

Government Initiatives and Its Implications in Primary Education during COVID-19 Pandemic: A Qualitative Study in Sylhet, Bangladesh

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic posed unprecedented challenges to the primary education sector globally, significantly impacting countries like Bangladesh. Focusing on the context of Bangladesh, this research aimed to explore the challenges and effectiveness of government interventions in continuing primary education. This study employed a qualitative approach to collect data from primary schools in two sub-districts (Sylhet Sadar and Sreemangal) in the Sylhet region of Bangladesh. We conducted in-depth interviews with eight primary school teachers and sixteen guardians of primary-level students, as well as key informant interviews with four headmistresses of government primary schools and two Upazilas (sub-district) education officers. Respondents were purposefully selected based on various characteristics such as sex, education, economic status, teaching experience, involvement in child education, and access to information technology. The data was managed using NVivo 14 software and analysed thematically using an inductive approach. The findings highlight the varied outcomes of government efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic, encompassing both successes and challenges. Positive implications include introducing a remote learning platform, innovative instructional approaches, and increased community engagement. However, the study also uncovered flaws in those initiatives, such as unequal learning opportunities, pedagogical shifts, a lack of clear instructions, a lack of child-friendly learning content, and a lack of supervision and monitoring. This research significantly advances existing knowledge by thoroughly examining government initiatives and identifying gaps specific to primary schools at the Upazila level in Bangladesh. The practical implications of these initiatives provide invaluable insights for policymakers and stakeholders shaping educational strategies during emergencies.

Keywords: Primary Education; COVID-19 Pandemic; Digital Learning; Innovative Initiatives; Bangladesh

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Introduction

Bangladesh has 21.6 million students studying at the pre-primary and primary levels, according to the Annual Primary School Census 2018 (Directorate of Primary Education, 2018). The COVID-19 pandemic presented substantial challenges in the education sector, particularly at the primary level. The report suggested that the COVID-19 pandemic has created the worst disruption to education systems, affecting around 38 million students in Bangladesh and putting them at risk of dropping out (UNICEF, 2020). With the support of the COVID-19 response plan for the education sector, the government of Bangladesh subsequently adopted strategies, including remote learning programs that use television, radio broadcasts, phone follow-ups, short-message service (SMS), distance learning, and live lectures via social media. The Bangladesh Access to Information (a2i) program has created a virtual archive where students can submit and store their lessons (Li, Z et al., 2021; Rahman & Sharma, 2021; UNICEF, 2020).

Studies conducted in Iran and Bangladesh reported that digital services (online classes, lessons through television broadcasting) had shown promise in facilitating education during the pandemic (Assi & Rashtchi, 2022); however, not all students have access to a reliable internet connection and necessary educational materials (Barua, 2020; Khan et al., 2021) that can enable students in Bangladesh to cope with this situation (Dutta & Smita, 2020). A similar study revealed that these interventions did not adequately ensure inclusive and accessible education for children and young individuals with disabilities (Bhattacharjee & Shiblee, 2021). Another, study in Africa revealed that the closure of schools exacerbated the situation for primary students, leading to a decline in their literacy skills (Angrist et al., 2021). During the pandemic, a study in India revealed that female students attending government schools in villages suffered more than boys attending private and city schools (Maity et al., 2022), leading to noticeable differences between

private and public primary schools (Sarkar et al., 2022). Furthermore, a study in Bangladesh showed poor Internet connectivity and a shortage of gadgets due to load-shedding and lack of affordability, respectively; less than 70% of students had access to distant learning, particularly in underprivileged communities (Hossain, 2021). Nevertheless, this study did not delve into additional government approaches to sustaining primary education.

This study addresses a critical gap in understanding the efficacy of the Government of Bangladesh's initiatives to sustain primary education during challenging periods, explicitly focusing on the COVID-19 pandemic. The absence of prior studies investigating these efforts underscores the need to identify and rectify any shortcomings before implementing interventions for optimal outcomes. Given Bangladesh's history of facing geographical and political crises that have adversely impacted primary education, this study aims to pinpoint effective strategies for successfully implementing government initiatives. The primary objective is to prevent further educational setbacks for marginalised and disadvantaged populations.

