নৈতিক আচরন' অনুসরণ করবে। এই গবেষণা কোন প্রকার দৈহিক বা মানসিক অসুবিধা সৃষ্টি করবে না। সাক্ষাৎকারের মাধ্যমে প্রাপ্ত তথ্য সঠিক ও নির্ভুলভাবে উপস্থাপন করা হবে।

অংশগ্রহণকারীদের প্রত্যায়ন :

আমি.....

ঠিকানা.....

এতদ্বারা প্রত্যায়ন করছি যে আমার বয়স কমপক্ষে ১৮ বছর এবং আমি সইচ্ছায় **Dr Julie White, Senior Research Fellow, Victoria University, Australia** কর্তৃক পরিচালিত গবেষণা কার্যক্রম **Through The Looking Glass : Inclusive Education in Rural Bangladesh** এ অংশগ্রহণের সম্মতি প্রদান করছি। আমি প্রত্যায়ন করছি যে গবেষণার উদ্দেশ্য এবং তার সাথে জড়িত ঝুকি এবং প্রতীকার যা নীচে বর্ণিত সে বিষয়গুলো সম্পর্কে মিসেস ফেরদৌসি আনিস আমাকে অবহিত করেছেন এবং আমি সদিচ্ছায় নিম্নক্ত পদ্ধতি বিষয়ে একমত পোষণ করছি:

- গবেষণা কার্যক্রমের বিষয়াবলী 'শিক্ষালবিশ গবেষক মিসেস ফেরদৌসি অনিস এর সাথে আলোচনা করা হয়েছে।
- গবেষণার শিয়োলাম পরিবর্তন/পরিবর্ধন করা যেতে পারে এবং আমাকে এ বিষয়ে অবহিত করা হবে।
- আমার দেওয়া তথ্য গবেষক কর্তৃক কেবলমাত্র গবেষণা কার্যক্রম এবং গবেষণা বিষয়ক প্রকাশনায় ব্যবহার করা হবে
- প্রাপ্ত তথ্য অনুরোধ সাপেক্ষে অবহিত করা হবে।
- গবেষণা বিষয়ে কোন প্রশ্ন থাকলে মোবাইল বা ইমেইল এর মাধ্যমে সরাসরি মিসেস ফেরদৌসি আনিস অথবা ডঃ জুলি হোয়াইট কে যোগাযোগ করা যাবে।

আমি প্রত্যায়ন করছি যে আমার সম্ভাব্য সব প্রশ্নের জবাব পেয়েছি এবং আমি অবগত যে আমি যেকোনো সময়ে এই গবেষণা কার্যক্রম হতে নিজেকে প্রত্যাহার করে নিতে পারি এবং তাতে করে আমি কোন সমস্যার সম্মুখিন হব না। আমাকে অবহিত করা হয়েছে যে আমার দেওয়া তথ্য গোপন রাখা হবে।

স্বাক্ষর.....

তারিখ.....

গবেষণায় অংশগ্রহন সম্পর্কিত যে কোন প্রশ্নের জন্য যোগাযোগ:
ডঃ জুলি হোয়াইট, সিনিয়ার রিসার্চ ফেল, ভিক্টোরিয়া ইন্সিটিউট, অষ্ট্রেলিয়া, ফোন নম্বর:
গবেষণায় অংশগ্রহন সম্পর্কিত যে কোন প্রশ্নের জন্য যোগাযোগ:
ডঃ জুলি হোয়াইট, সিনিয়ার রিসার্চ ফেল, ভিক্টোরিয়া ইন্সিটিউট, অষ্ট্রেলিয়া, ফোন নম্বর:+ ৬১(০৩)৯৯১৯ ১৮৪৪

আচরণ সম্পর্কিত কোন প্রশ্ন বা অভিযোগ থাকলে যোগাযোগ:

Ethics Secretary
Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee
Office for Research, Victoria University
P.O. Box 14428, Melbourne, VIC 8001
Email: Researchethics@vu.edu.au
Phone: +61 (03) 9919 4781 or 4461

Appendix E: Interview Questions (English)

Group 1

Interview questions for parents of school aged children

1. Please tell me about yourself, your family, work and education.
2. What do you understand by disability? Do you agree that all children should have the right to education?
3. What do you know about the Bangladesh government's inclusive education policies?
4. Do children with disability/ special needs and marginalised children go to mainstream schools in your village? How do you know?
5. Please give examples of any disability awareness programs you have seen or heard about?
6. How could villagers be informed about inclusive education?
7. How has female education succeeded in Bangladesh? Do you think similar strategies can promote inclusive education? Please explain.
8. What factors do you think hinder children with disabilities/special needs and marginalised children from studying in mainstream schools? Why?
9. What/Who do you think could be the agents of change in the implementation of inclusive education in your village? Please explain your answer.
10. How do you think the villagers can help to implement borrowed policies in rural areas?

