

Baseline analysis on Educational Situation of Indigenous Children and Adolescents



Baseline Analysis

Educational situation of indigenous children and adolescents in three selected areas of Bangladesh



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List of Acronyms

- **ADC** – Additional Deputy Commissioner
- **ATEO** – Assistant Thana Education Officer
- **AUEO** – Assistant Upazila Education Officer
- **BBS** – Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
- **BCC** – Behaviour Change Communication
- **BDT** – Bangladesh Taka
- **CAMPE** – Campaign for Popular Education
- **CHT / CHTs** – Chittagong Hill Tracts
- **CSO** – Civil Society Organization
- **DC** – Deputy Commissioner
- **DPE** – Directorate of Primary Education
- **DRIP** – Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- **DSS** – Department of Social Services
- **FGD** – Focus Group Discussion
- **FTPP** – Framework for Tribal Peoples Plan
- **GB** – Governing Body
- **GBK** – Gram Bikas Kendra
- **GO** – Government Organization
- **GoB** – Government of Bangladesh
- **HIES** – Household Income and Expenditure Survey
- **HSC** – Higher Secondary Certificate
- **ICT** – Information and Communication Technology
- **IDI** – In-depth Interview
- **IGAs** – Income Generating Activities
- **ILO** – International Labour Organization
- **IMDA** – Inclusive Market Development Approach
- **IPs** – Indigenous Peoples
- **IVCA** – Integrated Value Chain Approach
- **IWGIA** – International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs
- **KII** – Key Informant Interview
- **LGD** – Local Government Division

- **LGI**s – Local Government Institutions
- **MoWCA** – Ministry of Women and Children’s Affairs
- **MPO** – Monthly Payment Order
- **MTB-MLE** – Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education
- **NEP** – National Education Policy
- **NFPE** – Non-Formal Primary Education
- **NGO / NGOs** – Non-Governmental Organization(s)
- **RBA** – Rights-Based Approach
- **SDG / SDGs** – Sustainable Development Goal(s)
- **SMC** – School Management Committee
- **SPSS** – Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
- **SSC** – Secondary School Certificate
- **SSI** – Semi-Structured Interview
- **SSN** – Social Safety Net
- **SSS** – Social Security System
- **TR** – Test Relief
- **UDC** – Union Digital Centre
- **UEO** – Upazila Education Officer
- **UN** – United Nations
- **UNO** – Upazila Nirbahi Officer

Executive Summary

Bangladesh has achieved significant progress in expanding access to primary education and improving gender parity. Yet, indigenous children and adolescents—alongside other marginalized groups, including those in tea garden communities and children with disabilities continue to face persistent, multidimensional barriers to equitable education. These barriers span economic, linguistic, infrastructural, social, and digital dimensions, limiting both school attendance and meaningful learning.

This baseline study, conducted by the Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE), assessed the educational realities of indigenous children in three geographically and culturally distinct regions: Mymensingh (Haluaghat Upazila), Sylhet (Sreemangal Upazila), and Rajshahi (Nachol Upazila). The study aimed to generate evidence on access, participation, learning conditions, school environment, and systemic constraints, with a view to informing inclusive education policy, program planning, and advocacy.

Study Objectives

The study sought to:

1. Assess enrollment, attendance, retention, and learning outcomes among indigenous children and adolescents.
2. Identify socioeconomic, linguistic, gender, and infrastructural barriers to education.
3. Document experiences and perceptions of students, parents, teachers, and community stakeholders.
4. Examine the alignment between national education policy commitments and local-level implementation.
5. Generate actionable, evidence-based recommendations for improving inclusive education.

Methodology

A **mixed-methods, cross-sectional design** was employed, including:

- **Quantitative surveys** of 550 students to collect data on enrollment, attendance, learning challenges, digital access, and school infrastructure.
- **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs):** 12 FGDs with students, parents, teachers, youth groups, and community members explored lived experiences and social dynamics.
- **Key Informant Interviews (KIIs):** 15 interviews with education officials, head teachers, school management committee members, and community leaders provided insights into systemic issues.
- **Secondary Review:** Relevant national policies, program reports, and academic literature contextualized findings.

Purposive sampling ensured representation of indigenous groups, gender balance, geographic diversity, and children with disabilities. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and thematic coding, and findings were validated through sub-national workshops with local stakeholders.

Key Findings

1. Enrollment, Attendance, and Retention

- Primary school enrollment is high, demonstrating the reach of national access interventions.
- Attendance is irregular: most students attend 15–20 days per month, with very few achieving full attendance.
- Dropout rates peak around grade three, reflecting structural, economic, linguistic, and psychosocial challenges.

2. Socioeconomic and Household Factors

- Over 92% of households earn less than BDT 10,000 per month, with livelihoods concentrated in agriculture, tea garden labor, and informal work.
- Poverty directly affects schooling through transportation costs, child labor, seasonal work, early marriage, and low parental engagement.

3. Language and Learning Challenges

- Approximately 10% of students experience language barriers, while the absence of systematic mother-tongue-based multilingual education undermines comprehension and participation.
- Only 20% of schools provide bilingual learning support, despite 70% having at least one bilingual teacher.
- Mathematics (26.5%) and English (21.8%) are the most challenging subjects, indicating the combined impact of language and teaching quality on learning outcomes.

4. Digital Exclusion

- Over 60% of students lack access to mobile phones or computers, and others face poor connectivity or high costs, severely limiting participation in online or blended learning.

5. School Environment and Safety

- All schools surveyed provide separate toilets for girls, yet infrastructure gaps persist in sanitation, disability-friendly facilities, classroom space, and learning materials.
- Social insecurity, harassment, and unsafe routes disproportionately affect girls and contribute to absenteeism and dropout.

6. Regional Contexts

- **Mymensingh:** Economic pressures, child labor, and weakening cultural cohesion heighten educational vulnerability.
- **Sylhet:** Tea garden communities face persistent poverty, language exclusion, and limited institutional support.
- **Rajshahi:** Seasonal migration and agricultural labor disrupt continuity of learning.

7. Intersectional Exclusion

- Indigenous educational exclusion is compounded by gender, poverty, geography, language, and disability, particularly affecting adolescent girls.
- Only 1–2% of surveyed children reported disabilities, highlighting under-identification and minimal inclusion in education programs.

Educational exclusion among indigenous children is **multidimensional**, driven by the combined effects of poverty, linguistic marginalization, digital inequality, social insecurity, and weak institutional responsiveness. While national policies—including the Constitution, National Education Policy 2010, the 8th Five-Year Plan, and SDG 4—emphasize equity and inclusion, implementation gaps at the local level limit progress.

Recommendations

Policy-Level

1. Scale up mother-tongue-based multilingual education nationwide.
2. Recruit and train bilingual teachers from indigenous communities.
3. Increase budget allocations for inclusive and equity-focused education programs.

Programmatic

1. Provide targeted remedial support in Mathematics and English.
2. Improve school infrastructure, sanitation, and gender-responsive facilities.
3. Introduce safe transport, child protection mechanisms, and psychosocial support.
4. Bridge the digital divide by providing devices, internet access, and digital literacy programs.
5. Strengthen social safety nets, including stipends and school meal programs, to reduce absenteeism.

Community-Level

1. Promote parental engagement and awareness of education's value.
2. Establish school-based child protection and anti-harassment committees.
3. Integrate indigenous cultural knowledge into curricula to enhance relevance and participation.

Policy and Global Alignment

The study's findings align with Bangladesh's National Education Policy 2010, the 8th Five-Year Plan (2021–2025), and SDG 4, emphasizing the importance of inclusive, equitable, and quality education for all. The evidence underscores that systemic, culturally responsive interventions—grounded in localized evidence—are critical to ensuring indigenous children and adolescents are not left behind.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Bangladesh has made commendable progress in expanding access to primary education over the past decades, with significant improvements in enrollment and gender parity. However, **these gains have not been experienced equally by all population groups**. Indigenous children and adolescents continue to face persistent and multifaceted barriers that limit their regular participation in school and their opportunities for meaningful learning.

Bangladesh is home to 1.6 million indigenous peoples who are further classified into **more than 54 indigenous peoples groups**, speaking **at least 35 distinct languages**, with diverse cultures, livelihoods, and geographic locations (The Indigenous World, 2024). These communities are primarily concentrated in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, the northern plains, and selected forest, tea gardens and coastal areas. Despite this diversity, the education system remains largely **uniform and Bangla-centric**, with limited adaptation to indigenous learners' linguistic, cultural, and socio-economic realities. As a result, many indigenous children enter school at a disadvantage from the earliest grades.

National education policies, including the National Education Policy (2010), emphasize equity, inclusion, and access for marginalized groups. Bangladesh is also committed to achieving **Sustainable Development Goal 4**, which calls for inclusive and equitable quality education for all. However, **a gap persists between policy commitments and ground-level implementation**, particularly in relation to indigenous learners. Challenges related to language of instruction, teacher preparedness, school infrastructure, safety, sanitation, poverty, and digital exclusion continue to undermine regular attendance, retention, and learning outcomes.

While national-level data provide an overview of education indicators, **localized and disaggregated evidence on the educational experiences of indigenous children and adolescents remains limited**. In particular, there is insufficient documentation of how household poverty, livelihood patterns, social insecurity, and language barriers interact with school-level conditions to shape participation and learning. This lack of evidence constrains informed policy dialogue, targeted planning, and effective advocacy.

Against this backdrop, the Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) conducted this study to examine the **educational situation of indigenous children and adolescents in selected areas of Bangladesh**. The study aims to generate **grassroots-level evidence** on access, participation, learning conditions, and key barriers, drawing on both quantitative and qualitative data. By capturing the voices and experiences of indigenous families, students, and education stakeholders, the study seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of exclusion and inequality within the education system.

The findings of this study are intended to support **policy dialogue, civil society advocacy, and inclusive education reform**, with a focus on ensuring that indigenous children and adolescents are not left behind in Bangladesh's education development efforts.

Objectives

Broad Objective

The principal objective of the study is to conduct a comprehensive baseline analysis of the educational situation of indigenous children and adolescents in the selected areas, focusing on their educational status in terms of access, enrollment, retention, and completion rates, while identifying key barriers such as poverty, language differences, and gender discrimination.

Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- To assess the current status of educational access, enrollment, attendance, retention, and completion rates among indigenous children and adolescents in the selected regions.
- To capture and document the perceptions, experiences, and priorities of key stakeholders, including parents, students, educators, community leaders, and education officials, regarding the educational challenges and opportunities within indigenous communities.

Methodology

This study has adopted a mixed-methods approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative research methods to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the education scenario of indigenous children and adolescents in the selected areas.

Study Design

A cross-sectional baseline study design is employed, focusing on three specific geographic areas namely 1. Rajghat Union, Srimangal, Moulavibazar district; 2. Nachol Sadar Union, Nachol, Chapainawabganj; and 3. Gazirvita Union, Haluaghat, Mymensingh, as shown in the Bangladesh Map

Figure 1: Study Locations



The study has explored the current status, challenges, and opportunities in accessing and completing education among indigenous children and adolescents, including those with disabilities and from tea garden communities.

Data Collection Methods

- i. **Literature Review:** A thorough review of existing national and regional documents, research studies, education policies, and climate change education frameworks relevant to indigenous and marginalized groups was reviewed.
- ii. **Quantitative Survey:** Structured questionnaires are administered to households, students, or schools to collect measurable indicators on enrollment, attendance, dropout, and access to education services.
- iii. **Key Informant Interviews (KIIs):** Conducted in-depth interviews with education officials, school administrators, teachers, local government representatives, community leaders, and subject matter experts.
- iv. **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs):** FGDs were organized with different stakeholder groups, including students, teachers, youth, local education activists, blended groups (Indigenous and tea garden community parents and community members)
- v. **Sampling Strategy:** Purposive sampling was used to select study areas and participants, ensuring representation from diverse indigenous groups, gender balance, and inclusion of persons with disabilities where possible.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

A total of 12 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) (4 in each locality) have been organized that represented by one Student, Teacher, Youth/Local education activists, and a Tea gardens community members or parents.

Students included are as follows:

1. Primary School: 4 (2 males, 2 females)
2. Secondary School (2 males, 2 females)
3. Higher secondary (2 males, 2 females)

Key Informant Interviews:

There was 5 Key informant Interview (KII) per locality that include the UNO, AUEO/ATEO, Union Parishad Chairman, SMC or GB Chairman, or their representatives and one Local leader.

Data Analysis:

Systematic analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data was done to uncover trends, challenges, and opportunities and develop evidence-based insights and also actionable recommendations for enhancing educational access and equity.

Data Validation:

Initial findings were shared in sub-national consultations to validate data, incorporate stakeholder feedback, and ensure accuracy and relevance.

Secondary Data Integration:

Synthesization and integration of data from credible secondary sources are done to strengthen the analysis and complement primary research findings.

Report Writing:

A detailed report has been prepared from the data collected from primary and secondary sources.

The findings of the study were shared and validated by organizing subnational finding sharing meetings and consultations, where different stakeholders, such as; study participants, who were data sources, community members, local leaders, managers, journalists, and administrators of the local levels were present. The feedbacks and reflections of those subnational consultations were incorporated in the study.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

Educational Status of the Santal Community in Northern Bangladesh: A Case Study (2024)— Shah, Faruk; Shahidullah, K.K.; Sultana, F.

Case study of the Santal community in northern Bangladesh. Explores access, dropout, poverty, and how their ethnic identity intersects with educational exclusion. The authors employ interviews, focus group discussions, and document review. This helps reveal not just numbers, but the lived realities behind low enrollment and dropouts — such as poverty, cultural barriers, language issues, child-marriage, and gender discrimination. The study highlights structural, social, cultural impediments: language barriers, uncertain future employment, gender norms, and cultural mismatch with mainstream education systems.

