

EXPLORING THE DYNAMICS OF EXCLUSION IN EDUCATION



Sarwar Basher

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Save the Children's vision is a world in which every child attains the right to survival, protection, development and participation.

Save the Children's mission is to inspire breakthroughs in the way the world treats children, and to achieve immediate and lasting change in their lives.

ISBN 978-984-33-2443-6

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Layout and design : Friends in Village Development Bangladesh (FIVDB)

Cover Photo : Sarwar Basher

This publication is funded by: The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). The views expressed are those of the authors' and not necessarily those of SIDA.

Published jointly by:

Save the Children Sweden

Regional Office for South and Central Asia

<http://sca.savethechildren.se>

Printed by:

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The research team gratefully acknowledges the collaboration of the Save the Children Sweden-Denmark in conducting this study. We appreciate the contribution of all team members, specially Mr. Emamul Haque, of the Save the Children Sweden-Denmark. Special thanks of all the members of C-EMIS Project of FIVDB who successfully managed and coordinated the project work. We would like to thank all the participants of the brainstorming sessions in which the study plan was finalised. Special thanks to all the research assistants, Abdus Salam, Muhammad Al Amin, Abu Saeem Arif, Md. Yeasin Mazumder, Mohammad Shain Rana , Md. Badrul Amin, Belal Ahmed, Mitu Rnjan Das, Md, Abdullah Al Masud, Md. Tareq Uddin Nayem, Md. Shahidul Islam and Musharraf Hossain, of the study who brilliantly contributed to the field study and ensured the quality of data.

We would like to put on record our appreciation of all the interviewee and FGD participants in our four study areas for their cooperation and contribution. We thank the school authorities of our four study areas for allowing us to conduct the study in their schools and to the community people as well. We thank the “Education Theme” of ActionAid Bangladesh and South Asia Partnership Bangladesh for their cordial support in conducting the study in Shirajganj area. However, usual disclaimer applies.

PREFACE

Progress has been made in enrolling children in primary education. Both gross enrolment and net enrolment rate has increased over the decades. However, our educational landscape is still littered with irregular attendance, high dropout, repetition and poor learning achievement. Moreover, there are zones of exclusion in the country. These exclusion zones are particularly in haors, chars, hill tracts and in urban slums. Most of the excluded learners are from vulnerable communities including ultra-poor households, ethnic minority groups and physically challenged children.

In order to address the need of the disadvantaged, it is an imperative to comprehend the nature, scale and dimensions of exclusion. This spirit has been reflected in this humble initiative undertaken by Save the Children and FIVDB. A small research team led by Sarwar Basher has been responsible for this study and we thank them for their effort.

We hope this study will complement in enhancing our understanding of educational exclusion in the country and ultimately assist policy planners in undertaking appropriate measures to include these groups of children in the mainstream educational programme.

ZAHIN AHMED
Executive Director
FIVDB

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SECTION ONE

INTRODUCTION

Therefore, education as a practice of freedom must include a kind of historico-cultural, political psychoanalysis that reveals the formation of the self and its situation in all their dynamic and dialectical relations. People then become critically conscious of themselves as the very sorts of creatures that produce (and are produced by) their culture and history, and to realize their freedom they become engaged in liberatory acts that challenge the limits (internal and external) of particular situations that maintain oppression or injustice.

Paulo Freire¹

Education is a fundamental human right and the basic enabling capacity that helps human being to be free from all kinds of discrimination and domination. It is widely acknowledged that education contributes to the fullest development of human being. Olaniyan. D. A and Okemakinde. T (2008) argues that more educated individual, group and nation has more options for development. At the same time individuals, groups and nations without critical level of education would be more at risk of deprivation and domination.

Education has been recognised as a fundamental human right by several international conventions and declarations. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1948, declared education as a basic right of all people. Article 26 of the declaration indicates that everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Moreover, education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect of human right and fundamental freedom (UNESCO, 1991). The UN Convention on the Rights

¹ Paulo Freire (1996)

of the Child (CRC) ensured education as right of each child regardless of age, sex, ethnicity, religion, class, color and geography. World Conference on Education for All (Jomtein, 1990) and Dakar Declaration (2000) obliged countries to ensure quality education for all children.

Bangladesh as a signatory of the CRC, Jomtein and Dakar declarations, is also obliged to provide quality education to all children. Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh recognises the need for basic education as a fundamental right and providing education for all its citizens as one of the responsibilities of the state. The responsibility includes establishing a uniform system of education, extending free and compulsory education for all children (Article 15 and 16). In addition to these, articles 28 and 31 of the constitution lay down the general principles regarding the protection of children and others from all kinds of discrimination and Article 23 emphasises on the education of disabled children.

Following this obligation, Bangladesh has taken numerous initiatives including creating the Primary Education Act (1991) to make education compulsory and free for children aged 6-10. The country has prioritised primary education and involved all kinds of government and nongovernment agencies in the education sector since 1990 to ensure education for all the children and some significant achievement has been made regarding increasing enrollment and gender parity in primary education.

Despite some success being achieved in the primary education sector in Bangladesh, many children feel excluded at the cost of a few children emerging as 'The Best'. 'The Best' are taken to mean those who are of 'high merit' and have 'high success' in a very competitive system. Following the critical discussion on *Representation and Otherness* developed by Sturat Hall (1997),

it can be argued that the idea of 'The Best' is grounded on the binary principle and constructs the idea of 'The Worst'. Here 'The Worst' is the 'other' of 'The Best'. Throughout the whole education system it works as a silent process that creates opportunities for a few students to be 'the best' and at the same time condemns a large number of students to be 'the worst'. 'The worst' students are leveled as 'Ugly', 'Bad', 'Unruly', 'Dirty', 'Weak', 'Poor', 'Dull', 'Slow'.

Evidence shows that the majority of 'The Best' students belong to the city based mostly private schools and the high or high middle class families. On the other hand 'The Worst' students belong to poor village's school, as well as the poor families (Manjor 2008). At the same time this process of making 'The Best students' works within each school. Each school simultaneously produces both 'best' and 'worst' students though it is supposed to make comparatively an equal result.