Appendix F: Interview Questions (English)

Group 2

Interview questions for retired schoolteachers

1. Please tell me about yourself and your work.
2. What do you understand by disability? Do you agree that all children should have the right to education? Please explain.
3. What do you know about the Bangladesh government's inclusive education policies?
4. How are schools in your village implementing inclusive education policy? How do you know?
5. Do you think there is a difference in government actions to implement inclusive education in rural and urban schools? If yes, please give examples?
6. What is your opinion about how the government should implement a borrowed policy, such as inclusive education, in rural and urban areas? Why?
7. How has female education succeeded in Bangladesh? Do you think similar strategies can promote inclusive education? Please explain.
8. What factors do you think hinder the implementation of inclusive education policy in rural schools? Why?
9. What/Who do you think could be the agents of change in the implementation of inclusive education in your village? Please explain your answer.
10. How do you think the villagers can help to implement borrowed policies in rural areas?

Appendix G: Interview Questions (English)

Group 3

Interview questions for School Management Committee Member

1. Please tell me about yourself and your role as School Management Committee member.
2. What do you understand by disability? Do you agree that all children should have the right to education? Please explain.
3. What do you know about the Bangladesh government's inclusive education policies?
4. How are schools in your village implementing inclusive education policy? How do you know?
5. Do you think there is a difference in the government's actions to implement inclusive education in rural and urban schools? Can you please explain?
6. What is your opinion about how the government should implement a borrowed policy, such as inclusive education, in rural and urban areas? Why?
7. How has female education succeeded in Bangladesh? Do you think similar strategies can promote inclusive education? Can you please explain?
8. What factors do you think hinder the implementation of inclusive education policy in rural schools? Why?
9. What/Who do you think could be the agents of change in the implementation of inclusive education in your village? Please explain your answer.
10. How do you think the villagers can help to implement borrowed policies in rural areas?

Appendix H: Interview Questions (English)

Group 4

Interview questions for students at university or college

1. Please tell me about yourself, your family and education.
2. What do you understand by disability? Do you agree that all children should have the right to education?
3. What do you know about the Bangladesh government's inclusive education policies? Are you aware of inclusive education? Please explain.
4. Do children with disability attend mainstream schools in your village? Please explain.
5. Do you think there is a difference in government actions to implement inclusive education in rural and urban schools? If yes, please give examples?
6. What is your opinion about how the government should implement a borrowed policy, such as inclusive education, in rural and urban areas? Why?
7. How has female education succeeded in Bangladesh? Do you think similar strategies can promote inclusive education? Please explain your answer.
8. What factors do you think hinder the implementation of inclusive education policy in rural schools?
9. What disability awareness programs have you seen or heard about?
10. Do you think participation of villagers in decision making and policy planning may help to implement imported policies in rural areas? Please tell why.

Appendix I: Interview Question Bangla Translation

Group 1

<u>অভিভাবকদের জন্য প্রশ্নমালা</u>

১। অনুগ্রহপূর্বক আপনি এবং আপনার পরিবারের কাজ এবং শিক্ষা সম্পর্কে কিছু বলুন ।

২। আপনি প্রতিবন্ধি বলতে কী বোঝেন? আপনি কি একমত যে সব শিশুদের শিক্ষা গ্রহনের সমান অধিকার আছে? কেন বলতে পারেন?

৩। বাংলাদেশ সরকারের একীভুত শিক্ষানীতি বিষয়ে আপনার কি কোন ধারনা আছে?

৪। প্রতিবন্ধি ও প্রান্তিক শিশুরা কি গ্রামের সাধারন স্কুলে যায়? আপনি কিভাবে জানেন?

৫। প্রতিবন্ধি বিষয়ক কোন অনুষ্ঠান কি আপনি কখনও দেখেছেন বা শুনেছেন? অনুগ্রহ করে কিছু উদাহরন দিবেন কি?

৬। গ্রামবাসীকে কিভাবে একীভুত শিক্ষা সম্পর্কে জানান যায়?

৭। বাংলাদেশে নারীশিক্ষা কিভাবে উন্নতিলাভ করেছে? আপনি কি মনে করেন যে একই ধরনের পদ্ধতি অবলম্বন করলে একীভুত শিক্ষাতেও সফলতা আসবে?

৮। প্রতিবন্ধি শিশুদের সাধারন শিক্ষা কার্যক্রমে অংশগ্রহণ করাতে প্রধান প্রধান বাঁধা বা অসুবিধা কি?

৯। আপনাদের গ্রামে একীভুত শিক্ষা বাস্তবায়নে কারা বা কোন প্রতিষ্ঠান বিশেষ ভুমিকা রাখতে পারে?

১০। আপনি কি মনে করেন যে গ্রামাঞ্চলে কোন নতুন নীতিমালা বাস্তবায়ন ফলপ্রসূ করতে গ্রামবাসিদেরকে আরো বেসি নীতিনির্ধারণী কার্যক্রমে অংশগ্রহণ করা উচিৎ? কেন?