This research aims to uncover successes and potential gaps that may hinder effective implementation by delving into the strategies employed during the COVID-19 pandemic. The ultimate goal is to provide decision-makers and stakeholders with valuable insights that can inform policy decisions, guide future instructional approaches, and enhance the resilience of the primary education sector. The findings of this study are expected to play a crucial role in shaping policies and building resilience, not just locally but also for global educational systems encountering comparable challenges.

Methodology

From July 2020 to June 2021, we conducted an exploratory qualitative study using in-depth interviews (IDIs) and key informant interviews (KIIs). We purposefully selected data from

government primary schools in urban and rural areas of Sylhet Sadar and Sreemangal Upazila, Bangladesh, based on geographic diversity and COVID-19 access considerations. We conducted the interviews when the Government of Bangladesh lifted the lockdown. In addition to that, before conducting in-person one-to-one interviews, we informed each participant to fix a specific schedule and select a safer place to avoid gatherings. Then, we set up the interview room, ensuring a minimum social distance of one meter between the interviewer and participants and using face masks and sanitiser.

Participants included Upazila education officers, assistant teachers, head teachers, and primary school students' parents. Selection criteria encompassed age, sex, religion, teaching experience, economic status, and access to technology (see details in Table 1). We interviewed sixteen guardians, eight assistant teachers, four headmistresses, and two Upazila education officers. We visited targeted participants and probed specific aspects until the data became saturated. Once we reached data saturation, which is the level of repetition of

previously stated information from the participants, we determined the final sample size (Saunders et al., 2018).

We conducted in-depth interviews with assistant teachers and parents to ensure the implementation of COVID-19 safety measures. We also conducted key informant interviews with Upazila education officers and headmistresses. Following this, we also conducted one-to-one interviews in person or over the phone using Bengali language at the participants' convenience. We used a semi-structured interview guideline, recorded the audio, and transcribed it verbatim. The average interview duration was approximately fifty minutes.

Transcribed interviews were summarised and discussed for immediate feedback. We developed an initial code list using an inductive approach and incorporated deductive codes that were aligned with the study objectives. NVivo software aided in coding. The first author and co-principal investigator coded each transcript, resolving discrepancies. We employed thematic coding for data analysis.

Table 1: Data Collection Methods and Respondents		
Data-Collection Methods	Respondents	Criteria of Respondent Selection
In-depth Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eight Guardians of Government Primary School Students From Urban Areas • Eight Guardians of Government Primary School Students from Rural Areas • Eight Assistant Teachers From Four Government Primary Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catchment Areas of Selected Government Primary Schools • Guardians of Selected Govt. Primary Schools • Respondents' Age, Sex, Education, Financial Status, Religion, and Access to Information Technology • Teaching Experience, Responsibilities
Key informant interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four Head Teachers of Selected Government Primary Schools • Two Upazila Education Officers from Two Selected Upazilas 	

Source: Authors' Fieldwork, 2020-2021

Ethical Approval

The Ethical Review Committee of the University Research Centre approved the study. Before conducting interviews, we had obtained informed written consent or thumbprints (for

those who were illiterate). We assured the participants that we would only use their data for research purposes and that no report or publication would include their names or any other identifiable information. We kept the

participants' information completely secret at all times.

Findings

Three themes emerged from the responses of primary school guardians, primary school teachers, and Upazila education officers, which

include introducing remote learning platforms, innovative instructional approaches, and initiatives for community engagement. An analytical framework (Table 2) summarises the findings, while subsequent themes provide a descriptive discussion:

Table 2: Analytical Framework Highlighting Results Based on Empirical Data to Display the Summary Findings

Initiatives	Positive Influences	Gaps of Implementation
Introduced Remote Learning Platform	Continuation of Education	Lack of Mass Engagement
	Increased Parental Involvement in Child Education	Inadequate Interactive Learning
		Barriers to Access for Marginalised Students
Innovative Instructional Approaches	Increased Teacher-Student Communication	Improper Curriculum Alignment
		Lack of Training on New Study Method
	Increased Study Interest Among Students	Lack of Digital Device
Initiatives for Community Engagement	Enhanced Community Support	Unequal Home-Based Learning especially for Female Students
	Developed Teacher-Guardian Relationship	Inability to Communicate with all Guardians
	Created Motivation among Parents for Learning	Lack of Accountability
		Lack of Interest in Child Education Among Economically Vulnerable Parents