Harmonizing Educational Diversity: Integrating Indigenous and Ethnic Minority Perspectives in Bangladesh, Inspired by Australian Models (2024) — Mawa, J.

Discusses the structural exclusion of indigenous or ethnic minority perspectives (languages, culture) in mainstream Bangladeshi education and draws inspiration from Australian models of inclusion. The article also argues convincingly that Bangladesh's education system has long been mono-cultural and mono-lingual, oriented around the dominant Bengali culture— marginalizing indigenous or ethnic minority groups.

By looking at how Australia integrates Indigenous perspectives (languages, worldviews, cultural knowledge) into its national curriculum and teacher standards (e.g. inclusion of Indigenous languages and traditional ecological knowledge), the paper offers a tangible external model — giving policymakers and educators in Bangladesh a concrete reference. The article does not limit itself to curriculum critique but also points to deeper issues: lack of teacher training in indigenous languages and cultures; insufficient educational materials; infrastructure deficits in remote areas; poverty, discrimination and political marginalization — which collectively impede access and meaningful participation for indigenous/ethnic minority students. The author finally suggests concrete measures: developing curricula that reflect minority histories, traditions; adopting culturally responsive pedagogy; producing teaching aids, resources in native languages; enacting teacher training; and engaging minority communities in policy formation.

Enhancing Educational Equity Through Mother Tongue Instruction: Insights from Bangladesh's Ethnic Minorities and Global Practices (2025) — Hasan, K.; Azad, A.K.; Hossain, S.

Focuses on mother-tongue based multilingual education (MTB-MLE) for ethnic minority children in Bangladesh; examines how language-of-instruction affects equity.

This paper argues using mother tongues (or native ethnic minority languages) as mediums of instruction can promote educational equity for ethnic minority children in Bangladesh. It shows that the current mono-lingual (Bangla-centered) system creates structural

disadvantages for indigenous learners. The authors draw on international case studies (from countries such as the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Bolivia) to show how MTB-MLE has worked globally, improving learning outcomes, preserving cultural identity, and enhancing inclusion. This helps situate Bangladesh's challenges in a broader, globally recognized framework and shows evidence beyond local anecdotes.

The article doesn't just critique the status quo — it provides concrete, evidence-based recommendations for policy reform: expanding linguistic inclusion, empowering ethnic minority communities, revising language policies, and aligning reforms with global standards and constitutional commitments to linguistic rights. Beyond academic performance, the paper underscores how mother-tongue instruction helps affirm ethnic identity, preserve indigenous languages and cultures, and foster social inclusion — all central to a more inclusive, equitable education system in a linguistically diverse society like Bangladesh. Given that Bangladesh is home to many ethnic minority communities — often underrepresented and linguistically marginalized — this article brings a timely, needed voice into educational debate. It centers equity, respect for diversity, and systemic reform rather than assimilation or “one-size-fits-all” policies.

Educational and Institutional Barriers to Indigenous Language Preservation in Bangladesh: Challenges and Policy Implications (2025) — Karmaker, R

Analyzes how institutional and educational barriers (e.g., lack of textbooks, trained teachers) impede the preservation of indigenous languages — which ties directly into the education of ethnic communities. Unlike many earlier contributions that remain theoretical or broadly descriptive, Karmaker's study uses a combination of surveys (165 respondents), semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions (FGDs) with ethnic minorities, teachers, and community-leaders. This gives real-world, grounded insight into how institutional and educational structures impact language transmission — adding empirical weight to debates about language loss in Bangladesh. The paper documents how indigenous languages are excluded from school curricula. Key barriers identified: absence of textbooks in indigenous languages, lack of trained teachers competent in those languages, and the dominance of the national language (Bengali) in formal education. This helps illustrate that language decline is not just a matter of socio-economic pressure or “voluntary assimilation,” but structurally mediated by institutional choices.

According to the results, forcing children from ethnic minority backgrounds to learn in Bengali — a language that may not be their mother tongue — can lead to disengagement, academic underperformance, and higher dropout rates. That shows how language policy intersects with educational equity and social inclusion, reinforcing the argument that linguistic preservation is not only cultural, but also educational justice. The study concludes with practical implications: need for bilingual (or multilingual) education, development of teaching materials (textbooks) in indigenous languages, training of teachers from minority communities, and institutional support at governmental level. This moves beyond mere diagnosis to actionable suggestions, making the article useful for policymakers, educators, NGOs, and advocates of indigenous rights. The author acknowledges that Bangladesh is home to many distinct ethnic/linguistic communities (e.g. Chakma, Santal, Marma, Paharia, etc.), each with different languages, histories, and needs. By doing so, the study avoids over-generalizing and argues for context-sensitive and community-specific policy measures rather than a “one-size-fits-all” approach.

Challenges of Indigenous Children’s Primary Education in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh: Insights from Individuals Working in Education (2024) — Chakma, E.

Focuses on primary education of indigenous children in the Chittagong Hill Tracts region — captures on-the-ground perspectives of educators about barriers in access, culture context, curriculum fit. The study draws on semi-structured interviews with individuals working within the education system in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) — such as teachers, administrators, and community stakeholders — using a phenomenological approach to produce “crafted stories.” This insider perspective helps surface realities often overlooked in national-level statistics or policy documents. Rather than focusing on a single issue (e.g. language), the article reveals how a combination of factors undermines indigenous children’s access to quality primary education: centralized national policies insensitive to local context; language barriers; lack of appropriate teaching materials; shortage of qualified teachers; administrative problems including corruption; insufficient infrastructure; teacher absenteeism; poverty; low parental/community engagement; and social-economic marginalization. The author emphasizes that standard curricula and educational policies — designed for mainstream, Bengali-speaking contexts — are poorly suited to CHT’s culturally and linguistically diverse indigenous communities. This highlights the importance of tailored, localized approaches rather than “one-size-fits-all.”

Based on findings, the study urges that policymaking must take into account local context and cultural issues, including language, community engagement, resource allocation, teacher recruitment and training, and infrastructure. Given that many studies on Bangladesh’s indigenous education have been either broad-based or lacking in insider voices, this article stands out for focusing specifically on primary education in the CHT — a historically marginalized, remote, and culturally diverse region. That makes it valuable for researchers, policymakers and advocates looking to address equity and inclusion.

Preserving and Promoting Indigenous Languages of Ethnic Minorities in Bangladesh: A Strategic Planning Framework — Reza & Ullah (2023).

The article by Farhadur Reza and Muhammad Ullah—“*Preserving and Promoting Indigenous Languages of Ethnic Minorities in Bangladesh: A Strategic Planning Framework*” (2023) — offers an insightful and timely analysis of how Bangladesh’s indigenous languages, which embody rich cultural knowledge and epistemic value, are facing marginalisation despite constitutional and policy-affirmations such as Article 23(A), the 2010 Education Policy, and the 2010 Small Ethnic Groups Cultural Institutes Act. Their review underscores that while the National Curriculum and Textbook Board has published primary textbooks in five indigenous languages, this falls far short of ensuring vitality across more than 35 languages spoken by some 50+ Indigenous communities. The strength of the paper lies in its strategic planning framework, which emphasises teacher training, expanded textbook publication, community participation and policy institutionalisation; however, the authors could have strengthened the work by offering more empirical data on language-use shifts or case studies of particular communities. Overall, the article is a compelling call for deeper, systemic action in education policy and cultural governance to safeguard linguistic diversity in Bangladesh.

Enhancing Educational Equity Through Mother Tongue Instruction: Insights from Bangladesh’s Ethnic Minorities and Global Practices — Hasan, Azad & Hossain (2025).

The paper “Enhancing Educational Equity Through Mother Tongue Instruction: Insights from Bangladesh’s Ethnic Minorities and Global Practices” (Hasan, Azad & Hossain, 2025) presents a compelling and timely exploration of mother-tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE) in Bangladesh, weaving together evidence from ethnic-minority contexts and international practice. It lucidly argues that enabling children from minority language groups to begin schooling in their own languages not only enhances comprehension and cognitive development but also supports the preservation of cultural identity and reduces educational inequities. The authors succeed in positioning Bangladesh’s policy gaps—such as limited language-specific textbooks and insufficient teacher training—in a broader global framework of best practices, thus offering both aspirational benchmarks and concrete policy implications. However, the work would benefit from deeper longitudinal data tracking student outcomes over time and a stronger engagement with the practical challenges of shifting from Bangla-only instruction to robust MTB-MLE systems (e.g., resource constraints, community buy-in, teacher incentives). Overall, the article is a strong contribution to educational equity literature and a useful resource for policymakers and practitioners working to widen access for Bangladesh’s linguistic minorities.

Integrating Indigenous Languages into Textbooks for Ethnic Minority Students in Bangladesh: Empirical Research on Challenges and Potential Solutions — Ahmed (2024).

The article by Risala Ahmed (2024), “*Integrating Indigenous Languages into Textbooks for Ethnic Minority Students in Bangladesh: Empirical Research on Challenges and Potential Solutions*,” presents a valuable empirical investigation into the persistent obstacles facing mother-tongue inclusion in Bangladesh’s schooling system. Drawing on teacher experiences, the study highlights major barriers—such as the dearth of textbooks and instructional materials in indigenous languages, limited teacher training in multilingual pedagogy, and the pervasive influence of dominant languages and social media. At the same time, Ahmed identifies creative locally-driven responses including translation of literary texts, vocabulary enrichment in indigenous languages, and differentiated instruction strategies tailored to minority learners. While the research importantly elevates the voices of ethnic-minority educators and contributes to policy discourse on educational equity and linguistic diversity, its fairly narrow sample size and focus on teacher perceptions rather than longitudinal student outcomes mean its findings leave room for further study. Nonetheless, this paper makes a compelling case for systematic investment in mother-tongue resources, institutional teacher development, and community involvement in textbook design—pivotal steps toward inclusive education for Bangladesh’s diverse ethnic minority learners.

Educational and Institutional Barriers to Indigenous Language Preservation in Bangladesh: Challenges and Policy Implications — Karmaker (2024).

The article Educational and Institutional Barriers to Indigenous Language Preservation in Bangladesh: Challenges and Policy Implications by Ritesh Karmaker (2024) delivers a sobering and empirically-grounded account of how Bangladesh’s formal education system and institutional frameworks are complicit in the decline of indigenous languages. Using a mixed-methods approach of surveys, interviews and focus groups, the study reveals vivid barriers such as the near-absent inclusion of ethnic languages in school curricula, the lack of textbooks and qualified teachers for instruction in mother tongues, and an education system overwhelmingly centred on Bengali as the prescribed medium of formal learning. The research accordingly links language loss not merely to cultural shifts but to structural

educational exclusion, showing how ethnic minority children are disadvantaged by being taught in a non-native language, which amplifies dropout risks and accelerates intergenerational language transmission breakdown. The policy implications are direct and urgent: Karmaker argues for bilingual/multilingual education models, teacher-training in indigenous languages, institutional recognition of minority language rights and allocation of resources to curriculum development. While the study's localised sample and regional focus suggest limitations in generalisability, it nonetheless makes a strong contribution by connecting educational policy, institutional neglect and language endangerment in Bangladesh.

Educational Impact and Trends of Ethnic Language Loss in Bangladesh: A Statistical and Policy-Based Review (2013-2023) — Karmaker (2023-24).

The article by Ritesh Karmaker (2024) — *“Educational Impact and Trends of Ethnic Language Loss in Bangladesh: A Statistical and Policy-Based Review (2013-2023)”* — offers a rigorous decade-spanning assessment of how the erosion of ethnic minority languages in Bangladesh intersects with education and policy dynamics. Based on quantitative data and policy document review, it shows a clear downward trend in mother-tongue use across ethnic communities over the 2013-2023 period, a decline tied to the dominance of Bengali and English in formal schooling, the absence of multilingual teacher training, and a lack of institutional support for indigenous languages. The author argues that this language shift is not just a cultural loss but correlates with diminishing academic opportunities, weakened intergenerational transmission of heritage languages and weakened educational equity for ethnic minority children. Karmaker's policy recommendations — such as integrating indigenous languages into curricula, training bilingual teachers, and building monitoring frameworks — are timely and actionable, although the review notes constraints in national-level data and calls for more longitudinal, community-based research to track student-level outcomes over time.

Harmonizing Educational Diversity: Integrating Indigenous and Ethnic Minority Perspectives in Bangladesh, Inspired By Australian Models — Mawa (2024).

This article by Jannatul Mawa (2024), *“Harmonizing Educational Diversity: Integrating Indigenous and Ethnic Minority Perspectives in Bangladesh, Inspired by Australian Models”*, offers a thoughtful and timely comparison of the educational inclusion of indigenous and ethnic minority groups in Bangladesh with the more advanced frameworks developed in Australia. The author convincingly argues that Bangladesh's education system, with its long-standing focus on the dominant Bengali culture and language, has marginalised the histories, languages and knowledge systems of its indigenous communities (e.g., the Chakma, Garo, Marma) and that adopting lessons from Australia—such as national curricula that explicitly incorporate Indigenous world-views and culturally responsive pedagogy—could significantly enhance educational equity. Mawa highlights key elements of the Australian model—policy mandates, teacher training standards that embed Indigenous perspectives, and resource-development dedicated to cultural inclusion—and shows how these might be adapted in Bangladesh. The piece emphasises that beyond curriculum revision, structural reforms (teacher preparation in bilingual settings, material production in minority languages, institutional empowerment of minority communities) are essential to ensure that indigenous students are not only present in schools but fully engaged and culturally affirmed. While the article rightly draws attention to the promise of cross-contextual learning, it could be

strengthened by deeper empirical exploration of how Australian practices might be tailored for Bangladesh's specific political, geographic and linguistic diversity. Overall, though, Mawa's work stands as a valuable blueprint for moving from token acknowledgements of diversity toward systemic inclusion of Indigenous and ethnic minority perspectives in Bangladesh's educational landscape.