Appendix J: Interview Questions Bangla Translation

Group 2

শিক্ষকদের জন্য প্রশ্নমালা

১। অনুগ্রহপূর্বক আপনি এবং আপনার পরিবারের কাজ এবং শিক্ষা সম্পর্কে কিছু বলুন

২। আপনি প্রতিবন্ধি বলতে কী বোঝেন?আপনি কি একমত যে সব শিশুদের শিক্ষা গ্রহনের সমান অধিকার আছে? কেন বলতে পারেন?

৩। বাংলাদেশ সরকারের একীভুত শিক্ষানীতি বিষয়ে আপনার কি কোন ধারনা আছে?

৪। আপনার গ্রামের স্কুলগুলোতে কি একত্রিভুত শিক্ষা কার্যক্রম বাস্তবায়ন করা হচ্ছে?আপনি কিভাবে জানেন?

৫। আপনি কি মনে করেন যে গ্রাম এবং শহরের স্কুলগুলোতে একীভুত শিক্ষা বাস্তবায়নে কোন পার্থক্য আছে?

৬। আপনি কি মনে করেন যে আমদানিকৃত একীভুত শিক্ষানিতিমালা বাস্তবায়নে গ্রাম এবং শহরাঞ্চলে সরকারের পৃথক পৃথক কর্মপদ্ধতি অবলম্বন করা উচিৎ? কেন?

৭। বাংলাদেশে নারীশিক্ষা কিভাবে উন্নতিলাভ করেছে? আপনি কি মনে করেন যে একই ধরনের পদ্ধতি অবলম্বন করলে একীভুত শিক্ষাতেও সফলতা আসবে?

৮। প্রতিবন্ধি শিশুদের সাধারন শিক্ষা কার্যক্রমে অংশগ্রহণ করাতে প্রধান প্রধান বাঁধা বা অসুবিধা কি?

৯। আপনাদের গ্রামে একত্রিভুত শিক্ষা বাস্তবায়নে কারা বা কোন প্রতিষ্ঠান বিশেষ ভুমিকা রাখতে পারে?

১০। আপনি কি মনে করেন যে গ্রামাঞ্চলে কোন নতুন নীতিমালা বাস্তবায়ন ফলপ্রসূ করতে গ্রামবাসিদেরকে আরো বেসি নীতিনির্ধারণী কার্যক্রমে অংশগ্রহণ করা উচিৎ? কেন?

Appendix K: Interview Questions Bangla Translation

Group 3

গ্রামপ্রধান অথবা স্কুল কমিটি মেম্বার এর জন্য প্রশ্নমালা

১। অনুগ্রহপূর্বক আপনি এবং আপনার পরিবারের কাজ এবং শিক্ষা সম্পর্কে কিছু বলুন।

২। আপনি প্রতিবন্ধি বলতে কী বোঝেন? আপনি কি একমত যে সব শিশুদের শিক্ষা গ্রহনের সমান অধিকার আছে? কেন বলতে পারেন?

৩। বাংলাদেশ সরকারের একীভুত শিক্ষানীতি বিষয়ে আপনার কি কোন ধারনা আছে?

৪। আপনার গ্রামের স্কুলগুলোতে কি একত্রিভুত শিক্ষা কার্যক্রম বাস্তবায়ন করা হচ্ছে?আপনি কিভাবে জানেন?

৫। আপনি কি মনে করেন যে গ্রাম এবং শহরের স্কুলগুলোতে একীভুত শিক্ষা বাস্তবায়নে কোন পার্থক্য আছে?

৬। আপনি কি মনে করেন যে আমদানিকৃত একীভুত শিক্ষানিতিমালা বাস্তবায়নে গ্রাম এবং শহরাঞ্চলে সরকারের পৃথক পৃথক কর্মপদ্ধতি অবলম্বন করা উচিৎ? কেন?

৭। বাংলাদেশে নারীশিক্ষা কিভাবে উন্নতিলাভ করেছে? আপনি কি মনে করেন যে একই ধরনের পদ্ধতি অবলম্বন করলে একীভুত শিক্ষাতেও সফলতা আসবে?

৮। প্রতিবন্ধি শিশুদের সাধারন শিক্ষা কার্যক্রমে অংশগ্রহণ করাতে প্রধান প্রধান বাঁধা বা অসুবিধা কি?

৯। আপনাদের গ্রামে একত্রিভুত শিক্ষা বাস্তবায়নে কারা বা কোন প্রতিষ্ঠান বিশেষ ভুমিকা রাখতে পারে?

১০। আপনি কি মনে করেন যে গ্রামাঞ্চলে কোন নতুন নীতিমালা বাস্তবায়ন ফলপ্রসূ করতে গ্রামবাসিদেরকে আরো বেসি নীতিনির্ধারণী কার্যক্রমে অংশগ্রহণ করা উচিৎ? কেন?