Although Bangladesh is one of the earliest signatories of CRC and has taken a number of measures to prevent discrimination or punishment on the basis of the status, activities, expressed opinions, or beliefs of the child's parents, legal guardians, or family members; physical appearance, disability, caste / religion, language, economic situation and the position of the family in the power relations of the community; these are some of the factors which still contribute to how children are treated. Children are sometimes labeled as 'Uncontrollable' if their energy is unleashed in a disruptive manner. If a child makes a slow progress with reading, writing and counting, s/he is treated badly in a class. Apart from labeling children as 'Ugly', 'Bad', 'Unruly', 'Dirty', 'Weak', 'Poor', 'Dull', 'Slow'; children from excluded groups receive physical punishment although there is a recent directive from government prohibiting physical punishment.

All education Advocates believe that all children must

receive primary education. Hence we need to strive to make schools inclusive and genuinely child-friendly. Instead of learning the value of 'inclusion', children internalise discriminatory behavior as they see it on a daily basis from their peers and teachers. Some children are victims of discrimination because they are too young to fight back and protect themselves. Schools that discriminate against children defeat their own purpose.

It is of paramount importance for the actors in the child rights organisation to examine the magnitude of exclusion. Exclusion has a lasting impact on the lives of the children. In the worst cases, children are completely pushed out of the education system. Though enrolment rate improved over the years in Bangladesh, retention rate is a matter of serious concern. School-age children who are excluded from the education system become vulnerable to all forms of exploitation. It is very difficult to get these children back into school and is even more difficult to ensure full protection outside the school system so that they may enjoy their childhood.

This study was grounded on the above said background and the objectives of the study were to mapping the exclusions in education. This education exclusion mapping aims to make suggestions so that education system and schools become more inclusive in order to improve retention and better utilisation of state investment.

Objective

The overall goal of this study was to better understand the dynamics of exclusion in schools at a national level and to find advocacy scopes that can ensure children's access to and actively participate in and benefit from quality primary education in Bangladesh.

Specific Objectives

Specific objectives of the study were to-

- Map the dynamics of exclusion in schools
- Understand the causes of exclusion
- Collected relevant information in order to develop evidence based advocacy initiatives

The set objectives are aimed for an inclusive education system in which children have effective participation in changing exclusionary practices in schools and communities along with other stakeholders are engaged in the whole process to complement the inclusive system.

Methodology

This study was initiated with a conceptualisation and issue identification brainstorming session where the research strategy including methodologies and an initial list of issues as well as diverse theoretical and policy stands related with exclusion to be covered under this study was finalised.

The research report is prepared based on data and literature from both secondary and primary sources. The secondary literature review primarily is used in order to get a comprehensive knowledge about the exclusion issue. Different theoretical and policy discussions on exclusion have been reviewed to set out the theoretical background of the study. Besides, previous survey and PRA data gathered with the inception of Community-based child-centered Education Management Information System (CEMIS) project implemented by FIVDB in 20 villages of Sylhet have been used in the report to identify and analyse the socio-economic-cultural context of exclusions.

Community based approach was used to collect primary data. A large number of key interviews, focus group discussions and case studies were carried out to explore the dynamics of exclusion

in school and education system. The mapping addressed exclusions at 3 levels-

1. Exclusion from the system (Out of school)
2. Exclusion in the system (Maltreatment)
3. Exclusion as a result of the system (Poor quality education leading to failure)

In order to ensure representation of diverse communities as well as geographic areas, a total of 17 schools comprising four districts- Sylhet, Sunamganaj, Manikganj and Shirajganj, under three divisions-Dhaka, Sylhet and Rajshahi, have been covered. The locations of the study area and schools covered are provided in Annex- 1. This study considers each school as an individual study area and in each school 2 FGDs (one with students and another with parents, SMC members and community people), 6 key Informant Interviews (KII) with students and 2 case studies with students were carried out. Annex- 2 describes details of the FGD, interview and case study participants. FGDs, interviews and case studies have covered tea garden, border area and *haor* regions, perceived to be characterised by high degree of exclusion of all 3 types under consideration in the study.

Study Outline

The following section will provide a brief literature review on understanding exclusion and education and would focus on some theoretical and policy discussions regarding measuring exclusion in education. Section three will discuss the field findings and relate it with previous researches. This section will explore the dynamics of exclusion in education from different perspectives. Last section will provide some advocacy and policy pointers based on the findings and discussions of this research.

SECTION TWO

UNDERSTANDING EXCLUSION AND EDUCATION

Exclusion is a widely discussed issue in the discourse of development since 1980s. In the late 1980s, the term exclusion became popular in the western literatures to explain the consequences of the radical economic, industrial and social changes that were taking place. The term reflected long-term or repeated unemployment, family instability, social isolation and the decline of neighborhood and social networks.

It is evident from the development literature that over time, mainly two approaches have evolved in the understanding and analysis of exclusion. The dominant one is economic approach and the other one is social approach. Economic approach is based on human capital theory which focuses on person's or group's unemployment that results in inability to access social services like education, health etc. On the other hand the social approach focuses on the socio-political-economical conditions and processes for which a person or a group face deprivation and fail to participate equally in the society. Since the late 1980s, this term has been used to discuss how and why poor and marginalised people fail to meet his/her basic rights.

Rene Lenoir first used the term 'social exclusion' (in 1974) in the context of France. He explained the socially excluded as those who did not have access to welfare programmes run by the state. He mainly dealt with the exclusion of physically and mentally disabled (Zohir and others, 2008). But the concept of exclusion was used in earlier literature. Adam Smith mentioned that the inability of some people to "appear in public without shame" can be told as a form of deprivation (Sen, 2000). In all such references, the concern was with social exclusion and this term widely belongs to the domain of sociologists.

UNESCO, in an article on exclusion², addresses that social exclusion occurs as a result of inadequacy and failures in the systems and structures of family, community and society. The term engages understanding both who is excluded, and how. It also focuses the results of exclusion. Though the definitions of exclusion often resemble those of relative poverty, the concept however is not limited to it. Social exclusion does not always involve poverty. For example rich people may be excluded from the established social networks of elites due to an ethnic background. Critics also stress that the foreigners in a country are excluded due to their limited access to social rights.

"A state of poverty in which individuals cannot access the living conditions which would enable them both to satisfy essential needs (food, education, health, etc.) and participate in the development of the society in which they live."

ILO

"Social exclusion is broadly concerned about the social polarization associated with rapidly growing income inequality"

EU-1980

"Social exclusion is lack of access to the institutions of civil society (legal and political systems), and to the basic levels of education, health, and financial well-being necessary to make access to those institutions a reality."