CHAPTER THREE

Educational Attainment of the Ethnic Groups

Enrollment in Primary Schools

It has been observed that primary school enrollment rates are nearly 100 percent in the study area. 85.8% of the respondents of this survey are from the indigenous population while the rest 14.2% respondents belongs to Bangli or other communities (Table 3.1). Instances of child marriage are relatively rare within the Christian community but remain more prevalent among the Muslim population. Seasonal migration of parents to Dhaka for employment often results in absentee guardianship, affecting children's regular supervision and academic engagement. According to respondents, approximately 92 percent of children attend school regularly, while about 8 percent have dropped out, with the highest dropout rates occurring in Grade Three. Transportation costs pose a significant barrier to consistent school attendance. Additionally, some ethnic communities have increasingly adopted the Bangla language, reflecting a gradual linguistic assimilation.

Infrastructural Problem

Frequent hilly water surges occasionally disrupt educational activities in the area. Electricity shortages remain a persistent challenge. The overall social security situation for girls in rural villages is relatively stable, although an isolated incident of sexual violence occurred two years ago. Substance use among ethnic adolescents appears to be increasing, alongside rising engagement in online gaming and gambling. Instances of bullying by Bengali peers targeting ethnic languages and traditional foods have also been reported. Participation in guardian meetings remains low, with only about 30–40% of parents attending. Although textbooks in the Garo language have been distributed, there is a significant shortage of qualified Garo-speaking teachers. Similarly, santals communities in the Rajshahi region have received some language materials, but their availability and accessibility remain very limited. One of the teachers in Srimangal said,

"Even though books are provided to indigenous children, they are limited. Most of the time, teachers use Bengali, so the children cannot fully benefit." (আদিবাসী শিশুদের বই দেয়া হলেও তা সীমিত। শিক্ষকেরা বেশীর ভাগ সময়েই বাংলা ব্যবহার করেন। ফলে শিশুরা পুরোপুরি উপকৃত হতে পারে না।)

A community leader in Mymensingh said,

"In a few schools, disability-friendly infrastructure has been created. However, there are few trained teachers and special facilities." (কয়েকটি বিদ্যালয়ে প্রতিবন্ধী-বান্ধব অবকাঠামো তৈরী হয়েছে। কিন্তু প্রশিক্ষিত শিক্ষক ও বিশেষ সুযোগ-সুবিধা তেমন নেই।)

The Table 3.2 represents the religious distribution of 550 respondents. The most notable observation is that there is a very high presence of Christian participants, accounting for 52.7% of the total sample. This indicates that more than half of the respondents belong to Christian households, reflecting either the demographic characteristics of the study location or targeted sampling involving Christian communities. The second-largest religious group is Hindu, making up 40% of the participants. This suggests a substantial Hindu population within the surveyed area, although still smaller than the Christian proportion by around 12.7 percentage points. A smaller percentage of respondents are Muslim—only 6.2%. This indicates that Muslims make up a minor segment of the study population. Meanwhile,

Buddhists represent only 0.2% (1 respondent), making them the least represented group in the dataset.

Out of a total of 550 respondents, 533 students (96.9%)—reported being not disabled, indicating that most of the surveyed students are physically able (Table 3.3). A number of 7 students (1.3%) identified as disabled, reflecting a very small proportion of physically challenged individuals within the sample.

Occupations of the Head of the Household

Data presents the occupational distribution of 550 respondents' household heads, providing insights into the socioeconomic background of the students. The data reveal a high degree of occupational diversity, encompassing both formal and informal sectors. The majority of household heads are engaged in farming-related occupations, with 163 individuals (29.6%) directly involved in farming, alongside 43 farmers (7.8%), bringing the combined proportion of agricultural livelihoods to approximately 37.4%. This dominance underscores the rural and agrarian character of the communities represented in the study. Similarly, a substantial 23.3% of household heads work as tea labourers, while an additional 2.5% are involved in the broader tea garden sector. Taken together, this indicates that nearly one-fourth of the households depend on tea plantation labor—an occupation often associated with ethnic minority groups and economically marginalized populations in Bangladesh.

A smaller but notable portion of respondents' household heads work as general workers (12.5%), reflecting engagement in low-income, manual labor sectors. Occupations such as drivers (1.3%), masons (1.1%), and small-scale business owners (2.4%) also appear, suggesting limited participation in skilled or semi-skilled labor markets. Very few respondents' parents are engaged in white-collar professions such as teachers (0.9%), doctors (0.4%), or army personnel (0.5%), highlighting the relatively low presence of highly educated or formally employed individuals among the households. The inclusion of a small number of housewives (2.2%) and cooks (0.2%) further indicates gendered and domestic labor roles.

The cumulative percentage reaching 100% confirms complete data representation, and the high concentration in agriculture and tea labor underscores the socioeconomic vulnerability of these communities. Overall, the occupational structure reflects a predominance of low-income, labor-intensive employment, with minimal representation in professional or service-oriented fields.

This distribution provides critical context for understanding the educational and economic challenges faced by the students in this study—most of whom come from households dependent on unstable, low-wage, and physically demanding forms of labor. Moreover, the issues related to recognition of identity of indigenous people, their land rights and access to social safety net programmes are often an issue. The participation in decision-making process by CHT and plain land *Adibasi* are quite different too. Consequently, the indigenous community in plain land faces increased challenges that leading to displacement and internal migration.

Location of the School within Students' Reachability

The results indicate that a significant majority, 434 respondents (78.9%), answered "Yes," suggesting the availability of schools in their locality. In contrast, 110 respondents (20%) answered "No," reflecting a smaller but notable group who did not share the same experience or perspective as shown in the Table 3.4

Attendance of School in a Month

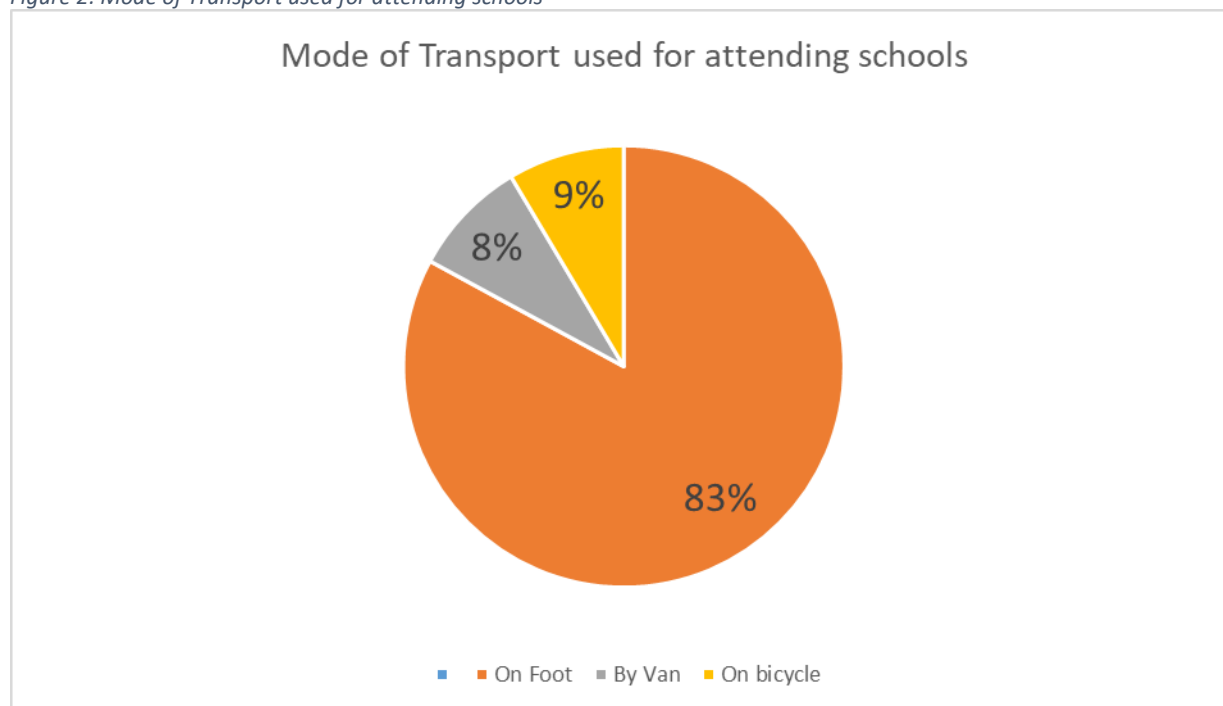
The Table 3.5 presents data on the number of days students attend school in a month based on a total of 550 respondents, illustrating considerable variation in attendance patterns. A close examination reveals that attendance frequency is unevenly distributed, reflecting disparities in students' consistency and engagement with schooling. Table 3.5 shows that the most prominent attendance group is those attending 20 days per month, comprising 16.9% of the sample, followed by those attending 15 days (14.2%) and 25 days (9.1%). This pattern suggests that a significant portion of students attend school for roughly two-thirds to three-fourths of the month, rather than the full 25–30 days typically expected in a regular school calendar.

Additionally, 7.1% of students attend 26 days, and a very small proportion (less than 1%) reach full-month attendance (28–30 days), indicating that only a handful of students maintain near-perfect attendance. At the lower end, some students attend for as few as 1–5 days (ranging between 0.5% and 1.3%), suggesting irregular or minimal school engagement—possibly due to economic hardship, illness, distance, or lack of motivation. Moreover, the data show that 101 responses (18.4%) fall under unspecified or missing categories, which might indicate incomplete data or students with irregular attendance not captured in the fixed-day categories.

Overall, the attendance distribution demonstrates a concerning level of irregularity among students, with the majority attending only about two to three weeks per month and very few achieving full attendance. This pattern could reflect structural barriers such as poverty, household labor demands, or inadequate transportation, particularly if the sample represents students from marginalized or rural communities. The findings emphasize the need for targeted interventions, including social safety net programmes, stipends and school meals to improve school attendance consistency and ensure equitable access to continuous education.

Mode of Transportation in Attending Schools

Figure 2: Mode of Transport used for attending schools



On Foot

The Table 3.6 illustrates the data regarding how many students go to school on foot, based on responses from 550 participants. The results indicate that a large majority of the students, 429 individuals (78%), fall under the “selected” category, which represents those who walk to school. This demonstrates that walking is the dominant mode of school commuting among the respondents, likely reflecting the short distance between students’ homes and their educational institutions, or the absence of accessible transportation options in their areas.

In contrast, 88 students (16%) are classified as “not selected,” implying that they use alternative means of transportation—such as bicycles, public transport, or school vehicles. Additionally, 6% of the cases fall into an unspecified or “other” category, possibly reflecting incomplete responses or students with irregular travel patterns.

The data suggest that the majority of students depend on walking as their primary mode of travel to school, which may be linked to the rural or semi-urban setting of the study area, where schools are located within walking distance and motorized transport is limited or costly. However, this also points to potential vulnerabilities—such as long walking distances, poor road conditions, or safety concerns, especially for younger children. The relatively small proportion of students using other means of transport highlights possible socioeconomic constraints and the need for improved infrastructure and transport facilities to ensure safer and more convenient school access for all students.

By Van

The Table 3.7 presents information on students, who go to school by van, based on data collected from 550 respondents. The results show that only a small proportion of students—47 individuals (8.5%)—were “selected,” indicating that they regularly use a van as their mode of transportation to school. This relatively low percentage suggests that van transport is not a common means of commuting among the students surveyed. In contrast, a large majority—468 students (85.1%)—were “not selected,” meaning they do not use van transportation. Additionally, 6.4% of responses fall under an unspecified category, which may include missing or incomplete data.

The dominance of the “not selected” category highlights that most students rely on alternative means such as walking, cycling, or other local transport options, likely due to factors such as economic limitations, proximity to the school, or unavailability of van services in their locality. The small percentage of students using vans may represent those who live farther from school or whose families can afford paid transport. This pattern underscores spatial and socioeconomic disparities in school access: while a few benefit from convenient transportation, the majority depend on less formal or physically demanding travel methods. Overall, the findings point to the need for improved and affordable school transport services, especially in rural or remote areas, to enhance accessibility and reduce barriers to regular attendance.

On bicycle

The Table 3.8 presents data on students who go to school by bicycle, based on a sample of 550 respondents. The findings indicate that only a small proportion of students—47 individuals (8.5%)—are “selected,” meaning they use a bicycle as their primary mode of transportation to school. In contrast, a vast majority—467 students (84.9%)—were “not selected,” suggesting they rely on other means such as walking, van, or public transport. Additionally, 6.5% of the responses fall into an unspecified or missing category, possibly due to nonresponses or data inconsistencies.

The relatively low percentage of students using bicycles suggests that cycling is not a widespread practice among the surveyed group. This could be attributed to several contextual factors, such as economic constraints preventing families from purchasing bicycles, lack of safe cycling infrastructure, or cultural and gender-related barriers that may discourage cycling, particularly among female students. The high proportion of students not using bicycles also reflects a reliance on walking or shared transport options, which may indicate that schools are located relatively nearby or that the students’ communities have limited access to affordable transport alternatives. Overall, while a small portion of students benefit from the convenience of cycling, the data highlight the need to promote safe and inclusive bicycle-friendly environments and provide affordable mobility options to enhance school attendance and accessibility.

Language Barriers

The Table 3.9 presents data on how many students face language barriers in their education, based on responses from 550 students. The findings reveal that a substantial majority—443 students (80.5%)—responded “No,” indicating that they do not experience language-related difficulties in understanding lessons, communicating with teachers, or following textbooks. In contrast, 57 students (10.4%) reported “Yes,” meaning they face language barriers in their

learning process. Additionally, 9.1% of the data fall under unspecified or missing responses, possibly representing incomplete answers or cases where students were unsure of their response.