Source: Authors' Analysis

Introducing Remote Learning Platform

Teachers and guardians in rural and urban areas found the 'Ghore Bose Shikhi' (Learning from Home) initiative by the Government of Bangladesh to be effective in keeping students engaged in education during the COVID-19 crisis. Three mothers and two fathers of urban and rural primary school students stated that they used to teach their children following the classes, which helped them to continue their studies. Conversely, a mother and two fathers from both urban and rural primary school students shared that they were unaware of the television broadcast of their classes. After a few days, they learnt about the classes from their friends, but their child was unable to attend many of them. A male guardian from a rural area reported that most guardians in his village were unaware of this issue. As a result, he assumed

that the government should start a campaign about the classes so that every student has access to the facility. A female guardian from a rural area made the following statement:

The COVID-19 pandemic halted my child's studies due to school closures and private tuition. I encouraged my child to study, but she frequently argued that without homework or exams, there was no reason to read. Later, relatives informed me that Sangsad Television broadcasted the classes. Every day, I sat in front of the television and made my child do homework based on the assignments. (IDI-01, Mother, Rural Area)

However, mothers of primary school students from both urban and rural areas reported that

their children initially participated in the classes but lost interest after a few days, forcing them to attend. In this regard, a mother from urban areas suggested reorganising the class contents with pictures and videos to pique the students' interest. On the other hand, a teacher expressed appreciation for the government's initiative to broadcast classes on national television but expressed concern about the lack of opportunities for student-teacher interaction, a crucial aspect of teaching primary-level students. One male guardian from a rural area shared his thoughts:

My daughter's education was about to stop because we were illiterate and did not know how to guide her. How would she study alone? Who would guide her? Someone needs to assist her. Moreover, she did not want to study at home, as schools and private tuition were closed. Suddenly, I heard from my neighbour that children's classes were going on national television, but my daughter couldn't do the classes because we didn't have any television, and we couldn't afford to buy one. (IDI-05, Father, Urban Area)

A headmistress identified this medium as an effective platform for reaching students who might not have internet access but have access to television and argued that the facility did not reach all the students equally due to the lack of television in the house and load-shedding during classes. The headmistress noted that the parents in her catchment area were relatively impoverished, and the COVID-19 pandemic prohibited people from visiting each other's homes, thereby impeding access to television in other households. An assistant teacher from a rural primary school shared the following information:

Not everyone has a television at home. I think about 50 per cent of the students have televisions at home, and the rest do not. But even those with a home television are not looking for regular education programs. (IDI-06, Assistant teacher, Rural Area)

Furthermore, an education officer expressed that Sangsad Television, the platform for broadcasting classes, did not effectively reach students at the grassroots level. To watch it, DISH's assistance (satellite connection) was required. In that case, the question remains about its effectiveness.

Innovative Instructional Approaches

Primary school teachers in Bangladesh viewed the government's cutting-edge instructional strategies during the COVID-19 pandemic as necessary adaptations in difficult circumstances. For example, a modified teaching manual provided online training for implementing the initiatives and instructed them to communicate with guardians over the telephone. Teachers perceived these approaches as lifelines because they allowed continuing education during a crisis. They recognised the importance of maintaining access to learning opportunities despite disruptions during the pandemic. However, Upazila education officers highlighted that the government also instructed them to organise 'Google Meet' classes and teach through a cluster system with 5–10 students each time, increasing teacher and student interaction. However, inadequate monitoring and training hindered the proper implementation of the plan. Therefore, we needed additional resources, training, and ongoing support to sustain these initiatives effectively. Another Upazila education officer stated:

Urban primary schools organised some Google Meet classes, but in rural areas, most students and teachers lacked digital devices and the necessary training to conduct classes on these online platforms. This led to unequal learning opportunities between rural and urban primary school students. So, taking classes through Google Meet was not feasible for primary school teachers. Therefore, we must devise effective strategies for urban and rural students to address these crises and minimise the associated losses. (KII-02, Upazila Education Officer)

In addition, assistant teachers from both urban and rural primary schools mentioned that most of the parents had no smartphone and, in that situation, they could not afford it. As a result, students from economically vulnerable families were deprived of education and were influenced to drop out. An education officer uttered:

Those families' economic status is weak, and those who do not have the device to do classes are deprived of these classes. Moreover, classes through Google Meet are very expensive. Many households cannot afford the cost of the internet. Due to this, the children of poor families are falling behind in many ways. (KII-01, Upazila Education Officer)

Moreover, the curriculum's design for face-to-face classes led Upazila education officers to believe that online education could not replace direct schooling. Online teaching does not facilitate interaction between students and teachers. He recommended a special curriculum for effective online learning during the crisis period. Furthermore, compared to boys, girls were more likely to assist in familial chores, like looking after younger siblings, and were considerably less likely to have access to technology, like cell phones. Three mothers from urban and rural areas emphasised that their only telephone belonged to the child's father, and they prohibited their daughter from using it. As a result, her daughter could not communicate with the class teacher. Two mothers from a rural area mentioned that they had only once used the phone to speak with the school teachers about their child's education. The teachers had given their child some homework over the phone, but their non-literate child could not complete it due to a lack of assistance from anyone. Participants' perspectives revealed several sub-themes, as outlined below:

- **Introduction to Innovative Instructional Approaches Amidst the Pandemic:**
Research findings suggest that during the COVID-19 pandemic, educational authorities implemented innovative instructional approaches, utilising modified teaching manuals and emphasising communication with guardians to enable online training. These adaptations were critical to maintaining the continuity of education in challenging circumstances.
- **Engaging Parents in Remote Education:**
Schools actively involve parents through virtual guardians' meetings, encouraging them to actively guide their children's education. The government's directive to organise 'Google- Meet' classes and adopt a cluster system aimed to enhance interaction among teachers and students, reflecting collaborative efforts to address the educational challenges posed by the pandemic.
- **Challenges and Obstacles in Implementation:**
Despite the positive initiatives, obstacles such as inadequate monitoring and training hindered the proper implementation of these plans. Continuous support, additional resources, and training were identified as crucial elements for the effective and sustainable execution of these innovative instructional approaches.
- **Limited Smartphone Availability and Gender Disparities:**
Teachers highlighted a significant barrier—the limited smartphone access among parents, especially those facing financial constraints. This resulted in some students' education deprivation, placing them at risk of dropping out. Additionally, our research findings observed gender disparities, with girls facing challenges in accessing technology and participating in remote learning due to familial chores and communication restrictions.
- **Call for Inclusive Strategies:**
The findings underscore the need for inclusive strategies that address technological disparities and gender-related challenges to ensure equal access to education during crises. Inclusion should be prioritised to overcome

barriers, allowing all students to engage in remote learning effectively.

Initiatives for Community Engagement

Teachers and guardians reported that the government's initiatives for community engagement helped to continue primary education during the COVID-19 pandemic because they improved student support structures. One of the head teachers of a rural primary school opined that parent had become more engaged in their children's education. This initiative has facilitated a better understanding of the student's needs and progress and increased collaboration between parents and teachers. Additionally, the Upazila education officers reported that community engagement fostered a shared sense of responsibility for students' education, and a headmistress from an urban primary school confirmed that parents were more willing to assist their children with at-home learning activities. On the other hand, mothers who are female guardians shared that they were guided by the school's communication to teach their children at home during this pandemic. Their child was reluctant to study because the school assigned no homework. However, when the teacher sent homework via WhatsApp, their child became interested in studying for homework. A mother of a primary school student from a rural area expressed her concern:

One day, the school's peon collected my phone number and said the class teacher would call me. The next morning, the school teacher called me and asked whether I had WhatsApp on my device. I replied 'yes'. Then he explained that he had created a WhatsApp group to assign homework to children, and it was my responsibility to complete the homework and share a snapshot of it in the group. Following the teacher's instructions, I attempted to complete my child's homework. It helped to keep my child in the study (IDI-09, Mother, Rural Area).