UNDP

Social exclusion covers both the causes and effects of poverty, and all forms of social and cultural discriminations and disadvantages. Ideas about exclusions are mostly concerned with both the processes (the way things happen), and conditions or set of circumstances (the way things are).

Education and Exclusion

Though exclusion and education has been inter-relatedly discussed since late 1980s, in the early stage, the discussion mainly focused on how people were deprived of getting education due to social exclusion. Later on, priority was given to address that people

² For details please see-

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/social-transformations-international-migration/glossary/exclusion/#topPage>

became socially excluded due to deprivation of education. However, exclusion theory was dominating in the discussion of education and exclusion.

But since early 1990s, exclusion has increasingly been discussed in the discourse of global education and has become a popular term in educational discussion. It mainly focused on the issues that are responsible globally and locally to deny people's right to education. After the Jomtien declaration of EFA, exclusion has been used as the key term to monitor who are left out from the mission of Universal Primary Education.

On the other side, significant discussions have evolved regarding the necessity to build an inclusive education system to address the issue of exclusion that is based on disabilities. Inclusive education means a comprehensive education system that is designed in a way that all children have equal opportunities to get an equal quality of education. Mainstream education system fails to accommodate all children specially those who have special needs and as a result they are excluded from the education system.

In the early stages, mainly in Bangladesh, discussion of exclusion was focused on enrollment of all children in school and Bangladesh has achieved a significant success in that respect. But soon it became clear that lots of the enrolled children drop out and then the focus turned into addressing the problem of drop out. Later on critics argued that retaining in school does not matter if the quality of education is poor. That's why for the last few years, the prime concern is to deliver quality education to all. But quality education still remains a big challenge for our primary education.

Present Status of Quality Primary Education

School survey report 2007 (Directorate of Primary education, Government of Bangladesh) demonstrates serious shortfall in the education system and shows that quality of primary education is not up to the mark. According to the survey data repetition rate is 11.2% (nationally) and repetition rate is so high (up to 24%) in some poor and marginalised areas. Repetition rate should ideally approach zero percent and high repetition rates indicate problems of internal efficiency.

This survey also reveals a high dropout rate and a low survival rate. The average dropout rate is more than 10% in each grade except grade 5 and is 4.4% in grade 5. National average survival rate is only 51.9% and the district level lowest value is 34.6% and highest value is 80.1%.

Table-1- Status of quality of primary education in Bangladesh

Level	Net Enrollment Rate	Drop out Rate	Repetition Rate	Survival Rate	Coefficient of efficiency
National average	91.1	11.24	11.6	51.9	58.8%
District level Highest value	98.8		24	80.1	72.4%
District level lowest value	73.9		6	34.6	42.8%

Source: School survey 2007, Directorate of Primary education govt. of Bangladesh

Physical and mental punishment is widely in practice in our education system. Though an act has recently been enacted to stop punishment in school, a nationally well known daily news paper (The Daily Prothom Alo) reported that in the last few months primary school students, both male and female, were physically

beaten and mentally punished in primary schools in different parts of the country. Some cases were so brutal that a writ petition has been moved recently in the High Court by two national NGOs³. Some students are still suffering as the physical punishment has caused permanent impairment for them.⁴

Table-1 demonstrates that there are discriminations between geographically rich and poor areas. This is because the education and socio-economic system encourage discriminations and the marginalised and poor children are the worst victim of it. They face different forms of exclusion and are never able to overcome it.

Both school as an individual institution and education system as a whole suffer from exclusion. Though there have been substantial literature discussing the issue, most of them are concerned with one dimension of exclusion focusing on the reasons of being out of school. But the literature is almost silent about the in-school exclusion. Though there are some rich researches in the western and African context of in-school exclusion which are mainly focused on race issue, we have continued to ignore the issue. Recently some initiatives have been taken to address the physical punishment issue in schools, however these also fail to relate the problem with broader socio-political context. In this sense present study is the first attempt to address the dynamics of exclusion in education. This study finds three dynamics of exclusion that are interrelated and at the same time being individually significant. Present study mapped exclusions at three levels of the education system-

1. From the system
2. In the system
3. As a result of the system

The following section will discuss this briefly.

³ Ain O Salish Kendra & Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust

⁴ For details please see *The Daily Prothom Alo*, 8 october 2008.

SECTION THREE

EXPLORING THE DYNAMICS OF EXCLUSION

Measuring exclusion in education should not only be limited in counting the number of out of school children or drop out students. Counting the number of out of school children is only useful to understand why and how children are excluded from the system. On the other hand, counting the number of drop out students only helps to understand the exclusionary process that occurs as a result of the system. But exclusion has other dynamics with the system itself that occur from home to the class room and make students unable to make best use of the education. Students also face many inhuman behavior and disparities based on merit, class and others socio-economic and cultural differences.

Whereas educational literatures highly focus on exclusion that denies children to access to education or make student drop out from school and less focus on within school exclusions, this study finds that within school exclusion is also very crucial and it makes a significant portion of students unable to enjoy the benefits of education. This study however, explores three dynamics of exclusion in education. First type of exclusion mainly occurs in the socio-economic and political levels that make conditionalities for which large number of children cannot enter into the educational system. For this kind of exclusion student can never enroll in the school. Second type of exclusion happens in the school system and makes discriminations and dominations among the students in the class and deprives a large number of students from receiving a quality education. Third type of exclusion happens as a result of ineffectiveness of schools or education system as a whole that forces students out from the school.