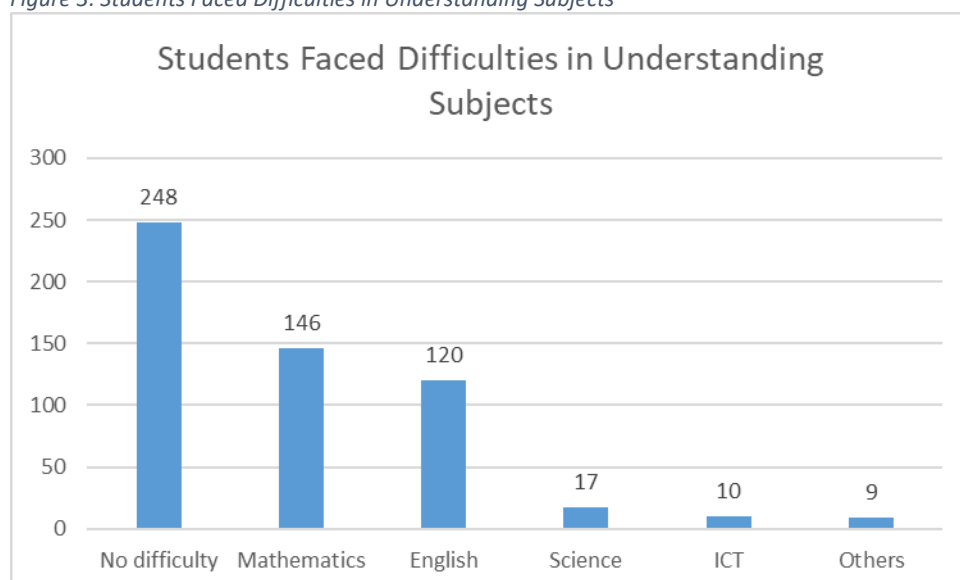
The fact that about one-tenth of the students report facing language barriers is significant, as it points to a minority group within the student population that may be linguistically marginalized. These challenges are likely experienced by students from ethnic or indigenous communities, where the mother tongue differs from Bangla, the dominant medium of instruction in schools. Such students often face difficulties in understanding lessons, leading to reduced participation, lower academic performance, and higher dropout risks.

While the majority of students appear linguistically comfortable within the classroom environment, the data emphasize that language barriers still persist for a notable segment of learners. This calls for attention to inclusive education practices, such as mother-tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE), teacher training in linguistic diversity, and the development of educational materials in indigenous languages. Addressing these issues would ensure that all students—regardless of linguistic background—have equitable opportunities to learn and succeed.

Difficulty in Understanding Subjects

The Table 3.10 presents data on which subjects students find most difficult, based on responses from 550 students. The findings reveal clear subject-specific trends in students' academic challenges. The largest portion of respondents—146 students (26.5%)—identified mathematics as the most difficult subject, making it the single greatest academic obstacle for learners. This is followed closely by English, which 120 students (21.8%) reported as difficult. Together, these two subjects account for nearly half of the total responses, indicating that students struggle most with areas that demand high levels of abstract reasoning and linguistic competence.

Figure 3: Students Faced Difficulties in Understanding Subjects



A smaller number of students found science (2.9%), ICT (1.8% combined), and finance (0.9%) difficult, suggesting that while these subjects pose challenges for some, they are not as universally problematic as math or English. Interestingly, only one student (0.2%) reported

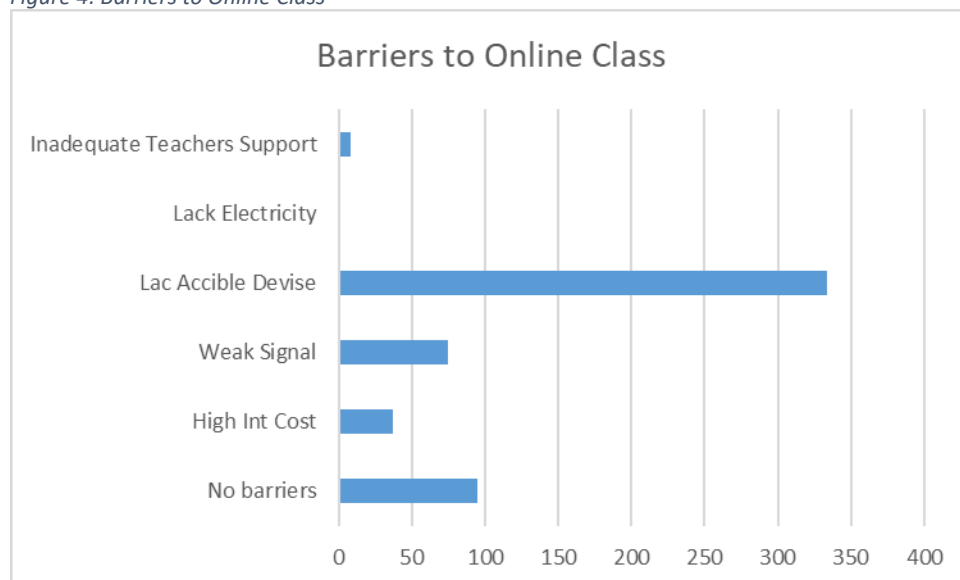
Bangla as difficult, implying that the national language is generally well understood and accessible to most students. However, it is notable that a large portion of responses—248 entries (45.1%)—fall under unspecified or missing data, which may indicate that many students either did not answer this question or did not find any subject particularly difficult.

Overall, the results highlight a pronounced struggle with mathematics and English, subjects that are foundational to academic achievement and future educational success. These difficulties could stem from language barriers, inadequate teaching resources, lack of subject-specific support, or limited exposure to quality instruction. The findings suggest the need for targeted remedial programs, improved pedagogy, and teacher training in these key areas to enhance students' comprehension and confidence, particularly among those from marginalized or linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Barriers to Online Class

The barriers faced by students in participating in online classes, based on responses from 550 students. The results reveal that technological and economic constraints are the primary obstacles to effective online learning. According to the Table 3.11, the most significant barrier, reported by 334 students (60.7%), is the lack of access to mobile phones or computers—a finding that underscores the persistent digital divide among students. This indicates that more than half of the surveyed students are excluded from online education simply due to the absence of necessary devices, highlighting a major equity issue in remote learning environments.

Figure 4: Barriers to Online Class



The second most common problem is network connectivity, cited by 75 students (13.6%), followed by high internet costs, reported by 37 students (6.7%). Together, these responses show that even among students who possess digital devices, poor internet infrastructure and affordability remain major barriers, especially in rural or economically disadvantaged regions. A small number of respondents—8 students (1.5%)—indicated that teachers did not provide enough help, suggesting that pedagogical support was also a challenge, though less widespread. Only one student (0.2%) reported electricity problems, implying that while

power supply issues exist, they are relatively minor compared to technological and financial barriers.

Additionally, 17.3% of responses were unspecified or missing, possibly reflecting students who did not participate in online learning or who experienced multiple overlapping challenges. Overall, the analysis demonstrates that socioeconomic inequalities and inadequate digital infrastructure are the dominant barriers to online education. These findings emphasize the need for affordable internet access, digital device distribution programs, teacher training, and improved e-learning support systems to ensure that all students—particularly those from marginalized backgrounds—can effectively engage in online learning.

Students Prioritized Seasonal Occupation instead of Schooling

The Table 3.12 presents information on how many students do not attend school due to involvement in seasonal occupations, based on data from 550 respondents. The results reveal that a considerable number of students are affected by this issue, highlighting the continuing link between child labor and educational disruption in certain socioeconomic contexts. Out of the total respondents, 37 students (6.7%) were “selected,” meaning they are directly involved in seasonal work that prevents them from attending school regularly. In contrast, 190 students (34.5%) were “not selected,” indicating that they are not engaged in such activities. A significant portion of responses—323 cases (58.7%)—fall under unspecified or missing data, which may represent students who either did not respond or whose attendance patterns vary irregularly due to economic pressures.

The data suggest that although the proportion of students explicitly involved in seasonal occupations (6.7%) may seem modest, the real impact is potentially greater, as many of the unspecified responses could also include students indirectly affected by household labor demands during peak agricultural or plantation seasons. In regions where families depend on farming, tea gardens, or other cyclical labor, children are often expected to contribute to household income, which results in interrupted schooling, absenteeism, and learning loss.

Overall, the findings point to a significant socioeconomic barrier to consistent education, where economic survival takes precedence over schooling. This underlines the need for policy interventions and community awareness programs to minimize child participation in seasonal labor, alongside conditional incentives (such as stipends or food-for-education schemes) to encourage school attendance throughout the year. Addressing these barriers is essential to ensuring educational continuity and equity, particularly among children from economically vulnerable and labor-dependent households.

Students not going to School due to Social Insecurity

High proportion reporting social insecurity as a barrier:

Out of 550 students, 58.7% (n = 323) reported social insecurity as a key reason for not attending school. This indicates that more than half of the respondents experience social barriers—such as community-level safety issues, gender-based harassment, bullying, or fear of violence—that significantly hinder their school attendance.

Low positive selection (1.5%):

Only 8 students (1.5%) were in the “selected” category, implying that only a very small fraction feel socially secure or unaffected by such issues. This suggests that protective measures—like school safety, parental assurance, or community monitoring—are minimal or ineffective.

Substantial group not selected (39.8%):

A notable 39.8% (n = 219) fall under “not selected,” which may represent students who are indirectly affected or excluded from regular schooling due to broader insecurity in their environment (for instance, ethnic discrimination, unsafe transportation, or local conflicts).

- Social insecurity is a dominant barrier preventing school attendance, possibly surpassing even economic or infrastructural causes.
- This problem might be gendered, with girls often facing more insecurity (harassment, early marriage risks, unsafe commuting).
- It also reflects systemic weaknesses—such as inadequate school safety policies, lack of community engagement, and weak institutional trust.

The data in Table 3.13 reveal that 58.7% of students are not attending school due to social insecurity, marking it as a major non-economic barrier to education. The negligible proportion of students who feel secure (1.5%) underscores a critical gap in institutional and community-level protection mechanisms. Strengthening school safety, building trust, and addressing social threats are essential to improving school participation.

Students not Going to School due to Harassment

The data presented in the table indicate that 6.4 percent (n = 35) of students reported harassment as a reason for not attending school, while 87.3 percent (n = 480) stated that harassment was not a factor influencing their school attendance. Although the numerical proportion appears relatively low, this finding holds considerable sociocultural and psychological significance, as harassment constitutes a critical barrier to equitable educational participation.

Harassment—whether physical, verbal, or psychological—creates a climate of fear and social stigma that discourages regular attendance, particularly among female students and those from marginalized ethnic communities. The prevalence of harassment-related absenteeism, though statistically modest, reflects the hidden and sensitive nature of such experiences. Research in educational sociology consistently highlights that harassment is severely underreported due to factors such as social taboos, fear of retaliation, and lack of institutional mechanisms for redress (UNESCO, 2023; Plan International, 2022).

The persistence of harassment as a cause of school avoidance underscores systemic gaps in school governance and community engagement. Many institutions lack gender-sensitive protection policies, confidential reporting systems, and adequately trained teachers to handle such cases. In rural and ethnic minority settings, cultural silence surrounding harassment further exacerbates the vulnerability of students,

leading to psychological distress, school withdrawal, and reduced academic achievement (UNICEF, 2021).

Comparatively, while harassment accounts for a smaller proportion of non-attendance than broader issues such as social insecurity or economic hardship, its qualitative impact on student well-being and educational continuity is disproportionately severe. Addressing this issue requires a multi-level intervention framework encompassing:

- the establishment of school-based child protection and anti-harassment committees,
- awareness campaigns targeting parents and community leaders, and
- integration of gender-responsive pedagogy and counselling services into school systems.

In conclusion, the data reveal that even a seemingly minor incidence of harassment can act as a powerful deterrent to education, particularly in socially conservative and under-resourced contexts. The findings call for urgent institutional and policy attention to ensure that schools become safe, inclusive, and empowering spaces for all learners.

The table 3.14 presents the distribution of responses regarding various factors contributing to students' lack of interest in schooling and irregular attendance. Among the total 550 respondents, **64.4% (n = 354)** were classified as "valid" responses, reflecting the portion of students who explicitly identified one or more barriers to attending school.

[Barriers to School Attendance and Factors Contributing to Students' Disinterest in Education](#)

Data from **Table 3.15** indicate that students' disinterest in schooling arises from multiple, interrelated barriers. The most frequently reported factor is **difficulty in understanding academic subjects (12.5%)**, pointing to significant pedagogical challenges. In rural and ethnolinguistic contexts, such difficulties are often intensified by language barriers, limited teacher preparation, and the absence of context-responsive learning materials, consistent with findings of the National Student Assessment (2022), which documented lower learning achievement among marginalized learners.

Distance to school (8.2%) emerges as a key structural barrier, particularly affecting students in remote areas and girls, for whom long or unsafe travel reduces regular attendance. Social and psychosocial factors also contribute to disengagement; a **limited peer network (4.7%)** reflects social isolation and weak school attachment, while the **lack of recreational or playground facilities (3.3%)** signals the absence of a child-friendly learning environment.

Economic constraints remain influential, with **financial hardship (3.3%)** and **child labor (1.6%)** jointly reflecting poverty-driven exclusion, a pattern aligned with national dropout data (BANBEIS, 2022). Although reported by fewer students,

teacher indifference (2.0%) represents a critical qualitative barrier, as unsupportive teacher–student relationships can significantly undermine motivation and retention.

Overall, the findings show that school disengagement is not driven by a single cause but by the intersection of academic, structural, economic, and psychosocial factors. Addressing these barriers requires integrated interventions focused on pedagogical support, accessibility, child-friendly school environments, and teacher sensitivity.