Appendix L: Interview Questions Bangla Translation

Group 4

<u>কলেজ বা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ছাত্র/ছাত্রীদের জন্য প্রশ্নমালা</u>

১। অনুগ্রহপূর্বক আপনি এবং আপনার পরিবারের কাজ এবং শিক্ষা সম্পর্কে কিছু বলুন।

২। আপনি প্রতিবন্ধি বলতে কী বোঝেন? আপনি কি একমত যে সব শিশুদের শিক্ষা গ্রহনের সমান অধিকার আছে? কেন বলতে পারেন?

৩। বাংলাদেশ সরকারের একীভুত শিক্ষানীতি বিষয়ে আপনার কি কোন ধারনা আছে?

৪। আপনাদের স্কুলে আপনাদের সাথে কি কোন প্রতিবন্ধি ছাত্র বা ছাত্রী পড়াশুনা করেছে? দয়া করে আপনার জবাবের ব্যাখ্যা দিবেন কি?

৫। আপনি কি মনে করেন যে গ্রাম এবং শহরের স্কুলগুলোতে একীভুত শিক্ষা বাস্তবায়নে কোন পার্থক্য আছে?

৬। আপনি কি মনে করেন যে আমদানিকৃত একীভুত শিক্ষানিতিমালা বাস্তবায়নে গ্রাম এবং শহরাঞ্চলে সরকারের পৃথক পৃথক কর্মপদ্ধতি অবলম্বন করা উচিৎ?কেন?

৭। বাংলাদেশে নারীশিক্ষা কিভাবে উন্নতিলাভ করেছে? আপনি কি মনে করেন যে একই ধরনের পদ্ধতি অবলম্বন করলে একীভুত শিক্ষাতেও সফলতা আসবে?

৮। প্রতিবন্ধি শিশুদের সাধারন শিক্ষা কার্যক্রমে অংশগ্রহণ করতে প্রধান প্রধান বাঁধা বা অসুবিধা কি?

৯। আপনি কি প্রতিবন্ধি বিষয়ক কোন সচেতনতা কর্মসূচী দেখেছেন বা শুনেছেন?

১০। আপনি কি মনে করেন যে গ্রামাঞ্চলে কোন নতুন নীতিমালা বাস্তবায়ন ফলপ্রসূ করতে গ্রামবাসিদেরকে আরো বেসি নীতিনির্ধারণী কার্যক্রমে অংশগ্রহণ করা উচিৎ?কেন?

Appendix M: Sample (Translated Interview)

Date of interview: 6 January, 2017

Researcher: Halima, how are you?

Halima: Good.

Researcher: I am very thankful to you for coming to this interview. Can you tell me a bit about your current work, education and your family?

Halima: Yes. I will tell. I am a teacher. I did my Masters. I have a son and a husband who works in Dhaka. This is all.

Researcher: So, what do you understand by the word "Protibondi" (Disability)?

Halima: By "Protibondi", it refers to the people who do not have the ability to behave like ordinary people and rise in life through obstructions. It cannot be explained in one word. There are many different ways to explain it.

Researcher: What are some of those ways? Can you tell me?

Halima: The person is socially incapable. Some people who have trouble studying also falls in this category.

Researcher: What do you understand by the exact word "protibondi" (disability)?

Halima: The word might refer to someone who is not that intelligent, blind or someone who is missing a limb. That is what I understand by the word.

Researcher: Do you agree that every child has equal right to education?

Halima: They have equal rights in the society in which they are born, but they do not get it.

Researcher: Do you have any idea about the Inclusive Education policy of the government of Bangladesh?

Halima: I do not have a clear idea, but I can tell you a bit about it. The way the current government has expanded education policy into villages by including women and character development in the education might fall under the Inclusive Education policy.

Researcher: Do children with disability and those who are marginalised attend the same school in villages? How do you know?

Halima: They did not go to same schools in the past but currently they do go. But they are still incapable of studying and socialising as much as the ordinary children. For example, the good children can blend in with others in society along with their studies, disabled children do not have the ability to do so. It is not possible for them. But currently it is slowly changing.

Researcher: How do you know that children with disability do not attend the same school as you claim?

Halima: I have seen it with my own eyes since I am a teacher. I have seen that those children are trying really hard to study and I have also seen some intelligent, disabled children who are studying along with the ordinary children.

Researcher: Have you seen any programs or listened to anything about children with disability? If you did, can you give me an example?

Halima: I have seen with my own eyes. I have seen and heard about it in television programs.

Researcher: How do you think we can let rural people know about Inclusive Education policy?

Halima: We can let them know by observing and encouraging those who have good knowledge and also by increasing the awareness amongst the neglected, by providing them with the knowledge in exchange for some prizes. By prizes I mean to say that if people get some kind of motivation, they will be attracted towards this topic.