EXCLUSIONS FROM THE SYSTEM

A survey was undertaken by CEMIS project of FIVDB in 21 villages of Sylhet region in 2001. Data shows that a large number of children never enrolled in school. Most of these children are from poorest families of this area. Table-2 shows that in all villages some students can never enroll in the school. In some villages number

Table-2- Out of school students

Village	Associated School	Number of Children age 5-12	Number of Children never enrolled school
Ausha	Ausha	220	37
Ilamergaon	Umaiergaon	49	14
Umaiergaon	Umaiergaon	265	60
Chalipur	Nandirgaon	110	5
Tukergaon	Noagaon	53	11
South Umaiergaon	Vadeshwar	364	31
Dakhri	Dakhri	261	47
Nandirgaon	Nandirgaon	312	67
Noagaon	Laugul	93	24
East faringura	Laugul	130	24
Pirergaon	Laugul	84	10
Barokapan	Barokapan	368	57
Barofaud	Vadeshwar	113	15
Baroshala	Baistila	167	6
Bachatila	Baistila	14	1
Manlipar	Baistila	183	10
Ramkrisnapur	Noagaon	56	13
Laugul	Laugul	53	9
Lalkha	Noagaon	37	7
satar	Satar	389	19
Hatkhola	Hatkhola	517	43

Source: CEMIS survey 2009 (Done by FIVDB)

of out of school children is significantly high, in one village (Lalkha) the proportion being more than a fifth. In the village Nandirgaon 67 children was out school, in Umaiergaon the number was 60 and in Barokapan 57 children was un-enrolled. A significant number of children were out of school in other villages as well. At present, 10% (nationally) of primary school going children of the country remains out of school and in the marginalised areas the number is much higher (district level highest value is 26.1%). These areas are mainly disaster prone, *haor*, *monga*, *tea garden* and hilly areas where administrative and institutional development is very low. (School survey report 2007)

Inside the Case: Reasons for Out of School

The present study carried out 15 case studies in the same areas with children never enrolled in school to deepen the understanding of causes that made children not to enroll in school. Studies reveal that poverty makes complex situations for a family in sending the children

to school (Titumir and Hossain 2004). In some cases, children are the only earning member of the family and have to bear the family burden. In some cases, children are engaged in work to help the families' subsistence.

Reasons for Exclusion from Education

1. Poverty
2. Polygamy
3. Fear of punishment
4. Death of father/mother
5. No help from relatives, neighbors and community
6. Children taking family responsibility
7. Parent's unwillingness to support children's education
8. Child labor
9. Parent's illiteracy
10. No incentive to attract children to school
11. Excessive workload at home
12. Large family
13. Absence of adult-earning members in the family
14. No permanent residence
15. Being the elder child of the family

Most children are first generation learners. Parents are often unfamiliar with education requirement and are therefore don't encourage their children's education. Some cases reveal that students are unwilling to go to school. In the 'Tea Garden' area most of the children are engaged in child labor and have to earn for the family. Some cases also show that different cultural practices, like father's several marriages, make barrier for them to enroll in school. In most of the cases, elder son or daughters never get enrolled. Some children face multiple causes whereas some children lose their chance to get enrolled in school even because of a single cause. In all the cases poverty makes the situation more complex.

Several national and international studies have shown that poverty is the key factor denying children their right to get education. In a similar research Titumir and Hossain (2003) show that poor students are often denied their right to access education. School survey report (2007) shows that rate of national level average access to education is 94.4% and the district level highest value is 99.4% whereas district level lowest value is 81.1%. This statistics reveal considerable regional disparity within the country.

Poverty makes the marginalised people more vulnerable. In the case studies, we found that numbers of out of school children are higher in the tea garden area than other areas. People from tea garden are socially excluded and are not well accepted by other people. This social exclusion limits their children's education aspirations. Also parents of the tea garden area do not feel comfortable to send their children to school because access to education is historically limited to people from this area and there are only few examples of children receiving education and hence getting educated has not developed as a culture in the tea garden community. In the case studies, we found that most of the parents are willing to send their children to school but due to poverty, social and cultural exclusion they hardly succeed.

Case Stories of Out of School Children

Case 1

My father died 3 years ago. We are 2 sisters and one brother. My elder brother is a rickshaw-puller. I am a domestic worker. We live in a slum. My mother cannot send me to school as we are very poor. I could not go school due to my father's death.

Alpana Akhtar, Age- 08 (Tea garden)

Case-2

I am a daily-wage earner. I have two brothers and two sisters. My mother died while I was one year old. From then I was under my grandfather's care until his death recently. Then our land was robbed and I had to take on the family responsibility as the elder member of my family.

Jaharlal munda

Case-3

I am the elder member of my family. I work as a helper in a carpenter's shop. I have to do the other works of my family as well. My father assumes that I would not be able to manage a job along with education and little education may not help me find a good job. So, he doesn't want to send me to school.

Atim

Case-4

My father works in a tea garden. We are 3 brothers and 2 sisters. I help my father at home and in the garden. My father is unable to send me to school.

Nandu Mia, age-12

EXCLUSIONS IN THE SYSTEM

Students are excluded in many ways in the school. It happens in the classroom because of the teachers' attitude and maltreatment by teachers and other students. The same maltreatment continues to be practiced at home and in the community. Present study reveals that all students are not equally treated by the teachers in schools. Students are categorised according to their merit, socio-economic and cultural background. This categorisation creates disparities among students regarding teachers' care, learning opportunities and punishment.

If a student is once labeled as 'bad' or 'good' by the teachers, it spreads beyond the class and school to the home and community. For example if a student is treated as 'non-meritorious', teachers begin to treat him/her badly and it is followed by other students as well. Then through other students it spreads to the community and the students face the same treatment on the way to school, in the play ground by his classmates and when his/her parent become aware of this, unfortunately, the student face same maltreatment at home by his/her parent. Through the process child loses his/her confidence and self respect and can never overcome this situation and finally fails to make good results in the school. It can even hinder his childhood development. Furthermore the class arrangements are also designed on the categorisation which makes the disparities permanent and reproductive.

Categorisation of the Students

Though, from the right perspective, all students regardless of age, sex, class, ethnicity and merit are supposed to be treated equally by the school and the teachers, this study however finds that the opposite is being practiced in real life. In the interview and Focus Group Discussions it is evident that students are labelled and

treated differently based on their performance and merit. In the Focus Group Discussion students share that a few students are more popular as 'good students' and teachers treat them with care and respect. On the other hand, a large number of the students are defined as 'bad students' and are treated badly by the teachers and the 'good students'.