CHAPTER FOUR

Education Scenario: Associated Reasons

Mymensingh

Children from indigenous communities are increasingly engaging in various income-generating activities, particularly during their secondary school years, which contributes significantly to premature school withdrawal. Their daily earnings typically range between BDT 500 and 1,500, indicating that economic participation has become a tangible alternative to formal education. A concerning trend has emerged in which children are reportedly involved in cross-border goods transportation, a practice facilitated by their legal status as minors—rendering them less vulnerable to punitive action by law enforcement. Parents, in some instances, appear to exploit this legal leniency for short-term economic benefit.

Moreover, child marriage remains prevalent, often conducted in secrecy to evade social and legal scrutiny. Simultaneously, the loss of traditional cultural cohesion has weakened community mechanisms of social control. The proliferation of drug use, excessive smartphone dependency, and deteriorating family ties has further disrupted the normative structures that once supported children's educational commitment and moral development.

Local community leaders have also expressed concern over the decline of cultural and educational values, emphasizing the necessity of greater student participation in school governance—including mechanisms for teacher evaluation and active student representation. Such participatory approaches are increasingly viewed as essential to restoring accountability, strengthening community-school relations, and re-engaging indigenous youth in formal education.

Sanitation Facilities and the Availability of Toilets in Schools

Table 4.1 presents the distribution of toilet facilities across **ten surveyed schools**, providing an overview of sanitation infrastructure in the study institutions. Access to **adequate, equitable, and hygienic sanitation facilities** is a core requirement for creating **safe, inclusive, and gender-responsive learning environments**, in line with the commitments outlined under **Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6.2**, which emphasizes special attention to the needs of women and girls.

The findings indicate a **relatively balanced distribution** of toilets across schools, with most institutions reporting between **four and six toilets**. Specifically, **30% of schools have four toilets**, while another **30% reported having six toilets**, suggesting that some schools maintain a moderately adequate level of sanitation infrastructure. However, **20% of schools reported having only two toilets**, which is likely insufficient for schools with larger student populations and raises concerns regarding equitable access, overcrowding, and hygiene during peak school hours.

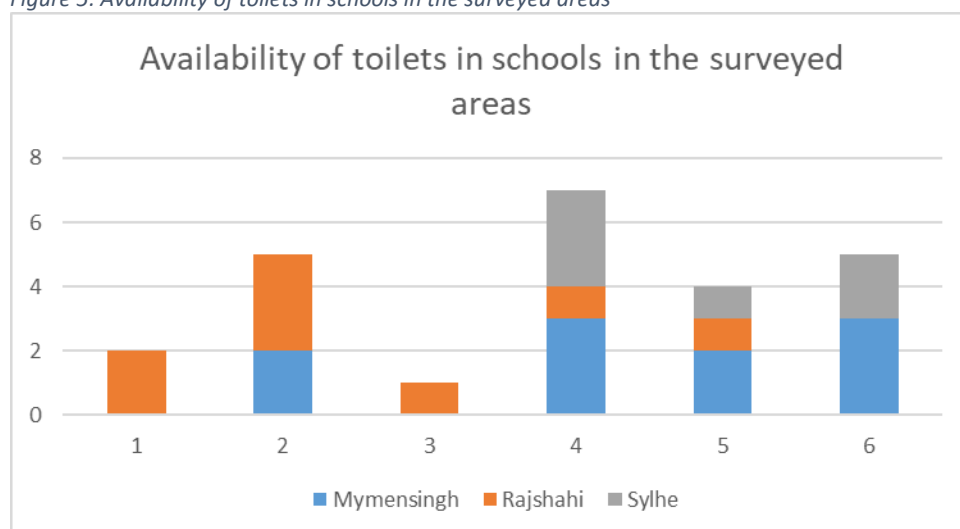
Insufficient sanitation facilities have direct implications for **gender equality and educational participation**. Limited access to adequate toilets—particularly where privacy and functionality are compromised—can disproportionately affect girls’ attendance, especially during adolescence, when **menstrual hygiene management (MHM)** becomes essential. Schools with inadequate sanitation facilities may therefore face higher absenteeism among female students, undermining efforts to ensure equitable access to education.

Beyond attendance, inadequate sanitation also affects **health, dignity, and learning outcomes**. Evidence from **UNESCO (2023)** and **UNICEF (2022)** highlights that access to clean and adequate sanitation is closely associated with improved attendance, retention, and overall student well-being. The variation in toilet availability, ranging from **as few as two to as many as six toilets**, further reflects gaps in infrastructure planning and standardization. While some schools demonstrate moderate adequacy, a significant proportion still falls short of ensuring **adequate and equitable sanitation for all learners**. Strengthening and standardizing school sanitation infrastructure is therefore essential to advancing **SDG 6.2 commitments** and to ensuring inclusive, safe, and health-supportive educational environments.

Availability of Separate Toilets for Female Students

Data show that **all ten surveyed schools (100%) provide separate toilet facilities for female students**, indicating full compliance with gender-sensitive infrastructure requirements (Graph -1). This represents a significant advancement toward creating safe, inclusive, and equitable learning environments for girls.

Figure 5: Availability of toilets in schools in the surveyed areas



The universal provision of separate female toilets reflects strong alignment with standards set by the **Government of Bangladesh**, the **Education Engineering Department (EED)**, and international frameworks, including the **UNESCO Gender Equality Strategy** and **SDG 4.a**, which call for child- and gender-responsive education facilities. Such infrastructure is essential for protecting girls’ dignity and ensuring equal access to education.

Evidence consistently demonstrates that the absence of gender-segregated sanitation contributes to absenteeism and dropout among adolescent girls, particularly during menstruation. Findings from **UNICEF (2022)** and **UNESCO (2023)** identify inadequate sanitation as a major barrier to regular school attendance. In this context, the 100% availability of separate toilets suggests a supportive environment that promotes girls' attendance and retention.

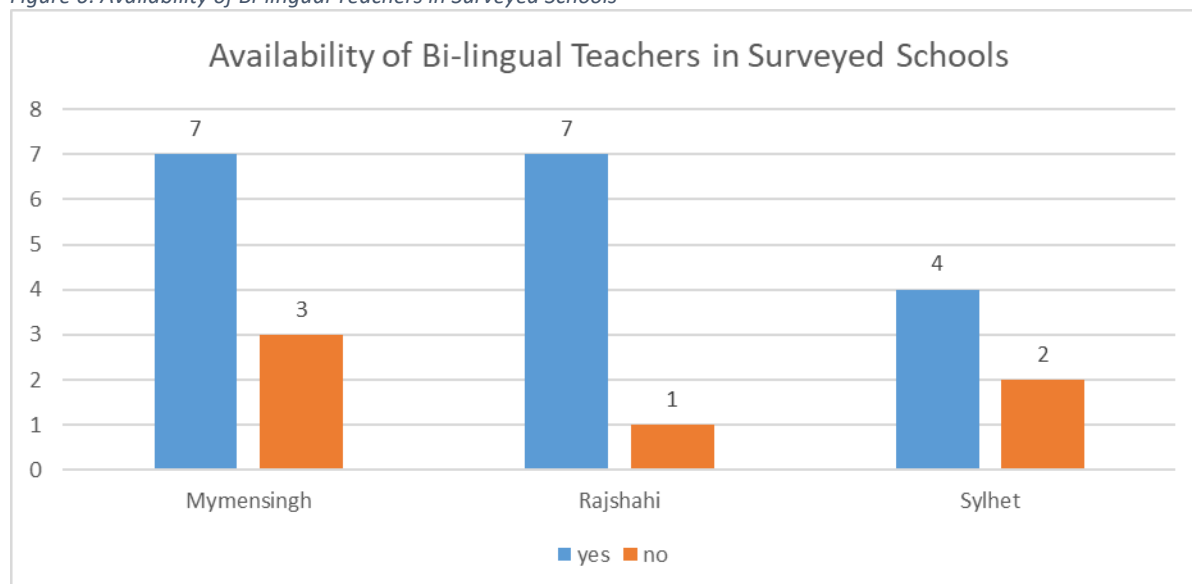
Beyond physical access, separate sanitation facilities enhance privacy, safety, and psychological well-being by reducing discomfort and risks of harassment. These factors contribute to improved school engagement and equitable participation in classroom activities.

While quantitative coverage is commendable, sustained impact depends on **quality and maintenance**, including cleanliness, reliable water supply, menstrual hygiene management facilities, and regular upkeep. Periodic monitoring and community engagement in sanitation management are therefore recommended.

Overall, the findings in **Table 4.2** demonstrate strong institutional commitment to gender equity in education. Continued attention to facility quality is necessary to ensure lasting benefits for girls' health, attendance, and empowerment.

Provision of Bilingual Support in Schools

Figure 6: Availability of Bi-lingual Teachers in Surveyed Schools



The data indicate that **only two of the ten surveyed schools (20%) provide any form of bilingual support**, while the remaining eight schools (80%) operate exclusively in Bangla. This pattern reveals a substantial gap in language-inclusive education, particularly in schools serving indigenous and ethnolinguistic minority students whose mother tongues differ from the language of instruction.

Although bilingual and mother tongue-based education are formally recognized in the **National Education Policy 2010** and the **National Multilingual Education Framework (MoPME, 2016)**, their implementation at the school level remains limited. The low adoption rate suggests a clear disconnect between national policy commitments and classroom practice.

The absence of bilingual support places non-Bangla-speaking students at a significant disadvantage. Indigenous children, in particular, face barriers to comprehension, participation, and self-expression, increasing the risk of academic underperformance and early dropout. Research consistently shows that mother tongue–based instruction in the early grades improves cognitive development, literacy acquisition, and overall learning outcomes (UNESCO, 2023; CAMPE, 2022).

Beyond academic effects, monolingual instruction can contribute to cultural and linguistic marginalization. Excluding students’ home languages from the learning process undermines cultural identity, self-esteem, and social inclusion. In contrast, bilingual education promotes cultural recognition and strengthens students’ sense of belonging.

Limited bilingual provision is often linked to shortages of trained teachers, lack of indigenous-language teaching materials, and insufficient integration of multilingual pedagogy into teacher training programs. Schools serving indigenous communities frequently rely on Bangla-only curricula, reinforcing structural inequities.

The findings underscore the need for targeted policy reinforcement, capacity building, and resource allocation. Expanding bilingual education through curriculum adaptation, teacher training, and community engagement is essential to ensuring equitable learning opportunities.

As shown in **Table 4.3**, the predominance of monolingual instruction highlights a critical weakness in inclusive education practice. Strengthening bilingual and mother tongue–based education is vital to reducing learning disparities, preventing dropout, and upholding the educational rights of indigenous and minority-language students.

Presence of Bilingual Teachers in Schools

Data from **Table 4.4** show that **seven of the ten surveyed schools (70%) have bilingual teachers**, while **three schools (30%) do not**. This indicates moderate progress toward linguistically inclusive staffing, although coverage remains uneven and insufficient to meet the needs of all students from multilingual and indigenous backgrounds.

The presence of bilingual teachers in a majority of schools represents an encouraging step toward inclusive education in linguistically diverse contexts. Bilingual educators play a critical role in bridging communication gaps, supporting comprehension, and facilitating classroom participation for students whose first language differs from the language of instruction.

As linguistic mediators, bilingual teachers enhance learning by explaining concepts in both Bangla and students’ mother tongues. This approach improves conceptual understanding, classroom engagement, and learner confidence, particularly in early grades. Empirical evidence indicates that bilingual instruction contributes to higher literacy acquisition and improved retention among indigenous learners (UNESCO, 2023; CAMPE, 2022).

However, the absence of bilingual teachers in 30% of schools highlights persistent inequities in teacher deployment. Students in these schools are more likely to experience language-related barriers that negatively affect academic performance and engagement. These gaps reflect systemic challenges in recruitment, training, and retention of bilingual educators, especially in remote and underserved areas.

Moreover, linguistic competence alone does not ensure effective bilingual instruction. Many bilingual teachers lack formal training in mother tongue–based multilingual education (MTB-MLE) and access to appropriate teaching materials, limiting instructional effectiveness.

Overall, while the findings reflect meaningful progress, expanding the recruitment, training, and professional support of bilingual teachers is essential to achieving equitable and inclusive learning outcomes for indigenous and minority-language students.

Availability of Educational Materials in Schools

Data from **Table 4.5** show that **seven of the ten surveyed schools (70%) have adequate educational materials**, while **three schools (30%) report shortages**. This indicates a moderate level of resource availability, suggesting partial progress in ensuring instructional readiness, alongside persistent gaps that hinder effective teaching and learning.

The availability of educational materials in 70% of schools reflects a relatively positive trend, particularly in comparison to historical deficits in rural and indigenous education settings. Access to textbooks, visual aids, writing supplies, and supplementary learning resources is a key determinant of instructional quality and student engagement. This finding suggests some effectiveness in supply distribution mechanisms supported by government agencies, NGOs, and donor-funded programs.

However, the absence of adequate materials in 30% of schools highlights continuing disparities, especially in remote and marginalized areas. Resource-constrained schools are often unable to implement interactive or learner-centered pedagogies and instead rely on rote, teacher-centered approaches. Such limitations negatively affect student motivation, comprehension, and academic performance, disproportionately impacting first-generation learners and indigenous children.

Unequal access to learning materials raises broader equity concerns. Students in under-resourced schools face greater learning gaps, reinforcing cycles of educational disadvantage. In multilingual and indigenous contexts, the lack of linguistically and culturally appropriate materials further exacerbates exclusion, as most textbooks remain available only in Bangla. Beyond availability, the **quality and relevance** of materials are critical. Evidence indicates that learning resources are most effective when they reflect local realities and sociocultural contexts (UNESCO, 2023; CAMPE, 2022).