Researcher: Why do you think female education in Bangladesh has improved?

Halima: The education of women improved recently because the books until SSC and Intermediate are free from the government which is a good motivation from the government for the participation of women as many women did not want to study because of the inabilities to get the books. On top of that, there are so many schools and colleges in close distances which also increased the motivation for women to study.

Researcher: Do you think if the government adopts a similar approach for Inclusive Education policy, it will have equal success?

Halima: Yes, I do think that if the government keeps on trying, there will be success.

Researcher: What are the main obstacles or difficulties for children with disability to receive education in mainstream schools?

Halima: The main obstacle is that they feel ashamed because they see themselves as completely different people. They are bullied by other children due to which they distance themselves further from the society. As such, the opportunity to grow is ruined by decisions they make.

Researcher: Are there any further obstacle in your opinion?

Halima: I did not understand the question.

Researcher: Are there any other difficulties that restrict children with disability to access mainstream schools and study together with ordinary children?

Halima: Yes, there are obstacles because they require more specialised education compared to ordinary children which are usually not taught in ordinary schools. Even if they are taught in the same school, every disabled child needs to be taught separately because they learn by using different techniques. For example, blind children and intelligent, disabled children study in completely different ways. However, it is not possible to implement different teaching strategies in schools.

Sample (Amended Translated Interview with code)

Date of interview: 6 January, 2017

Researcher: RSTF, how are you?

RSTF: Good.

Researcher: I am very thankful to you for coming to this interview. Can you tell me a bit about your current work, education and your family?

RSTF: Yes. I will tell. I am a teacher. I did my Masters. I have a son and a husband who works in Dhaka. This is all.

Researcher: So, what do you understand by the word "Protibondi" (Disability)?

RSTF: By "Protibondi", it refers to the people who do not have the ability to behave like ordinary people and rise in life through obstructions. It cannot be explained in one word. There are many different ways to explain it.

Researcher: What are some of those ways? Can you tell me?

RSTF: The person is socially incapable. Some people who have trouble studying also falls in this category.

Researcher: What do you understand by the exact word "protibondi" (disability)?

RSTF: The word might refer to someone who is not that intelligent, blind or someone who is missing a limb. That is what I understand by the word.

Researcher: Do you agree that every child has equal right to education?

RSTF: They have equal rights in the society in which they are born, but they do not get it.

Researcher: Do you have any idea about the Inclusive Education policy of the government of Bangladesh?

RSTF: I do not have a clear idea, but I can tell you a bit about it. The way the current government has expanded education policy into villages by including women and character development in the education might fall under the Inclusive Education policy.

Researcher: Do children with disability and those who are marginalised attend the same school in villages? How do you know?

RSTF: They did not go to same schools in the past but currently they do go. But they are still incapable of studying and socialising as much as the ordinary children. For example, the good children can blend in with others in society along with their studies, disabled children do not have the ability to do so. It is not possible for them. But currently it is slowly changing.

Researcher: How do you know that children with disability do not attend the same school as you claim?

RSTF: I have seen it with my own eyes since I am a teacher. I have seen that those children are trying really hard to study and I have also seen some intelligent, disabled children who are studying along with the ordinary children.

Researcher: Have you seen any programs or listened to anything about children with disability? If you did, can you give me an example?

RSTF: I have seen with my own eyes. I have seen and heard about it in television programs.

Researcher: How do you think we can let rural people know about Inclusive Education policy?

RSTF: We can let them know by observing and encouraging those who have good knowledge and also by increasing the awareness amongst the neglected, by providing them with the knowledge in exchange for some prizes. By prizes I mean to say that if people get some kind of motivation, they will be attracted towards this topic.

Researcher: Why do you think female education in Bangladesh has improved?

RSTF: The education of women improved recently because the books until SSC and Intermediate are free from the government which is a good motivation from the government for the participation of women as many women did not want to study because of the inabilities to get the books. On top of that, there are so many schools and colleges in close distances which also increased the motivation for women to study.

Researcher: Do you think if the government adopts a similar approach for Inclusive Education policy, it will have equal success?

RSTF: Yes, I do think that if the government keeps on trying, there will be success.

Researcher: What are the main obstacles or difficulties for children with disability to receive education in mainstream schools?

RSTF: The main obstacle is that they feel ashamed because they see themselves as completely different people. They are bullied by other children due to which they distance themselves further from the society. As such, the opportunity to grow is ruined by decisions they make.

Researcher: Are there any further obstacle in your opinion?

RSTF: I did not understand the question.

Researcher: Are there any other difficulties that restrict children with disability to access mainstream schools and study together with ordinary children?

RSTF: Yes, there are obstacles because they require more specialised education compared to ordinary children which are usually not taught in ordinary schools. Even if they are taught in the same school, every disabled child needs to be taught separately because they learn by using different techniques. For example, blind children and intelligent, disabled children study in completely different ways. However, it is not possible to implement different teaching strategies in schools.