Teachers are supposed to support their students develop their merit however the irony is that teachers themselves are defining student's merit in a competitive system, classify and label them as 'Good or Bad' student forgetting their own professional respon-

Table- 3- Reason for defining the students as 'bad' or 'good'

'Bad student'	'Good student'
Not preparing tasks regularly	Preparing tasks regularly
Not behaving gently	Behaving gently
Not respecting elders	Respecting elders
Fighting at school	Not fighting at school
Not obeying the teachers	Obeying the teachers
Calling bad names	Not calling bad names
Doing bad in exams	Doing well in exam
Not coming to school regularly	Coming to school regularly
Not being meritorious	Being meritorious
Mumbling while reading	Reading fluently
Not standing at the assembly line	Standing at the assembly line
Leaving school during lunch break	Not leaving school during lunch break
Staying dirty	Staying clean
Sitting in the back bench	Sitting in the first bench
Wearing dirty and old clothes	Wearing good clothes
Wasting school time by playing	Not wasting school time by playing
Making noise	Not making noise
Telling lie	Not telling lie
Not within <i>Roll no-1-10</i>	Within <i>Roll no- 1-10</i>

Source: Present study

sibility. The ranking and labeling ultimately determines the nature of their treatment to their students. These practices go against the fundamental child rights principles that strive to ensure equal treatment for all children to develop themselves as a respective member of the society. This study reveals dozens of causes based on which teachers define a student as 'bad or good'.

The above list is based on the responses provided by the students during interviews and FGDs. Students were asked to share their perception of 'Good and Bad' students. The answers reveal that school are creating and reinforcing such perceptions in the minds of the students. Example of one such unjust perception: 'Poor children are bad as they are unable to wear clean cloth and stay clean all the time'. On the others side, there are other things that do not depend on the willingness or ability of the students but these also contribute to defining students as 'Good / Bad'. For example, interviews and FGDs reveal that most of the students are poor and they have to help their father or mother in their work or work outside homes to earn money. As a result, poor students are unable to come to school regularly and they may fail to study at home as they do not have any scope to study at home as their parents are illiterate; their house lacks basic amenities and they are expected to work at home as well.

Disparities in Teachers' Behavior

In the Focus Group Discussions and interviews, students said that there are discriminations in the way teachers treat their students. Students said that teachers are more careful when it comes to 'Good students' and are somewhat rude when it comes to the so called 'Bad students'. Table-4 shows that teachers' attitudes are almost opposite to the 'supposedly' 'Bad students' when compared to the 'supposedly' 'Good students'. In this situation 'good students' continue to be 'good' and 'bad students' continue to be

'bad'. This makes a 'Caste System' within the class. For instance if it is determined by the teachers that only good students will sit in the first bench or will be able to write on the black board it creates a hierarchy of privileges within the class. Those students whom the teacher believes as 'good' are not punished if they fail to complete a task while 'bad students' are punished even for talking in the class. This creates disrespect among the students for their teachers and teachers lose the moral right of teaching.

Table- 4-Teacher's attitudes to students

Attitude towards the so called 'Good students'	Attitudes towards the so called 'Bad students'
Love more	Punish more
Take care more	Ignore
Call 'Good', 'Best'	Call 'Dull', 'Weak', 'Donkey',
Inspire them	Humiliate them
Believe more	Don't believe
Call them to do mathematics on the black board	Don't call to write on the black board
Help in studies/lesson preparation	Does not help
Don't punish or punish less if they don't prepare task	Punish them for silly reasons
Give chance to do coaching in school	Don't give any favor
Want them to sit in the first bench	Want them sit in the back bench
Behave kindly	Behave rudely
Give promotion to the rich (Daughter of the Chairman) student even if they fail	Cut down the name of the students if they do not come to school for 20-25 days

Source- Present study

Students told that if the 'Good students' are unable to answer or complete a task, teacher make them understand, but if the

'Bad students' are unable to answer questions, teacher beat them. They also said that teachers teach the 'Good student' differently to make the task interesting and understandable. In the absence of such support, the 'Bad student' fails to keep up with what is being taught in the class. Teachers sometimes teach the 'Good student' and ask the 'bad student' to learn from 'good student' which make it impossible for them to understand the task.

The Hidden Arrangement of Reproduction of Exclusion

In our traditional school system, classes function in such ways that the marginalisation of the students reproduce through the daily practice. This process starts from the register book and follows up to the process and practice of enrolling, examining, seating arrangement, reward and punishment.

Register Book and Serialisation and Grouping of Students

School registers the students according to their performance in the exam. In this process, some students, who are ranked from 1 - 5/10, established as 'Good students' and the rest of the students are established as 'Bad students'. If there is a large number of students in a class, school divides students in many sections or groups. In that case students of section A/1 are established as 'good' and students of section B/2, C/3, D/4 are treated as 'bad students'. In the FGDs and interviews, students expressed that they feel very bad if roll number and section works as a cause for them in determining teacher's and students' attitudes to them. Students of roll no 10-above suffer from inferiority complex whereas students of roll 1-5/10 feel proud.

Seating Arrangement

Traditionally the 'good students' sit in the first bench and the back benches are reserved for the 'bad students'. It is a reward for the 'good students' to sit in the first bench and in contrast, it appears as a punishment for the 'bad students' to sit in the back bench.

One student said that she did not like to sit in the back bench but she had to sit as her roll is 50 and if she sits in the front row, 'good students' push her out. She further added that it is very difficult to hear the lesson from the back bench as teachers only concentrate to the first bench's students. High pupil teaches ration makes it more difficult for the back benchers to keep up with the class.

Way of Teaching, Reward and Punishment

As the first benchers are closer to the teachers, they can hear the lecture clearly and if they fail to understand anything they can ask the teacher to repeat it which helps them to prepare task easily. Also teachers ask them task to perform regularly and offer them to do math or writing task on the black board which inspires them to concentrate on study. On the other hand, back benchers are hardly able to hear the teacher's speech. They are seldom offered to write on the black board. Students said that as they do not hear teacher's lecture from the last bench and teachers only concentrate on the first few rows of benches, they have nothing to do except gossiping and talking. In that event teachers become angry with them and offer them to come in front to write on the black board. As they fail to follow the lessons they fail to write it down on the blackboard. As a result, teachers punish them. In case of section formation, school decides to organise special coaching for the A group/section student which deprive the 'weak' students from the opportunity to recover themselves. This works as a reinforcing circle for the 'weak' students from which they can never get themselves out.

Punishment: A Way of Teaching?

Though punishment is recognised as violation of child right throughout the world, it is a common practice in our schools. This study reveals that students are both physically and mentally punished. There are dozens of causes that lead teacher to punish their students and natures of punishments are often very crude which

can even disrupt the child's natural development process. In the FGD and KIIs, students told of more than 20 causes that lead them to be punished. Table-5 shows a picture of cause and nature of punishment.