Overall, while progress is evident, ensuring universal access to adequate, inclusive, and context-sensitive educational materials remains essential to improving learning outcomes and advancing **SDG 4: Quality Education for All**.

Perceived Safety of the School Environment

Data from **Table 4.6** show that **nine of the ten surveyed schools (90%) are perceived as “safe enough,”** while **one school (10%) has limited safety measures**. This indicates a generally secure school environment, alongside residual gaps that warrant institutional attention.

The positive safety perception in most schools suggests the presence of basic physical and social safeguards, including boundary walls, controlled access, and teacher supervision. Such

conditions are essential for fostering student well-being, parental trust, and regular school attendance.

However, the existence of even one school with inadequate safety provisions is significant, particularly in rural or marginalized contexts where students have limited alternatives. Safety gaps—whether infrastructural or social—can undermine participation and expose students to physical or psychological risks.

Safety concerns are not experienced uniformly. For girls and students from indigenous or minority communities, safety includes psychological security and freedom from harassment or discrimination. Evidence indicates that perceived insecurity contributes to absenteeism and dropout, especially among adolescent girls (UNESCO, 2023; CAMPE, 2022).

As emphasized in **SDG 4.a**, safe and inclusive learning environments are a core component of quality education. Continuous monitoring, preventive measures, and community engagement are therefore necessary to ensure that all schools meet minimum safety standards and support equitable learning outcomes.

Rajshahi

Number of Toilets in Schools

Data from **Table 4.7** show that across eight surveyed schools, the number of toilets ranges from **one to five**, with **most schools (37.5%) having only two toilets**. The remaining schools each report one, three, four, or five toilets (12.5% each), indicating uneven sanitation provision.

The predominance of schools with one or two toilets suggests basic infrastructure that may be inadequate relative to student enrolment, particularly during peak school hours. Limited facilities often result in overcrowding, poor hygiene conditions, and increased health risks, especially in rural and indigenous contexts.

Inadequate toilet availability also raises **gender equity concerns**. Female students are disproportionately affected by insufficient and poorly maintained sanitation facilities, particularly during menstruation, which can contribute to absenteeism and dropout (UNICEF, 2022; UNESCO, 2023).

The wide variation in toilet numbers reflects the absence of standardized infrastructure planning. International guidelines recommend at least one toilet per 25 students, with separate facilities for boys and girls, standards that some schools may not meet. Strengthening WASH planning and monitoring is therefore essential.

Availability of Separate Toilets for Female Students

Data from **Table 4.8** show that among eight surveyed schools, **seven schools (87.5%) provide separate toilet facilities for female students**, while **one school (12.5%) does not**. This reflects substantial progress in gender-responsive sanitation provision and aligns with the **National Education Policy (2010)** and **SDG 4.a**, which emphasize safe, inclusive, and gender-sensitive school infrastructure.

Despite this progress, the absence of separate toilets in even one school represents a critical gap. Inadequate sanitation facilities disproportionately affect girls, particularly during menstruation, contributing to discomfort, absenteeism, and increased dropout risk (UNICEF, 2022; CAMPE, 2023). Separate toilets are essential for ensuring privacy, dignity, and psychological safety, especially in rural and indigenous contexts where cultural norms around privacy are strong.

Overall, while coverage is encouraging, **universal access** remains necessary. Strengthened monitoring, targeted resource allocation, and regular maintenance are essential to ensure all schools meet minimum WASH standards and provide safe, dignified learning environments for female students.

Provision of Bilingual Support in Schools

Data from **Table 4.9** show that among eight surveyed schools, **only two schools (25%) provide bilingual support**, while **six schools (75%) operate exclusively in Bangla**. This reveals a substantial gap in linguistic inclusivity, particularly for indigenous and non-Bangla-speaking students whose mother tongue differs from the language of instruction.

The limited availability of bilingual support constrains learning and comprehension for minority-language students, often resulting in reduced classroom participation, reliance on rote learning, and lower academic performance. Evidence shows that mother tongue–based bilingual education significantly improves learning outcomes, retention, and engagement among linguistically diverse learners (UNESCO, 2023). In its absence, students are more likely to experience disengagement and early dropout.

Beyond academic effects, monolingual instruction can marginalize students’ linguistic and cultural identities, undermining self-esteem and sense of belonging. While national policies, including the **National Education Policy (2010)** and the **National Multilingual Education Framework (MoPME, 2016)** that promote mother tongue–based multilingual education, implementation remains limited due to shortages of trained teachers, localized materials, and effective monitoring.

Overall, the predominance of monolingual instruction reflects persistent inequities in educational access. Strengthening bilingual education through targeted teacher training, curriculum adaptation, and institutional support is essential to achieving equitable and inclusive education in line with **SDG 4.5**.

Presence of Bilingual Teachers in Schools

Data from **Table 4.10** indicate that **only three of the eight surveyed schools (37.5%) have bilingual teachers**, while **five schools (62.5%) do not**. This highlights a significant shortage of linguistically skilled educators, particularly in schools serving indigenous and non-Bangla-speaking communities, and points to a critical gap in inclusive education provision.

The limited presence of bilingual teachers constrains effective teaching and learning for students whose home language differs from the language of instruction. In schools without bilingual educators, students are more likely to face comprehension difficulties, reduced classroom participation, and lower academic performance, increasing the risk of repetition and early dropout (UNESCO, 2023; CAMPE, 2022). Without linguistic mediation, instruction often becomes inaccessible and disengaging for minority-language learners.

Bilingual teachers also serve as cultural mediators, linking classroom learning with students’ social and cultural contexts. Their absence can weaken students’ sense of identity and belonging, while their presence supports confidence, inclusion, and engagement.

Despite policy commitments in the **National Education Policy (2010)** and the **National Multilingual Education Framework (MoPME, 2016)**, implementation remains limited due to gaps in recruitment, training, and deployment. Expanding local recruitment and targeted training of bilingual teachers is therefore essential to advancing equitable and inclusive education in line with **SDG 4.5**.

Availability of Educational Materials in Schools

Data from **Table 4.11** show that **all eight surveyed schools (100%) have educational materials available** for teaching and learning. This reflects a positive trend in resource accessibility and indicates that basic instructional requirements for classroom teaching are largely being met across the sampled schools.

The universal availability of educational materials suggests effective implementation of government-led initiatives, such as the **free textbook distribution program**, alongside support from NGOs and donor-funded education projects. Compared to earlier contexts marked by shortages of textbooks and teaching aids, this represents a notable improvement in educational provisioning.

Adequate teaching-learning materials (TLMs)—including textbooks, charts, workbooks, and digital resources—support clearer instruction, improve student engagement, and enable more interactive and learner-centered pedagogies. Such practices align with national curriculum guidelines and contemporary teaching approaches (NCTB, 2022).

From an equity perspective, universal access to materials helps reduce learning disparities, particularly for students from indigenous and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. However, availability alone is insufficient. The **quality, cultural relevance, and linguistic inclusivity** of materials remain critical, especially in multilingual settings. Evidence highlights the need for context-sensitive and bilingual learning resources to enhance comprehension and inclusion (UNESCO, 2023).

Perceived Safety of the School Environment

Data from **Table 4.12** indicate that **all eight surveyed schools (100%) were perceived as “safe enough”** for students. This unanimous response reflects a highly positive school climate and suggests that basic safety measures are effectively in place across the study area.

The universal perception of safety implies adequate physical infrastructure, including secure boundaries, well-maintained classrooms, sanitation facilities, and regular teacher supervision. Compliance with school construction standards and disaster-preparedness guidelines recommended by the Education Engineering Department and UNICEF (2022) likely contributes to this positive assessment.

School safety also encompasses social and psychological dimensions. The findings suggest low levels of bullying or harassment and the presence of supportive teacher–student relationships, which are essential for student well-being, engagement, and sustained attendance. In indigenous and multicultural settings, such perceptions also indicate respect for cultural diversity and non-discrimination.

The reported safety aligns with **SDG 4.a**, which emphasizes safe, inclusive, and effective learning environments. While the findings demonstrate a strong foundation, sustaining this achievement requires continuous monitoring, community involvement, and attention to emerging risks, including psychosocial and environmental safety concerns.

Sylhet

Educational Expense of the Children

Although the primary education is free and compulsory in Bangladesh, there are household cost of education that has impact on children's education from the most marginalized communities including the indigenous groups.

From the data in Table 4.13, it is clear that a large majority of respondents fall under the category “yes, but difficult.” This means most parents are managing to pay for their children’s education, but only with considerable struggle. Their ability is not smooth — they face financial stress, adjustment, or trade-offs in other household expenses to continue schooling for their children.

A small portion of respondents indicated “yes, easily,” showing that only a minority of families have a stable economic condition sufficient to support education without hardship. This suggests economic disparities, where only a limited group can afford educational expenses comfortably. On the other hand, very few respondents selected “never,” meaning that only a small percentage of families are completely unable to bear educational costs. Although this category is relatively low, it still highlights the presence of families who require financial support, scholarship, or government assistance to ensure their children receive education.

Overall, the data reveals that access to education is not entirely out of reach for most families, but affordability is a major concern. The dominant response “yes, but difficult” reflects economic vulnerability and suggests the need for support systems — such as stipends, reduced fees, or community assistance — to lessen the burden and ensure continuous schooling.

Dropouts

Prevalence of Dropouts

The findings show that **27.6% of respondents reported cases of school dropout**, indicating that **more than one in four students discontinue their education before completion**. This represents a substantial level of attrition and signals a serious concern for the education system.

At the same time, **72.4% of respondents reported no dropout**, suggesting that the majority of children remain enrolled and that overall school retention is relatively high. The cumulative percentage reaches **100%**, confirming complete data coverage with no missing responses (Table 4.14).

While continued participation by nearly three-quarters of students is encouraging, the **27.6% dropout rate remains significant and cannot be overlooked**. This level of dropout reflects persistent barriers that undermine sustained participation in education. These barriers may include **economic hardship, limited parental capacity to bear education-related costs, distance to schools, early marriage, child labour, low motivation, and learning difficulties**. Overall, the findings indicate that although school participation is generally strong, **the proportion of students dropping out represents a critical challenge**. Targeted

interventions—such as financial support, community awareness, student counselling, and improvements in learning conditions—are essential to further reduce dropout rates.

Reasons for Dropouts

The analysis reveals that **financial hardship is the overwhelmingly dominant cause of school dropout**. An estimated **95.4% of respondents identified financial constraints as the reason for dropout**, indicating that nearly all dropout cases in the sample are linked to economic difficulties. These include the inability to afford school-related expenses such as tuition, learning materials, uniforms, transportation, and other indirect costs (Table 4.15).

Only **3.9% of respondents reported that dropout was not related to financial reasons**, suggesting that other factors—such as early marriage, poor academic performance, lack of interest, or household responsibilities—exist but remain marginal in comparison. A negligible **0.7% of responses were missing**, indicating a high level of data completeness.

These findings highlight that **economic vulnerability constitutes the most significant barrier to sustained schooling**. As such, retention strategies must prioritise **financial assistance mechanisms**, including stipends, scholarships, free distribution of textbooks and learning materials, and broader community or government support. Without addressing these economic constraints, dropout is likely to persist even where access to schools is available.

Dropout Due to Child Marriage

The data further indicate that **child marriage is an important, though not predominant, contributing factor to school dropout**. According to Table 4.16, **28.2% of respondents reported that dropout occurred due to child marriage**, meaning that **more than one in four dropout cases are associated with early marriage**. This underscores the continued influence of social practices that disproportionately affect adolescent girls' educational participation. However, the majority of respondents (**71.8%**) reported that dropout was **not caused by child marriage**, suggesting that other factors—particularly financial hardship—play a more dominant role in driving dropout.

Despite not being the primary cause, the scale of dropout linked to child marriage remains significant and warrants focused attention. The findings point to the need for:

- Increased community awareness programmes on the harms of early marriage
- Stronger enforcement of existing legal frameworks
- Community-based protection mechanisms for adolescent girls
- Education policies and school practices that support continued learning for married adolescents

In summary, while financial hardship remains the most pervasive driver of dropout, **child marriage accounts for a substantial proportion of cases** and represents a serious social and educational challenge that requires **coordinated educational, legal, and community-based interventions**.

Monthly Income of the Guardian

Data from **Table 4.17** show that the majority of guardians fall within very low-income brackets. More than half of respondents (**57.3%**) report a monthly household income below **BDT 5,000**, indicating widespread economic hardship and limited financial capacity. Such low

income levels are likely to affect children's access to education, nutrition, healthcare, and adequate learning environments.

A further **34.7%** of guardians earn between **BDT 5,000 and 10,000** per month. When combined with the lowest income group, **over 90% of households earn BDT 10,000 or less**, confirming that the study population is overwhelmingly low-income. Only a small minority fall into relatively higher income brackets, with **6% earning BDT 10,000–15,000** and just **2% earning BDT 15,000–20,000**, indicating minimal representation of financially secure families.

The dominance of low-income households suggests high vulnerability to economic stress, which can contribute to irregular attendance, early school dropout, limited access to learning materials, and early involvement of children in income-generating activities. This economic context is therefore critical to understanding educational participation and outcomes.

The findings underscore the need for targeted support measures, including stipends or scholarships, school feeding programs, access to educational resources, and livelihood support for parents, to mitigate economic barriers to education.

Availability of Toilets in School

The findings of Table 4.18 show that the surveyed institutions have an average of **4.8 toilets per school**, indicating a generally modest but relatively uniform level of sanitation infrastructure. Most schools reported between four and six toilets, suggesting some degree of standardisation in infrastructure planning; however, the absence of schools with more than six toilets raises concerns about whether existing facilities are sufficient for larger student populations. In terms of gender-sensitive sanitation, **83.3% of the surveyed institutions (five out of six)** reported having **separate toilet facilities for females**, reflecting significant progress in ensuring privacy, safety, and hygiene for girls. Nevertheless, **16.7% of institutions (one school)** still lack separate female toilets, representing a critical gap that may adversely affect girls' attendance, comfort, and participation, particularly during adolescence. While overall progress is evident, **universal provision of gender-segregated sanitation facilities remains essential** to fully meet standards outlined under **SDG 6.2**, which emphasises access to adequate and equitable sanitation for all, and to create inclusive and supportive learning environments.