Appendix N: Participant Information

Table 5.1: Description of Participants

Abbreviation	Informant Type
RPCD	Rural parent, child with disability
RPCWD	Rural parent, child without disability
CSM/CSF	College student male/college student female
RTM/RTF	Retired teacher male/retired teacher female
MCM	School Managing Committee Member

Information about the participants is presented in Table 5.2. The total number of participants in this study was 12. Only one out of the 12 participants had a child with a disability.

Table 5.2: Participant Information

No.	Participant	Age (years)	Gender	Job	Children
1.	CS	19	Female	1st year Undergraduate student	
2.	CS	18	Male	Will complete Year 12 in a few months	
3.	RPCD	23	Female	Housewife	One six year old child with disability who stays at home. Her husband works in the Middle and earns well. Even then, she often struggles to bear the expenses of travelling for her child's treatment and medical expenses.
4.	RPCWD1	21	Female	Housewife	One child who attends the local primary school

No.	Participant	Age (years)	Gender	Job	Children
5.	RPCWD2	28	Female	Housewife	One child attends the local primary school and another child is in secondary school
6.	RPCWD3	27	Male	Worked at the local market	Two children without disability attends the local primary school
7.	RPCWD4	31	Male	Labourer, worked overseas	One child without disability attends the local primary school
8.	RPCWD5	34	Male	Hindu farmer	Three children without disability. Two children attends the local primary school, the other child is in secondary school.
9.	RPCWD6	53	Female	Housewife	Two children without disability. The daughter completed Year 12 and the son is a college student in Year 11.
10.	MCM	60	Male	Has a university degree and has been a managing committee member for 11 years	Two children without disability studying at a private university in Dhaka
11.	RTM	60–65	Male	Retired Hindu primary school teacher with 34 years of teaching experience	Three adult children without disability
12.	RTF	60–65	Female	Retired Primary school teacher with 32 years of teaching experience	One adult child without disability. The child is married and has his own children without disability

Appendix O: Fieldwork Experience

My fieldwork experience has shown that gaining access to a research area involves more than physical entry or obtaining official permission to conduct interviews. In the current study, being aware of unexpected occurrences and effectively managing changes was necessary. Interviews with men were scheduled late in the evening or at night after they returned from work at a mutually convenient place. Friday interviews could not be considered as this is part of the weekend, when Muslims throughout the country congregate in mosques for afternoon prayer, after which having a family lunch, spending time with friends or relatives, or attending celebrations is the norm.

Numerous other adaptations to the field conditions and environment had to be made. It had been predicted that power outages might occur. Power failure led to the cancellation of some interviews after waiting for more than an hour for power to be reinstated. Rescheduling of interviews was required at such times, or, if participants were unable to come back another time, interviews were held by candlelight.