Students are sent to school so that they can learn good behavior not to be treated based on their inherent behavior. Being children they are in the school to learn and it is the school's duty to help children learn the appropriate behavior. But this study surprisingly finds that schools are acting like courts. Instead of finding the cause of students' behavior, teachers are punishing them when students behave in a way they are not expected to behave. For instance, why a student does not come to school regularly or prepare task regularly does not necessarily depends on his or her willingness. In the FGD and interview, students told that most of them are poor and they have to help their father or mother in their work or had to work to earn money. There is no scope for them to prepare lessons at home as their parents are illiterate and they have to work for the family. Students are punished even for causes they are in no way responsible for. For instance, poor student can not wear school dress or they are usually late in school as they are engaged in work. But they are punished for these failings. These socio-economic factors are beyond the child's choice, but schools and teachers are not ready to understand it. That affects how teachers treat them as they usually treat well who are regular in class and are doing well in the exam and ignoring the vast majority of students.

'Good student' never get punished. Teachers do not act equally to all students when it comes to determining punishments. 'The first rank students' are not beaten by stick; they at best have to hold ears when 'Bad students' are badly beaten for the same cause.

Table5- Cause and Nature of Punishment

Cause of Punishment	Nature of Punishment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fighting / quarrelling • Not preparing task • Making noise • Leaving the class without permission • Talking/gossiping in the class • Changing places • Disobeying the teachers • Misbehaving with 'Good student' • Unable to write on the black board • Being inattentive in the class • Not wearing the school dress • Drawing on the wall • Not following the rule • Running in the corridor • Wasting time in the name of going to toilet • Unkempt nails • Telling lies • Being late in school • Complaining against 'Good Student' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beat on the hand so that they can remember while eating • Forbidding students to come school • Beat by hand, duster, and stick • Ignoring the students • Beat on back with a stick • Sit-ups holding ears • Beating students while putting student's head under the bench • Calling bad name: Cow, Donkey... • Putting head under bench • Made to standing on one foot • Made to leave the class • Standing with keeping books in the hand /on head • Standing outside the class • Putting off the pant and beating on the back • Pulling the ears • Made to stand outside under Sun • Beating by junior class students • Put pencil between two fingers and making pressure • Standing - nose touching the wall • Standing on the bench

Source: Present study

Naturalisation of Punishment

Though students have many complaints against punishment, it is surprising that most of them kind of approve punishment and think that teachers punish them to make them learn well. Some children also think that teachers have the right to punish them as their parents also ask teachers to punish them if they fail to prepare task. That's why though punishment is inhuman, it has been justified as the teacher's way to teach or correct his/her students.

Feeling After Being Punished

Two theories have been developed in the discourse of classroom management – one is based on *Behaviorism* approach and other is based on *Humanism* theory. Punishing pupils in order to manage the classroom is supported by the behaviorism approach. Behavior management methods based on behaviorism approach advocates rewarding pupils when they conform to school expectations and punishing them when they do not. According to this approach rewards are examples of positive reinforcement and punishment acts as negative reinforcement.⁵

Critics of behaviorism-based classroom management stress that positive reinforcement can establish an expectation of payout for learning, and negative reinforcement can damage a student's confidence and self-esteem and it can also work against good classroom management. They argue that humanism-based methods, in contrast, focus on inner motivation and behavioral choice as appropriate behavioral management foundations. Humanistic teaching is pupil-centered; it means recognising students as individuals, respecting their differences, and trying to help them in their personal, social, emotional and academic lives.⁶ Such methods are said to promote listening and communication; foster awareness of self, improve student's confidence and self-

⁵ For details please see <http://www.universityessays.com/example-essays/education/behaviour-management.php>

⁶ For details please see <http://www.universityessays.com/example-essays/education/behaviour-management.php>

esteem, and encourage respect for others.

On the other hand, there have been several studies that prove that punishment does not work for children to learn what the punisher wants to teach. In contrast, it makes some negative impacts on the punished.

Findings of this study strongly support humanism-based classroom management method as the students expressed their strong opinion against punishment. In the FGDs and interviews, students said that they are both physically and mentally punished. Physical punishment even includes beating with stick while stu-

Feeling and Reaction after being punished

- Not go school at least for two days
- Fear approaching the teacher for further clarifications
- Lose interest to read
- Drop out from the school
- Suffer from inferiority complex
- Lose self-confidence
- Feel ignorance
- Disown the class and school

dents are tied up. Other forms of physical punishment like kneel down are very painful and harmful for them. Though mental punishment appears to be less harmful on the face of it, students said that mental punishment is more intolerable for them. They felt it was very humiliating and were ashamed because of the mental punishment. It causes damages to their personality and they lose self respect. Some students even think of committing suicide.

They said that they feel very bad after being punished. Some became very angry and sensitive. They lose their confidence, self respect and begin to disown the class and school. A large number of students told that often they did not go school for 2/4 days after being punished by the teachers. Punishment works more negatively on those students labeled as 'Bad'.

Maltreatment of Students

This study finds that the so called 'bad' students even face maltreatment from the so called 'good' students also. Teacher's maltreatment to the 'bad students' and reward to the 'good students' constructs the idea that 'good students' are superior to the 'bad students' and they have the right to humiliate or ignore the 'bad

Maltreatment of the students

- Ignore the poor/'bad' student
- Humiliate them
- Don't help the poor/'bad' student
- Behave badly
- Call bad names
- Beat the physically disable students

students', since it is practiced by the teachers and gets approval. 'Good students' often become teachers' assistants and manage the class in the absence of the teacher. It is evident from the study that 'good

students' usually dominate the class and behave badly with the 'bad students'. Students said that, though sometimes 'good students' play with 'bad students', they always maintain a distance.

Maltreatment of Parents

In the FGDs and interviews, students told that they also face bad treatment at home by their parents. As the parents come to know the bad result / performance of the student they immediately accuse the kids and punish them at home as well. In this process, punishment crosses the boundary of school and reaches home. They also told that parents tell that they will end their (students) study and make them involved in income generating works full-time which puts pressure on the students and has a negative effect on their study.