Availability of Toilet Facilities for the Female Students

The data from Table 4.19 show that among the **six surveyed institutions, five (83.3%)** have **separate toilet facilities for females**, while **one institution (16.7%)** lacks such provision. This indicates that the majority of institutions have taken steps to ensure gender-segregated sanitation, reflecting positive progress in gender-sensitive infrastructure planning. However, the absence of separate female toilets in even one institution highlights a critical gap in achieving universal access. In educational settings, the lack of gender-segregated facilities can adversely affect **female participation, privacy, and hygiene**, particularly for adolescent girls. Separate toilets are essential for ensuring dignity, encouraging regular attendance, and supporting effective **menstrual hygiene management (MHM)**. While the **83.3% compliance rate** demonstrates substantial progress, it also underscores the need for **full coverage** to align with national education and WASH policies and to meet the requirements of **Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6.2**, which calls for adequate and equitable sanitation for all, with special attention to the needs of women and girls.

Availability of Bilingual Support in School

Data collected from **six surveyed schools** indicate that **only one school (16.7%)** provides any form of **bilingual educational support**, while the remaining **five schools (83.3%)** do not offer such provision. The cumulative distribution confirms **complete data coverage (100%)**, with no missing responses. These findings reveal that bilingual support is largely absent across the surveyed institutions, highlighting a significant gap in the delivery of **linguistically inclusive education (Table 4.20)**.

The limited availability of bilingual support poses substantial challenges for students from **indigenous and linguistic minority backgrounds**, many of whom speak languages other than Bangla at home. In the absence of bilingual instruction or language support mechanisms, these students are more likely to experience difficulties in comprehension, classroom participation, and overall learning outcomes. Such language barriers may contribute to lower academic performance, reduced engagement, and an increased risk of dropout. The findings underscore the urgent need to strengthen **language-responsive education strategies**, including the deployment of bilingual teachers, provision of mother-tongue-based learning materials, and adaptation of curricula to reflect linguistic diversity, in order to ensure equitable access and meaningful participation for all learners.

Availability of Educational Material at School

Data collected from **six surveyed schools** show that **four schools (66.7%)** reported having **bilingual teachers**, while **two schools (33.3%)** indicated that they do not. The cumulative percentages reach **100%**, confirming complete data coverage with no missing responses. The presence of bilingual teachers in two-thirds of the schools suggests a positive step toward **linguistically inclusive education**, particularly in contexts where students speak indigenous or minority languages at home (Table 4.21).

However, the absence of bilingual teachers in **one-third of the surveyed institutions** represents a notable gap in language support. In linguistically diverse settings, the lack of bilingual educators can hinder classroom communication, limit student comprehension, and reduce engagement, especially in the early grades. Bilingual teachers play a critical role in bridging the gap between students' home languages and the language of instruction, supporting smoother transitions to mainstream curricula, and fostering a sense of cultural and linguistic inclusion. While the overall findings indicate encouraging progress, they also highlight the need for **targeted recruitment, training, and professional development initiatives** to ensure that all schools, particularly those serving indigenous and minority populations those are equipped with teachers proficient in both national and local languages.

Safety in School

Safety perceptions were assessed across **six surveyed schools**. The findings indicate that **four respondents (66.7%)** rated their schools as **"enough safe,"** reflecting a generally positive assessment of existing safety conditions. However, **one respondent (16.7%)** reported having **"few" safety conditions**, and another **16.7%** perceived their school as **"not at all safe,"** signalling serious safety concerns. The cumulative distribution shows that **83.3%** of respondents experience at least some level of safety, while **16.7%** report a complete lack of safety (Table 4.23).

While the majority perceive schools as reasonably safe, suggesting adequate infrastructure, supervision, and basic security, the fact that **one-third of responses (33.4%)** fall within the “few” or “not at all safe” categories highlights uneven safety conditions across institutions. These variations may be linked to differences in building quality, availability of boundary walls or security measures, disaster preparedness, and risks related to bullying, harassment, or unsafe commuting, particularly for girls and younger children. Perceived safety plays a critical role in influencing **student attendance, retention, psychological well-being, and parental confidence** in schools. The findings therefore underscore the need for **targeted safety improvements**, especially in schools facing higher risks, to ensure a consistently safe and supportive learning environment for all students.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion and Recommendations

Policy Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, several policy and programmatic actions are recommended to enhance educational access and learning outcomes among marginalized students.

1. Providing Targeted Academic Support

Students' difficulties in English, Physics, Mathematics, and ICT highlight the need for subject-specific remedial programs. NGOs, in collaboration with schools, can introduce after-school tutoring, bridge courses, and interactive learning modules that simplify complex topics. Peer-learning initiatives and community-based education volunteers may also help sustain students' interest and improve performance.

2. Building Teachers' Capacity and Confidence

Continuous professional development is essential to address gaps in teachers' subject knowledge and digital literacy. Training should focus on innovative, participatory, and ICT-integrated teaching methods, as well as bilingual instruction techniques for linguistically diverse classrooms. NGOs can facilitate teacher mentorship networks and provide training resources through partnerships with teacher training institutions.

3. Increase Digital Access and Connectivity

With over 60% of students lacking access to personal digital devices, NGOs and local authorities should work together to establish school-based digital learning centers and device-sharing programs. Collaboration with telecom providers could enable low-cost internet packages for students and teachers. Investment in reliable electricity and network connectivity, particularly in rural and indigenous areas, is critical for ensuring consistent digital learning opportunities.

4. Reducing Financial Barriers to Learning

High internet costs and related expenses continue to hinder educational participation. Targeted education stipends or digital learning grants can help low-income families access online and blended learning opportunities. NGOs can also advocate for community Wi-Fi hubs or learning spaces to provide free or low-cost access for students.

5. Promoting Linguistic Inclusion in Education

The persistence of language barriers (10.4%) calls for greater emphasis on mother-tongue-based education. NGOs can support the development of multilingual learning materials and advocate for the recruitment of bilingual teachers from indigenous and minority backgrounds. Training teachers in language-sensitive pedagogy will further strengthen inclusion and comprehension in the classroom.

6. Supporting Policy Advocacy and Systemic Change

NGOs should engage in policy dialogue with government and education stakeholders to promote inclusive curriculum reforms, integration of digital literacy at all levels, and increased resource allocation for marginalized learners. Evidence from field-based interventions should be used to inform national education strategies.

7. Strengthening Monitoring and Accountability

Continuous monitoring of attendance, dropout rates, and subject-wise performance is essential to track progress. NGOs can help develop community-based education monitoring systems and support schools in using data to design responsive interventions.

8. Promoting Economic Alternatives to Child Labor

- (i) Introducing conditional cash transfers or education stipends and school meals to offset household income losses and encourage continued school attendance.
- (ii) Expanding livelihood diversification programs for parents, particularly during off-season or migration periods, to reduce the economic necessity of child labor.
- (iii) Establishing community-based monitoring committees to identify, counsel, and support families where children are involved in income-generating activities, including cross-border trade.

9. Addressing Cross-Border Child Labor and Legal Loopholes

- (i) Strengthening collaboration between local government, border security, and child protection agencies to monitor and prevent child involvement in informal trade.
- (ii) Conducting community sensitization campaigns highlighting the legal, ethical, and developmental harms of child labor.
- (iii) Advocating for policy alignment between child labor laws and child protection frameworks to ensure accountability and legal enforcement.

10. Preventing Child Marriage and Strengthen Social Accountability

- (i) Support village-based child protection and vigilance committees to prevent early marriage through local reporting and counseling systems.
- (ii) Facilitate awareness programs that emphasize the value of girls' education, health, and empowerment.
- (iii) Work with religious, cultural, and administrative leaders to enforce the Child Marriage Restraint Act and shift community attitudes toward delaying marriage age.

11. Revitalize Indigenous Cultural Cohesion and Community Institutions

- (i) Supporting community-driven cultural revitalization initiatives, such as local festivals, storytelling, and traditional knowledge sharing, to rebuild collective identity and values.

- (ii) Fostering parent-teacher-community partnerships to restore shared responsibility for children’s education and moral development.
- (iii) Engaging traditional leaders and youth groups in dialogue and mentorship programs to strengthen intergenerational trust and cultural continuity.

12. Address Emerging Social and Behavioral Challenges

- (i) Integrating life skills education, mental health support, and substance abuse awareness within school and community programs.
- (ii) Promoting digital literacy and responsible technology use among students to balance online engagement with learning and wellbeing.
- (iii) Establishing youth-friendly community centers that offer counseling, recreational activities, and mentorship to channel adolescent energy positively.

13. Enhance Student Participation and School Governance

- (i) Encouraging student councils and school-based child clubs to promote leadership, accountability, and civic engagement.
- (ii) Introducing **transparent teacher evaluation systems** incorporating student and parent feedback to improve classroom performance.
- (iii) Providing **training on participatory school governance** for students, teachers, and School Management Committees (SMCs).

14. Foster Policy Integration and Multi-Sectoral Coordination

- (i) Advocating for **cross-sectoral collaboration** between education, labor, and social welfare departments to create comprehensive protection systems for children.
- (ii) Ensuring indigenous and marginalized children’s concerns are reflected in **local and national development plans**.
- (iii) Promoting **data-driven decision-making** to identify high-risk areas and monitor trends in dropout, child labor, and early marriage.

Alignment with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2010

The recommendations directly reinforce several core objectives of Bangladesh’s *National Education Policy 2010*, which emphasizes inclusive, equitable, and quality education for all citizens.

- **Inclusion and Equity:** The focus on reducing dropout, preventing child marriage, and ensuring linguistic inclusion among indigenous learners aligns with NEP clauses advocating education access for disadvantaged and marginalized populations (Articles 18–19).
- **Quality and Relevance:** Efforts to strengthen teacher training, introduce student participation in school governance, and to promote digital learning resonate with NEP objectives on improving teaching quality, modernizing curriculum, and integrating ICT in education.

- **Moral and Cultural Development:** Initiatives to restore cultural cohesion and moral education reflect NEP’s commitment to nurturing ethical values, social responsibility, and respect for national and indigenous heritage.
- **Child Rights and Protection:** Recommendations to curb child labor and strengthen community-based child protection mechanisms align with NEP’s vision of safeguarding children’s welfare and promoting safe learning environments.

Alignment with the 8th Five-Year Plan (2021–2025)

The 8th Five-Year Plan prioritizes *human capital development* through inclusive, skill-oriented, and technology-driven education. The proposed interventions support these targets in several ways:

- **Reducing Dropout and Learning Poverty:** Strategies to provide financial incentives, improve teacher competence, and enhance community engagement align with the Plan’s goal of reducing dropout rates at primary and secondary levels and improving learning outcomes.
- **Digital Transformation in Education:** The promotion of ICT-based learning, digital literacy, and equitable device access supports the government’s broader “Smart Bangladesh” vision for digital inclusion.
- **Empowerment of Indigenous and Vulnerable Groups:** The Plan emphasizes equitable development and gender equality. The study’s focus on indigenous children, girls’ education, and child protection contributes directly to these equity-oriented goals.
- **Youth and Skills Development:** By addressing secondary-level engagement, preventing child labor, and encouraging leadership through school governance, the recommendations advance the Plan’s human resource development and youth empowerment objectives.

Alignment with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4): Quality Education

SDG 4 aims to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.” The proposed policy and programmatic actions contribute to multiple SDG 4 targets, including:

- **Target 4.1:** Ensuring that all children complete free, equitable, and quality primary and secondary education — supported by interventions addressing dropout, child marriage, and economic barriers.
- **Target 4.3 and 4.4:** Promoting access to affordable quality technical, vocational, and ICT-based learning opportunities — reflected in teacher capacity-building and digital literacy initiatives.
- **Target 4.5:** Eliminating gender disparities and ensuring equal access for indigenous and vulnerable populations — through inclusive pedagogy, mother-tongue education, and culturally responsive teaching.
- **Target 4.a:** Building and upgrading education facilities that provide safe, inclusive, and effective learning environments — consistent with recommendations for school-community partnerships and student participation in governance.
- **Target 4.c:** Substantially increasing the supply of qualified teachers — addressed through teacher professional development and mentorship initiatives.

Summary of Policy Coherence

Overall, the proposed recommendations exhibit strong policy coherence with both national and global education priorities. They support Bangladesh's ongoing transition toward a knowledge-based, inclusive society, as envisioned in the National Education Policy 2010 and the 8th Five-Year Plan, while also advancing the country's commitment to achieving SDG 4 by 2030.

Through targeted actions—such as; preventing dropout and child labor, enhancing teacher's quality, ensuring linguistic and cultural inclusion, and promoting equitable digital access, Bangladesh may hope for a better access and sustenance of education for the ethnic children and beyond.

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Appendices

Survey Questionnaire

Part A

Name:

Sex:

Age:

Father's name:

Mother's name:

Age:

Ethnic Group:

Religion:

Address:

Household size:

Income of head of the household:

Occupation of household head:

Status of the physical condition:

Challenged:

Without Challenged:

Part B

School Access and Enrolment

Is there any school nearby?

If yes, which school:

Do you go to school?

How many days have you attended school last month (from the day of survey)?

What is the distance of school from your place? (KM/MN)

How do you go to school (Mode of transportation)?

If No,

Why doesn't she/he go to school?

- (i) Economic reason ----- (ii) Physical reason
- (ii) Involved in income generating activity
- (iii) Child marriage
- (iv) Language Barrier
- (v) Distance of school
- (vi) Safe and security
- (vii) Others

Retention and drop outs

In which class you are reading?