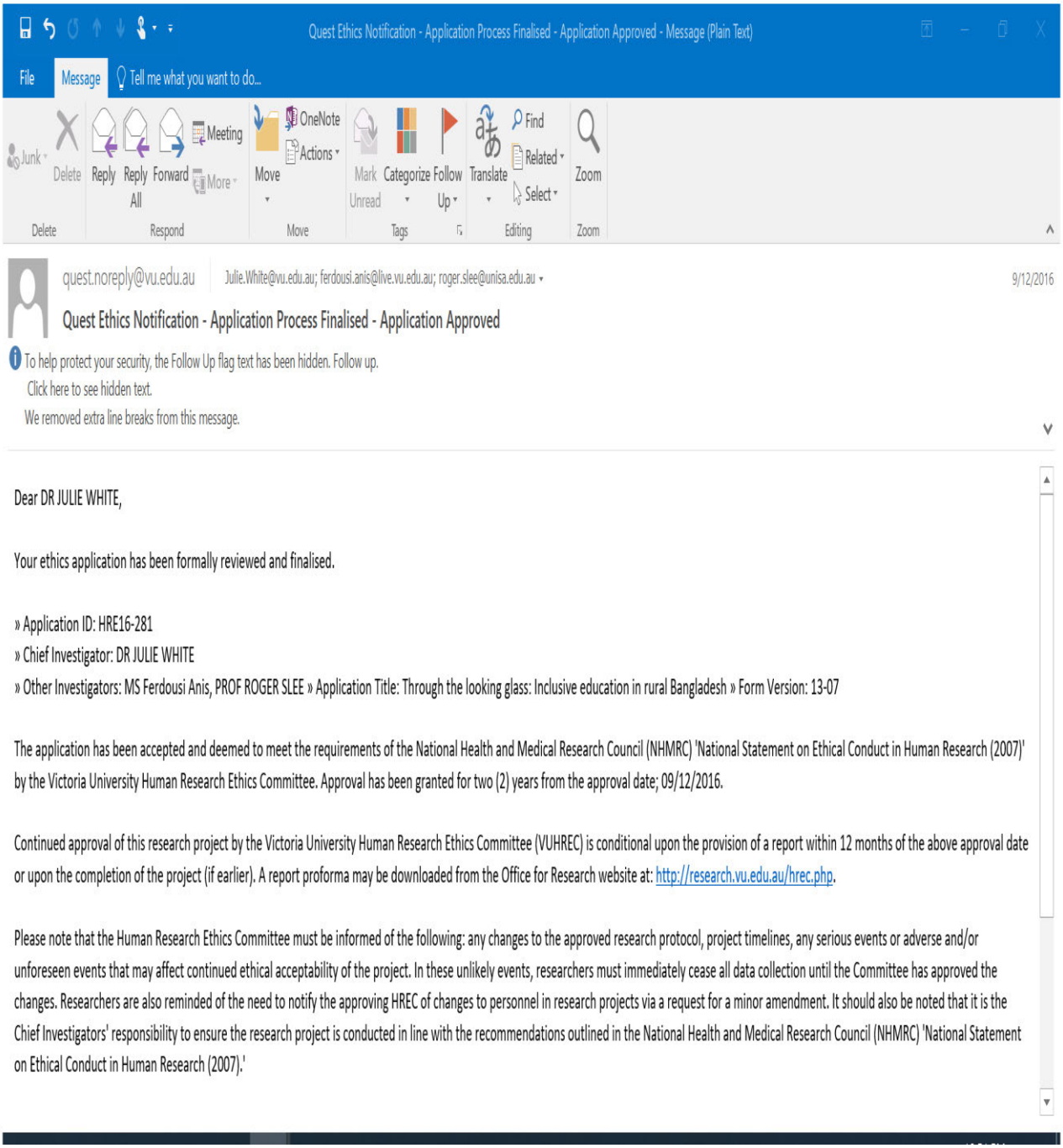
Despite having a Bangladeshi background, accessibility involved more than having lived in that country for many years and knowing the language. Having awareness about rural culture and religious knowledge, being able to communicate in the local dialect, paying attention to and embracing expected behaviours, and following local practices was of vital importance to access rural households.

Although I consider myself an insider because I hail from Bangladesh and have lived and worked there, it was crucial to immerse myself into the unfamiliar and unaccustomed conditions and practices of rural life. I participated in everyday household activities with rural women in my place of accommodation and accepted rural norms and values. I committed to blending in by immersing myself into rural culture and practices, for example by wearing traditional clothes, sitting on the ground eat with the villagers; drinking tube well water, participating in daily activities and communicating using as much colloquial language as possible. The need to stay alert and not to mention my academic and social background was crucial. I sought the kind understanding of the participants for my lacking the spontaneity to use colloquial Bangla. Adjustments in

accordance with these requirements were particularly necessary to blend in with rural life and for the fieldwork to be conducted as candidly as possible. Learning local practices required me to keep an open mind to understand rural life.

On reflection, the time spent in these two villages in Munshiganj enabled me to cross the barriers of hierarchy, occupation, income and religion. It helped me examine my personal and cultural expectations and biases, and adopt strategies for the benefit of the participants as well as make changes to facilitate effective interviewing. This was crucial for 'responsive interviewing' in terms of awareness of culture and balancing social position (Cole, 2018; Rubin & Rubin, 2014, p. 180).

Appendix P: Ethics Application Approval



Quest Ethics Notification - Application Process Finalised - Application Approved - Message (Plain Text)

File | Message | Tell me what you want to do...

Junk | Delete | Reply | Reply All | Forward | Meeting | More | Move | OneNote | Actions | Mark Unread | Categorize | Follow Up | Translate | Find | Related | Select | Zoom

Delete | Respond | Move | Tags | Editing | Zoom

quest.noreply@vu.edu.au Julie.White@vu.edu.au; ferdousi.anis@live.vu.edu.au; roger.slee@unisa.edu.au 9/12/2016

Quest Ethics Notification - Application Process Finalised - Application Approved

To help protect your security, the Follow Up flag text has been hidden. Follow up.
Click here to see hidden text.
We removed extra line breaks from this message.

Dear DR JULIE WHITE,

Your ethics application has been formally reviewed and finalised.

» Application ID: HRE16-281
» Chief Investigator: DR JULIE WHITE
» Other Investigators: MS Ferdousi Anis, PROF ROGER SLEE » Application Title: Through the looking glass: Inclusive education in rural Bangladesh » Form Version: 13-07

The application has been accepted and deemed to meet the requirements of the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) 'National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)' by the Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee. Approval has been granted for two (2) years from the approval date; 09/12/2016.

Continued approval of this research project by the Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee (VUHREC) is conditional upon the provision of a report within 12 months of the above approval date or upon the completion of the project (if earlier). A report proforma may be downloaded from the Office for Research website at: http://research.vu.edu.au/hrec.php.