EXCLUSIONS AS A RESULT OF THE SYSTEM

Existing literature shows that drop out is one of the results of poor quality of the education system. Though the previous research gives a macro-level picture of reasons that are broadly responsible

for drop out, they specifically fail to signify the micro reasons that deepen the macro contexts. This study goes through both macro and micro reasons related with drop out and try to correlate them. Findings of the study show that at the macro level, poverty and social and cultural marginalisation are mainly responsible for drop

Table 6- Drop out students

Village	Associated School	Number of Children age 5-12	Number of Drop out student
Ausha	Ausha	220	3
Ilamergaon	Umaiergaon	49	0
Umaiergaon	Umaiergaon	265	19
Chalipur	Nandirgaon	110	2
Tukergaon	Noagaon	53	0
South Umaiergaon	Vadeshwar	364	19
Dakhri	Dakhri	261	16
Nandirgaon	Nandirgaon	312	17
Noagaon	Laugul	93	1
East faringura	Laugul	130	3
Pirergaon	Laugul	84	3
Barokapan	Barokapan	368	6
Barofaud	Vadeshwar	113	10
Baroshala	Baistila	167	3
Bachatila	Baistila	14	0
Manlipar	Baistila	183	5
Ramkrisnapur	Noagaon	56	1
Laugul	Laugul	53	5
Lalkha	Noagaon	37	0
satar	satar	389	9
Hatkhola	Hatkhola	517	15

Source: CEMIS survey 2010 (Done by FIVDB)

out. But the exclusive school system makes the vulnerability of the marginalised more complex and makes it impossible for them to overcome the situation. Children come from poor families that are also socially and culturally marginalised. The discriminatory treatment in the school and in the family actually becomes the obvious cause for drop out.

In Sylhet area, a survey was undertaken by CEMIS project of FIVDB in 21 villages in 2010. Data shows that a large number of students dropped out from the school. These children are mainly from poorest and socially and culturally marginalised families. Table-6 shows that there are drop out children in almost every village and school. In some schools number of drop-out is very high.

Inside the Case : Reasons for Drop Out

Present case studies with 15 drop out children give a picture of the exclusionary school system. In the interview students said that they faced discrimination at school due to their poverty and marginality. They had to sit at back bench and they failed to hear the class lecture. Besides, teachers did not pay attention to them. As a result, they continued doing badly in school that brought about cruel punishment for them instead of good treatment and care. Things got more critical when the families became informed about the bad performance of the students and once again children were badly treated at home by the family members and the families were likely to decide that they better leave school and join work. In this exclusionary process the poorest students internalise fear and get diffident about study and are unable to fight against it. They start feeling uncomfortable with study and the ultimate result is either leaving the school on their own / under family pressure or failing in the exam which brings an end to the education.

Case Studies of Drop Out Students

Case-1-

Sabuj Mia discontinued school after passing class two. His father is a worker in the tea garden and mother works in a nursery. They are two brothers and two sisters. The family is unable to pay the costs.

Sabuj Mia, age-10

Case-2

Sushen Lal's mother died when he was 5. He left school after class three. His father works in a tea garden. He works in a flower garden from 8 am to 5 pm and earn 2000 taka per month. This money is spend for the family.

Sushen Lal, age-14

Case-3

Rubel Mia was a student of Lakhura Government Primary School. He left school after class five. They are five brothers and 3 sisters. He works in a workshop. His father is daily-wage labor.

Rubel Mia-Age-12

Case-4

Sujel Ahmed left school after class five. They are 4 brothers and 3 sisters. They have no land. His father is a agricultural worker. His elder brother is a mason and works 10 hours a day against 50 taka salary. He is sanitary worker.

Sujel Ahmed, Age-14

Case-5

Lokman Hossain have three brothers and two sisters. He left school after class three. His father failed to pay the annual exam fee. His father is a agricultural worker. He now works with his father at the field.

Lokman Hossain

Case-6

Ruhul Amin left school three months ago. He was a student of class three. His father is an agricultural worker and has no land of his own. He is the eldest brother and had to take the responsibility of earning.

Ruhul Amin, Age-14

Impact of Exclusion in Children's Life

From the findings of the FGDs and interviews it can be said that exclusions have different impacts in the children's life. It has both short term and long term effects. Some effects are visible while some invisible impact cause permanent harm for the children.

Child Labour

The excluded students first drop out from the school or make very poor results in the school. As a result their family decides to engage them in work permanently which certainly adds to child labor. While ILO acknowledges education as the best answer to the child labor, here the reverse is happening. In the case studies it has been found that several students who were recognised as 'bad students' left school and engaged in child labor where inclusion in the class could make them continue in school.

Table 7- Drop out and Child Labour

Age	Drop out at class	Present Occupation	Earning	Daily work hour
14	Three	Labor in a nursery	2000	9
12	Five	Labor at a workshop		
14	Five	Worker at a sanitary shop	1500	9
16	Two	Agricultural worker		
14	Five	Worker at a workshop	1500	12
11	Two	Helps father in his shop		10
12	Three	Agricultural worker		8
14	Three	Household labor	1500	12
14	Five	Driver		12
15	Two	Grocery business worker		
10	Three	Household help		
14	Four	Agricultural worker		8

Source: Present study

Exploitation and Maltreatment in Family and Community

Findings of the present study show that, some children faced exploitation due to be being detached from school and education. In the community and family studentship is an identity for the child that assures him/her to avail some rights and to receive decent behavior from the surroundings. Respondents, who no longer were students or/and were never students at all, said that while students receive good behavior and respect from teacher, peers, family members and community people, they in contrast, receive the opposite treatment.

Disruption in Childhood Development

Critics address punishment as violence in school. Several studies show that punishment not only harms the education of the students but hinders their overall development as well⁷. In FGD and interview it became clear that students who are punished in school not only do worse in the school but also lose their acceptance in community and family. They are treated badly and lose their natural acceptance in the family and community which increases the chance for deviant behavior and their natural opportunities for growth and development in life are thus denied. Students told that they internalise fear and inferiority and lose their confidence and self respect. In this condition no child can enjoy childhood and cannot develop him/herself as a future member of the society.

Chance for Worse Future

As excluded children have to be engaged in child labor, their chance to develop fully to survive in the future is minimised or denied. In contrast, extreme labor and different forms of exploitation make them weaker and they ultimately get excluded from the mainstream society. While a 'Good Student' continues to study that makes chance for him/her to ensure a comprehensive human development and develops opportunities for a decent way of earning in the future, the excluded child becomes a child labor and results in concurrent future exclusions at all levels for him/her.