Were you a drop out? If yes, in which class?

Did you get admitted again? If yes, in which class?

Do you get the free books from school?

Do you understand everything that yours say?

Do you face any language barrier?

Teachers

How many indigenous students are enrolled in your school?

Primary School

Secondary School

Intermediate College

What is gender ratio of the students?

Primary School

Secondary School

Intermediate College

Who are mostly absent in classes

Primary

Secondary

Intermediate College

Male

Male

Male

Female

Female

Female

What do you think of the class wise drop out in your school?

Male

Female

What do you think about the causes of drop out in school?

- (i) Economic reason (ii) Physical reason
- (ii) Involved in income generating activity
- (iii) Child marriage
- (iv) Language Barrier
- (v) Distance of school
- (vi) Safe and security
- (vii) Sanitation
- (viii) Others

Guardian

How many children do you have? Among those how many are enrolled in school/college

What is your income

Can you afford your child education?

Is any of your children a drop out? If yes, Why?

Which of the cost of the items that is difficult to bear?

School fees Uniform transformation exam fees session/admission fess

Is there any extra cost related to education that is difficult to bear?

Is there any concern of security and discrimination?

Is there any facility for the indigenous population?

What is your thinking about the importance of education for your children?

Male

Female

In which level you want to see your children educated

School College Beyond

What do you think about the causes of drop out in school?

- (ix) Economic reason (ii) Physical reason
- (x) Involved in income generating activity
- (xi) Child marriage
- (xii) Language Barrier
- (xiii) Distance of school
- (xiv) Safe and security
- (xv) Sanitation
- (xvi) Others

Institution Survey

Primary School

Teachers No.:

Male

Female

Students

Male

Female

Secondary School

Teacher

Student

Governing body:

Intermediate College

How many toilets:

Existence of female toilet

FGD Checklist

No of FGDs=12

Student: 1

Teacher: 1

Youth/Local education activists:1

Tea gardens community members and parents: 1

For Students

Primary School: 4 (2 males 2 females)

Secondary School (2 males 2 females)

Intermediate College (2 males 2 females)

School Access and Enrolment

Is number of schools sufficient for the community?

How do you like your school?

Why do you like your school?

Why don't you like your school?

Are the teachers friendly with you?

Do you attend your school regularly?

What are the causes of not attending the school?

Why do students drop out?

Why do you miss the attendance in school?

Why do you drop out from the school?

Do your parents encourage you to come to school?

Among the parents, who encourage you more?

What are the barriers of not going to school?

Teachers

What do you feel being a teacher in your school?

How long have you been in the school?

What is the percentage of indigenous students coming to your school?

Is there any seasonal variation in the attendance of school by the students?

According to you what is the main problem of student enrollment in the school?

Why do students drop out?

Is there any particular more prone to drop outs?

What are the problems that you face?

Do you know the local vernacular?

Is it a problem if someone doesn't know the local language?

According to you what can be done to improve the student enrolment in this community?

Youth Local educational activists

What is the educational situation in your community?

What are any specific cultural and social practice or norms that effect educational scenario in the community?

What is the percentage of literacy rate in your area?

What are the reasons of drop out?

What can be done to reduce the drop outs?

What can be done overall to improve the literacy situation of your community?

Do you find any sort of discrimination between the mainstream and indigenous population?

What is the role of government and NGOs in the advancement of education in the community?

Mixed Group (Indigenous and tea garden community parents and community members)

What is the educational situation in your community?

What are any specific cultural and social practice or norms that effect educational scenario in the community?

What is the percentage of literacy rate in your area?

Is there any particular ritual or ethnic value and norm that may affect the educational scenario of the community?

What are the reasons of drop out?

What can be done to reduce the drop outs?

What can be done overall to improve the literacy situation of your community?

Do you find any sort of discrimination between the mainstream and indigenous population?

What is the role of government and NGOs in the advancement of education in the community?

Key Informant Interviews

Total: 5

UNO-1

ATO-1

Chairman-1

GB Chairman-1

Local leader: 1

KII Checklist

Part A

Name:

Designation:

Area:

Part B

What is the educational situation in your community?

What do you think about the quality of teachers in your community?

Do you think if the teachers are monitored for their activities?

What are any specific cultural and social practice or norms that effect educational scenario in the community?

What is the percentage of literacy rate in your area?

Is there any particular ritual or ethnic value and norm that may affect the educational scenario of the community?

What are the reasons of drop out?

What can be done to reduce the drop outs?

What can be done overall to improve the literacy situation of your community?

Do you find any sort of discrimination between the mainstream and indigenous population?

What is the role of government and NGOs in the advancement of education in the community?

Tables

Table 3.1: Ethnic Identity of the Students under Study

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4	.7	.7	.7
Bengali	73	13.3	13.3	14.0
Indigenous	472	85.8	85.8	99.8
Others	1	.2	.2	100.0
Total	550	100.0	100.0	

Table 3.2: Religious Identity of the Students

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5	.9	.9	.9
Hindu	220	40.0	40.0	40.9
Muslim	34	6.2	6.2	47.1
Buddha	1	.2	.2	47.3
Christian	290	52.7	52.7	100.0
Total	550	100.0	100.0	

Table 3.3: Physical Conditions of the Students

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	10	1.8	1.8	1.8
Diseable	7	1.3	1.3	3.1
Not Diseable	533	96.9	96.9	100.0
Total	550	100.0	100.0	

Table 3.4: availability of schools in their locality

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	6	1.1	1.1	1.1
yes	434	78.9	78.9	80.0
No	110	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total	550	100.0	100.0	

Table 3.5: Attendance of School in a Month

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	101	18.4	18.4	18.4
1	4	.7	.7	19.1
10	12	2.2	2.2	21.3
11	1	.2	.2	21.5
12	7	1.3	1.3	22.7
13	6	1.1	1.1	23.8
14	9	1.6	1.6	25.5
15	78	14.2	14.2	39.6
16	20	3.6	3.6	43.3
17	16	2.9	2.9	46.2
18	15	2.7	2.7	48.9
19	6	1.1	1.1	50.0
2	9	1.6	1.6	51.6
20	93	16.9	16.9	68.5
21	1	.2	.2	68.7
22	34	6.2	6.2	74.9
23	8	1.5	1.5	76.4
24	5	.9	.9	77.3
25	50	9.1	9.1	86.4
26	39	7.1	7.1	93.5
27	1	.2	.2	93.6
28	4	.7	.7	94.4
3	3	.5	.5	94.9
30	4	.7	.7	95.6
4	5	.9	.9	96.5
5	7	1.3	1.3	97.8
6	1	.2	.2	98.0
7	6	1.1	1.1	99.1
8	2	.4	.4	99.5
9	3	.5	.5	100.0
Total	550	100.0	100.0	

Table 3.6: Mode of Transportation in Attending Schools - On Foot

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	33	6.0	6.0	6.0
Selected	429	78.0	78.0	84.0
not selected	88	16.0	16.0	100.0
Total	550	100.0	100.0	

Table 3.7: Mode of Transportation in Attending Schools - By Van

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	35	6.4	6.4	6.4
Selected	47	8.5	8.5	14.9
not selected	468	85.1	85.1	100.0
Total	550	100.0	100.0	

Table 3.8: Mode of Transportation in Attending Schools - On bicycle

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	36	6.5	6.5	6.5
Selected	47	8.5	8.5	15.1
not selected	467	84.9	84.9	100.0
Total	550	100.0	100.0	

Table 3.9: Language barriers faced by the students

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	50	9.1	9.1	9.1
yes	57	10.4	10.4	19.5
no	443	80.5	80.5	100.0
Total	550	100.0	100.0	

Table 3.10: Students faced Difficulty in Understanding Subjects

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	248	45.1	45.1	45.1
Bangla	1	.2	.2	45.3
English	120	21.8	21.8	67.1
Finance	5	.9	.9	68.0
Geography	3	.6	.6	68.5
ICT	10	1.8	1.8	70.4
Mathematics	146	26.5	26.5	96.9
Physics	1	.2	.2	97.1
Science	16	2.9	2.9	100.0
Total	550	100.0	100.0	

Table 3.11: Barriers to Online Class

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	95	17.3	17.3	17.3
High internet cost	37	6.7	6.7	24.0
Network problem	75	13.6	13.6	37.6
Had no mobile/computer	334	60.7	60.7	98.4
Electricity problem	1	.2	.2	98.5
The teacher does not provide enough help	8	1.5	1.5	100.0
Total	550	100.0	100.0	

Table 3.12: Students Prioritized Seasonal Occupation instead of Schooling

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	323	58.7	58.7	58.7
selected	37	6.7	6.7	65.5
not selected	190	34.5	34.5	100.0
Total	550	100.0	100.0	

Table 3.13: Students are not attending school due to social insecurity

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	323	58.7	58.7	58.7
selected	8	1.5	1.5	60.2
not selected	219	39.8	39.8	100.0
Total	550	100.0	100.0	

Table 3.14: Factors contributing to students' lack of interest in schooling and irregular attendance

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	35	6.4	6.4	6.4
Yes	35	6.4	6.4	12.7
No	480	87.3	87.3	100.0
Total	550	100.0	100.0	

Table 3.15: Barriers contributing to students' disinterest and irregular school attendance

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	354	64.4	64.4	64.4
teachers dont show enough sympathy	11	2.0	2.0	66.4
understanding the subject is difficult	69	12.5	12.5	78.9
small friend circle	26	4.7	4.7	83.6
lack oppourtunity for entertainment/playground	18	3.3	3.3	86.9
distance	45	8.2	8.2	95.1
have to work	9	1.6	1.6	96.7
financial problem	18	3.3	3.3	100.0
Total	550	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.1: distribution of toilets across ten surveyed schools

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2	20.0	20.0	20.0
	4	30.0	30.0	50.0
	5	20.0	20.0	70.0
	6	30.0	30.0	100.0
Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.2: Schools provide separate toilet facilities for female students

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	10	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 4.3: Proportion of schools provide bilingual support

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	2	20.0	20.0	20.0
	2	8	80.0	80.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.4: Presence of Bilingual Teachers in Schools

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	7	70.0	70.0	70.0
	no	3	30.0	30.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.5: Availability of Educational Materials in Schools

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	7	70.0	70.0	70.0
	no	3	30.0	30.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.6: Perceived Safety of the School Environment

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Enough	9	90.0	90.0	90.0
	Few	1	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.7: Number of Toilets in Schools

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		1	12.5	12.5	12.5
	1	1	12.5	12.5	25.0
	2	3	37.5	37.5	62.5
	3	1	12.5	12.5	75.0
	4	1	12.5	12.5	87.5
	5	1	12.5	12.5	100.0
	Total	8	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.8: Availability of Separate Toilets for Female Students

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	2	25.0	25.0	25.0
	no	6	75.0	75.0	100.0
	Total	8	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.9: Provision of Bilingual Support in Schools

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	7	87.5	87.5	87.5
	no	1	12.5	12.5	100.0
	Total	8	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.10: Presence of Bilingual Teachers in Schools

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	3	37.5	37.5	37.5
	no	5	62.5	62.5	100.0
	Total	8	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.11: schools possess educational materials

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	8	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 4.12: Perceived Safety of the School Environment

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Enough	8	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 4.13: Educational Expense of the Children

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		2	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Easily Bearable	20	13.2	13.2	14.5
	Bearable, but difficult	123	80.9	80.9	95.4
	Can't bear	7	4.6	4.6	100.0
	Total	152	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.14: Prevalence of Dropouts

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	42	27.6	27.6	27.6
	no	110	72.4	72.4	100.0
	Total	152	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.15: Financial constraints as driver of school dropouts

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		1	.7	.7	.7
	Yes	145	95.4	95.4	96.1
	No	6	3.9	3.9	100.0
	Total	152	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.16: Drop out for child marriage

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	selected	11	28.2	28.2	28.2
	Not selected	28	71.8	71.8	100.0
	Total	39	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.17: Monthly Income of the Guardian

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	under 5000 taka	86	57.3	57.3	57.3
	5000-10000 taka	52	34.7	34.7	92.0
	10000-15000 taka	9	6.0	6.0	98.0
	15000-20000 taka	3	2.0	2.0	100.0
	Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.18: Availability of Toilets in Schools in Sylhet

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4	3	50.0	50.0	50.0
	5	1	16.7	16.7	66.7
	6	2	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	6	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.19: Availability of Toilet Facilities for the Female Students

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	5	83.3	83.3	83.3
	no	1	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	6	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.20: Availability of Bilingual Support in School

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	1	16.7	16.7	16.7
	2	5	83.3	83.3	100.0
	Total	6	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.21: Number of Bilingual Teachers in Schools

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	4	66.7	66.7	66.7
	no	2	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	6	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.22: Availability of Educational Material at School

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	1	16.7	16.7	16.7
	no	4	66.7	66.7	83.3
	not enough	1	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	6	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.23: Safety in School

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Enough	4	66.7	66.7	66.7
	Few	1	16.7	16.7	83.3
	Not At all	1	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	6	100.0	100.0	

Snapshot



A class room in Haluaghat



Confident about tackling rainy time at Nachol



FGD with students, Sindurkhan tea garden, Rajghat, Sreemoangal



Little friend, big smile at Nachol



Happy for food, Birgram, Nachole, Chapainawabganj



A moment of deep conversation, Pirpur, Nachole, Chapainawabganj



FGD with Guardian, Sarpukur, Nachole, Chapainawabganj



KII with Upazilla Nirbahi Officer, Sreemangal



Key Informant Interview with a resource person



Finding sharing meeting at Mymensingh



Finding sharing meeting at Netrokona



Findings sharing meeting at Sylhet



Findings sharing meeting at Hobigonj