However, the guardians of the school children were more aware of the curriculum and learning objectives due to initiatives. While community engagement has increased, parents have recognised that there is still a need for more resources like smartphones, free internet facilities, worksheets, notebooks, pens, and pencils, particularly in rural areas. They also stressed the importance of ongoing support and training for teachers and parents. Regarding this matter, an Upazila education officer stated:

We have taken some steps to communicate with students via mobile phones. However, I was unable to communicate with all of the students. However, if we persist in our efforts, we can ensure that everyone is included in the contract. (KII-01, Upazila Education Officer)

The headmistress of a rural primary school stated that they could not engage all of the community's guardians in learning activities due to parents' lack of response and interest. On the other hand, a father, a male guardian, stated that they received instructions to communicate with the school teacher, but their inability to do so stemmed from a scarcity of smartphones. He added that during this crucial period, his struggles to meet daily expenses prevented him from spending money on his child's education, such as purchasing a smartphone or recharging a phone for an internet package.

Additionally, an education officer emphasised another challenge: the difficulty in communicating with or engaging students from rural to urban migrated families who enrolled in their schools, as many families had relocated from urban areas during the pandemic. He appreciated the continuation of those children's education and preferred to find a compatible solution to maintain communication with such students and reduce the dropout rate of primary students. From the perspective of the participants, this study revealed the following findings:

- **Positive Impacts of Government-Led Initiatives:**

These initiatives strengthened support structures, increased parental involvement, and improved collaboration between parents and teachers, contributing to a more supportive learning environment.

- **Community Engagement and Shared Responsibility:**

Education officers at the sub-district level emphasised that community engagement fostered a sense of shared responsibility for students' education. Parents became more willing to assist their children with at-home learning activities, and effective communication from schools guided mothers in facilitating their children's education through digital platforms.

- **Increased Awareness but Persistent Challenges:**

Guardians' awareness of the curriculum and learning objectives increased, but there was a consensus that additional resources, especially in rural areas, were still needed. Continuous support and training for teachers and parents were crucial to enhancing the effectiveness of community engagement initiatives.

- **Barriers to Inclusive Community Engagement:**

Despite positive impacts, challenges were identified, particularly in rural areas. Some respondents expressed difficulty engaging all guardians due to a lack of interest and response. Access to technology, specifically smartphones, was a barrier, impacting communication between parents and teachers. Financial constraints also hindered some parents from affording educational resources, emphasising the need for targeted interventions to ensure inclusive community engagement in education.

Discussion

The study underscores the need for a multi-pronged response to sustain the delivery of primary education through different strategies, such as introducing remote learning platforms,

innovative instructional approaches and initiatives for community engagement. Drawing on the breadth of experience from parents, teachers and education officers across primary schools, these themes reveal success alongside challenges. "The Ghore Bose Shikhi" project was generally seen as a very good idea for involving students in education during the pandemic. However, there were variations in the effectiveness of this distance-learning platform in urban and rural areas. For instance, some parents of primary school children managed to keep their children following TV lessons, while others missed out because the campaign to sensitise them was not done, hence missing an educational opportunity. So, this challenge indicates a need for a more comprehensive awareness campaign (Nkosha et al., 2013) so that nobody is left behind in pursuing their studies. Moreover, while the televised classes were appreciated, concerns were raised about sustaining student interest over time, suggesting incorporating visual aids such as pictures and videos to enhance content and engagement (Hamad, 2023). Furthermore, this study recommended the development of a specialised curriculum tailored for effective online learning during crises for curriculum adaptation to better suit the challenges posed by remote learning (Nambiar, 2020).

Also, the government used different teaching approaches, for instance, where teachers were trained online and utilised platforms like Google Meet, which was the right move at the time, but unfortunately, it had implications on education accessibility since there are rural areas with limited access to the internet and a lack of digital devices. Thus, urban students had more continuation of education opportunities than their rural counterparts during the pandemic. Moreover, the effectiveness of such initiatives was hampered by inadequate training in using digital gadgets. Moreover, challenges like slow internet speeds and inadequate technical support affected parents and teachers, leading to an incomplete academic education for children and contributing to rural-urban disparities (Rahman et al., 2021). Similarly, a study showed primary-level teachers faced

obstacles to apply government's teaching module in rural schools due to lack of digital devices, trained teachers, and proper facilities (Rafe, 2020). In view of this situation, appropriate provisions should be made for students' and teachers' equipment along with sufficient trainings since there may be some necessary equipment provided before implementing it. It is emerged that girls were engaged in household work than education due to lack of adequate access to e-devices thus hindering continuance with their studies. For this reason, both technology inclusion as well as gender sensitive interventions should ensure girl child participation in learning.