⁷ Please see "Behaviour Management In The Classroom"-
<http://www.universityessays.com/example-essays/education/behaviour-management.php>

SECTION FOUR

TOWARDS AN INCLUSIVE SCHOOL AND EDUCATION SYSTEM

An inclusive school and education system is the best answer to exclusion in education. Present research points to three level exclusions in education. To address exclusion, initiatives are needed to be taken at each level. In the external level, poverty and others socio-cultural issues of marginalisation should be tackled properly to reach education of quality to the children from poor and marginalised families. In the internal level, classroom management process, teaching method, exam system and overall school system should be changed radically to ensure equal and appropriate care and nursing for each student. Necessary initiatives should be taken to enrich the performance and efficiency of school to retain students in school. Some policy and advocacy pointers based on the present study findings are discussed below that can contribute to reduce exclusions in education.

Special Initiatives for the Schools of 'Poor and Marginalised Areas'

Present study shows that there are discriminations among schools based on geographical location and exclusions become critical and worse in marginalised schools. Therefore, special initiatives are required for these schools to upgrade the performance of this school. It was an interesting finding that areas and schools themselves may get excluded from the education system because of where they are situated and whom they serve.

Implementing Child-centered Teaching

Our teaching method is teacher-centered and not child-centered. In the teacher-centered method, children are treated as passive recipients and their thinking, perceptions and opinions are neglected and they have to internalise the teacher's lecture. This passive participation denies natural development. Also the lesson and learning becomes joyless to them and as a result they become

uninterested in study. But in the child-centered teaching process, children are the center of teaching-learning. They are active participants in the learning. Through the active participation of each child, the lesson continues in the class. Different forms of group works and games are applied in this method to ensure active participation of all children. In this method each student gets equal care and nursing.

As each student gets equal chance for active participation and gets equal care and nursing in the child-centered teaching-learning method, it can reduce exclusion in the classroom and can make the class more inclusive. So, it is strongly required that teacher centered teaching-learning method should be replaced by child-centered teaching-learning method. A long term plan should be made to train and orient teachers in child centered teaching-learning.

Changing the Value of Education

Commercialisation and materialism are reflected within the education system as well. A high degree of economic value is dominating and associated with the concept of education. The notion is that education is a means to enhance individual's skills to fit him/hers in the job/labor market. This totally challenges the beauty and joy of learning for knowing and growing. A good job is the only aspiration for future and students compete with each other to stand first in the exam for that job. This idea fosters an unhealthy, unjust competition among students and the poor and marginalised students are excluded in the race. Whole education system is based on this sense of competition. Some city-based private schools are glorified as 'Success Schools' and parents are in competition to get their children enrolled in such schools. On the whole, the competition is internalised in the parents, teachers and students' minds defeating the purpose of education

There are competitions within schools and among students in a class. In this race and competition among students, those schools catering to the children from rich families continue to do well and the poor and marginalised students continue to be excluded. A sense of competition leads teachers to help those who are from better financial and social conditions as well as to improve their own socio-economic standing. As a result, those who are poor and marginalised are seen as those who cannot do well and therefore receive a discriminatory treatment from the teachers. Also competition encourages students not to help each other and builds up an individualistic development aspiration which may not be healthy for childhood development.

So, value imparted by education should be changed to create an attitude of cooperation instead of competition so that all children are treated equally and have a chance for equal development. Effective advocacy initiatives can be taken in national and local level and curriculum needs to address this issue.

Inclusive Seating Arrangement

Traditional seating arrangement of the classroom is that students sit in benches that are set one after another. In this sitting arrangement, only students who sit in the first few benches are able to get the attention of the teachers as the pedagogy is lecture-based and teacher-centered. This study reveals that the back benchers are deprived of the lessons and they get almost no attention from the teachers. As a result the back benchers fail to do well in exam and are excluded from education.

Therefore, the seating arrangement should be changed and instead of a square/rectangular shape it should be circle. In a circle sitting arrangement participants have better chance for equal sharing and contribution. Also the lecturer stands in a position to concentrate equally to all the participants.

Appropriate Student Teacher Ratio

A high pupil-teacher ratio makes it difficult for a teacher to take care of all the students. As a result only few students get the benefit at the cost of ignoring a large number of students. The present study came across pupil-teacher ratio up to 1:100 in some government schools. To address this problem more school should be set up in different areas on the basis of the number of children. There has to be one teacher for each class and the teacher-student ratio should preferably be below 1:40.

Teachers' Training on Humanism-based Classroom Management

Our teachers are habituated with the behaviorism based classroom management and they have no idea about humanism based class room management. Training for teachers are needed to orient them with humanism based class room management. It will help them to reject the approach that punishment is better to manage the class room well.

Special Care for Poor and 'Weak' Children

As poor and 'weak' children suffer more from exclusion, there should be special care for poor and 'weak' children. Schools can arrange special coaching for poor/marginalised students in the school and the SMCs can effectively contribute in this process.

Community-based Monitoring System

As punishment is a common practice in the school, a community based monitoring system can be implemented to prevent this practice. Community people along with SMC can regularly monitor the school whether teachers are practicing punishment or not.

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ANNEX-1- STUDY AREA

Administrative Division	District	School
Sylhet	Sylhet	Dhupagol Government Primary School
Sylhet	Sylhet	Mogolgaon Government Primary School
Sylhet	Sylhet	Lakhura Government Primary School
Sylhet	Sylhet	Laogul Government Primary School
Sylhet	Sylhet	Purbavag Government Primary School
Sylhet	Sylhet	Jolarmukh Abadipara Government Primary School
Sylhet	Sylhet	Sarispur Government Primary School
Sylhet	Sylhet	Chatal Government Primary School
Sylhet	Sunamganaj	Basantapur Government Primary School
Sylhet	Sunamganaj	Dhanpur Government Primary School
Rajshahi	Shirajganj	Kashiahata Government Primary School
Rajshahi	Shirajganj	Sarkarpara-Moulvipara Government Primary School
Rajshahi	Shirajganj	Kandarapara Government Primary School
Rajshahi	Shirajganj	Tatulua Government Primary School
Dhaka	Manikganj	Bangram Government Primary School
Dhaka	Manikganj	Darikandhi Government Primary School
Dhaka	Manikganj	34No Barongail Government Primary School

ANNEX-2-PARTICULARS OF PARTICIPANTS

Method	Participant	Number	Number of Participant	Age
FGD	Community people	17	10-12	25 to 50
	Students	17	12	6 to 12
KII	Students	102	102	6 to 12
Case Study	Students	64	64	6 to 15



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