Please note that the Human Research Ethics Committee must be informed of the following: any changes to the approved research protocol, project timelines, any serious events or adverse and/or unforeseen events that may affect continued ethical acceptability of the project. In these unlikely events, researchers must immediately cease all data collection until the Committee has approved the changes. Researchers are also reminded of the need to notify the approving HREC of changes to personnel in research projects via a request for a minor amendment. It should also be noted that it is the Chief Investigators' responsibility to ensure the research project is conducted in line with the recommendations outlined in the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) 'National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007).'

Appendix Q: Objectives in NEP10 (Extract, pgs.1-3)

The aims, objectives, goals and principles of the Education Policy will be as follows.

1. to reflect the Constitutional guarantee at all levels of education and make learners aware of the freedom, sovereignty and integrity of Bangladesh;

2. to stimulate the intellectual and practical qualities of the learners so that moral, human, cultural, scientific and social values are established at personal and national levels;

3. to inspire the students with the spirit of our war of liberation and develop patriotism, nationalism and qualities of good citizens (i.e, sense of justice, non-communalism, dutifulness, awareness of human rights, cultivation of free thinking and discipline, love for honest living, the tolerance of corporate life, friendliness and perseverance);

4. to promote the continuity of national history, tradition and culture through an inter-generational process;

5. to foster creative and thinking faculties among the learners through a system of education that contains indigenous spirit and elements and which will lead to a life-oriented development of knowledge of the learners;

6. to evolve an education process that is oriented to creativity, practicability and productivity to achieve advancement in the economic and social fields of the country; to create a scientific mind set of the students and to develop in them the qualities of leadership;

7. to remove socio-economic discrimination irrespective of race, religion and creed and to eradicate gender disparity; to develop non-communalism, friendliness, global fraternity, fellow-feeling and respect for human rights;

8. to create unhindered and equal opportunities of education for all as per learners' talents and aptitudes, irrespective of geographical, social and economical situations to establish a society that is free from discrimination; to resist use of education as a commodity to reap profits;

9. to show tolerance for different ideologies for the development of a democratic culture and to help develop a life-oriented, realistic and positive outlook;

10. to ensure the marginal competencies of learners at each level so that they are discouraged from rote learning, rather use their own thoughtfulness, imagination and urge for curiosity;

11. to ensure skills of high standard at different areas and levels of education so that learners can successfully compete at the global context;

12. to attach substantial importance to information and communication technology (ICT) along with maths. science and English in order to build up a digital Bangladesh based on knowledge-orientation and cultivation of ICT;

13. to put special emphasis on the extension of education; to give priority to primary and

secondary education; to motivate the students to show dignity of labour; to enable students to acquire skills in vocational education to facilitate self-employment, irrespective of levels of education;

14. to develop some uniform and basic ideas amongst all learners; to establish a sense of equal status amongst all citizens of the country to implement a uniform curriculum of certain basic subjects at the primary level schools of diverse delivery systems; to prescribe and ascertain the learning of some uniform textbooks to attain that; to initiate some method of teaching in some basic subjects at the secondary level to achieve similar objectives;

15. to ensure a creative, favorable and joyful environment for the students at the primary and secondary levels for their proper protection and congenial development;

16. to help students grow up with sound moral character through lessons from their respective religious teachings and moral sciences;

17. to ensure proper quality of education at each level and to correlate the competencies learnt at the earlier level (as per the aims and objectives of education) with the next one to consolidate the formations of knowledge and skills; to promote extension of such knowledge and skills; to enable the learners to acquire these skills; to motivate the people to participate in the educational process, at the primary, secondary and vocational levels, in particular to realize the objectives of education;

18. to build students as skilled human resources to fight the challenges of the world threatened by climate change and other natural disasters and to create in them a social awareness about environment;

19. to ensure quality of the higher education in all disciplines and motivate students in research and to create a congenial and necessary environment of research within the country through the cultivation of knowledge and sciences;

20. to ensure the proper context and situations in the education system at the higher level that facilitates ideal cultivation of learning;

21. to extend the use of information and communication technology (ICT) instrumental in educational process at every level

22. to take special measures for the development of education of the backward classes of the country including the street children;

23. to promote and develop the languages and cultures of the indigenous and small ethnic groups;

24. to ensure the education of the physically and mentally challenged learners;

25. to create a society free from the curse of illiteracy ;

26. to initiate special measures to promote education in the areas identified as backward in education;

27. to ensure efficient and correct teaching of the Bangla language;

28. to take necessary steps to create facilities of playground, sports, games and physical exercises in all educational institutions for the healthy growth of the physical and mental qualities of the learners;

29. to take various steps to foster hygienic awareness of the students;

30. to caution the students and make them aware of the dangers of taking drugs or similar items.