The study equally demonstrated that community engagement efforts by government were successful in reinforcing primary education during the pandemic. Better school-parent communication increased involvement of parents and guardians, which helped to sustain children's learning at home. Nonetheless, the effects of these programs did not affect everybody evenly; rural communities bore greater burdens mostly because they lack technology access besides financial limitations. Pierre Bourdieu's cultural and social capital theory, which is relevant to the education industry, can be used to interpret these circumstances (Richardson, 1986). His explanation posits that objectified cultural capital, such as a television, smartphone, internet connection, internet speed, uninterrupted electricity, and teaching materials, constitutes cultural capital. During the COVID-19 pandemic, those students had no or limited access to cultural capital and were more likely to fall behind in learning. Furthermore, a parent's literacy and awareness, as well as a teacher's digital and media skills, can express embodied cultural capital. This research found that illiterate parents could not handle or assist their children's education during the pandemic situation, and they were also unaware of the child's learning and teaching. Teachers in rural areas were less confident in using media and digital platforms for education. These circumstances indicated that those with less embodied cultural capital faced educational

deterioration. Furthermore, Bourdieu's idea of social capital refers to an individual's social network and its mostly symbolic value. Here, this notion can be extended to students' social educational environments. According to Bourdieu's capital theory, community engagement, teacher-student, and teacher-parent relationships in the study area manifested positive effects in education, referred to as social capital. These circumstances indicated that distance learning during the pandemic exacerbated disparities in education (Frohn, 2021), especially in rural areas. Moreover, the absence of mechanisms for follow-up on given assignments diminished students' accountability towards completing homework, emphasizing the need for learning support at home in designing distance learning programs during crises (Hossain, 2021), addressing a range of interrelated issues, including educational, socio-political, and attitude-related phenomena (Rahman et al., 2021). Additionally, effective implementation and sustainable practice of these programs require appropriate performance monitoring and field visits to assess progress reports and identify barriers and support through additional resources allocated for training (Mustary, 2021). A Denmark study showed that teachers made home visits and provided one-to-one online learning and coaching for vulnerable students (Milner et al., 2021). The same approach could be employed within our systems to ensure equal opportunities for all students during future crises. According to Rahman et al. (2021), a continuous education drive should include providing ongoing support and training for both school teachers and parents using digital platforms, thereby enhancing parents' understanding of the curriculum and learning goals for efficient home-based study. Therefore, teachers need to attend training on advanced technologies to deliver quality education, as per the research findings reported by the aforementioned study.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the research findings underscore the government's commendable efforts in

implementing various initiatives to ensure the continuity of primary education during the challenging times of the COVID-19 pandemic. The introduction of the "Learning from Home" initiative, innovative instructional approaches, and community engagement initiatives reflects a commitment to maintaining educational access and fostering a supportive learning environment.

While positive impacts are evident, such as increased parental involvement, strengthened support structures, and improved collaboration between parents and teachers, the study reveals persistent challenges. Unequal access to technology, limited awareness, and disparities in resources create barriers that hinder the effectiveness of these initiatives. The digital device gap, inadequate technical support, and rural-urban disparities contribute to incomplete academic education and potential long-term setbacks.

Moreover, the research highlights the importance of accountability, proper strategic planning, and continuous monitoring for successful implementation. The absence of a follow-up mechanism for assignments and a structured plan for overcoming barriers necessitate proactive measures to ensure long-term effectiveness.

The study emphasises the need for continued innovation and equitable solutions to address educational disparities and reduce the risk of long-term setbacks. It also emphasises the importance of ongoing support, training, and collaboration among teachers, students, and parents to deliver quality education in the digital age. Besides, it should draw inspiration from successful strategies like personalised support for vulnerable students in Denmark.

The researchers recommend a comprehensive approach that includes targeted interventions, addressing technological gaps, and fostering inclusive strategies. By prioritising accountability, strategic planning, and continuous support, education systems can better navigate challenges and ensure all students have equal learning opportunities,

even during crises. Ultimately, this will lead to a more equitable and accessible education for all.

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Ethical Approval

The authors declare that the Ethical Review Committee of the SUST (Shahjalal University of Science and Technology) research centre approved the study. The research had been approved by an evaluation committee headed by the Director of the Research Centre, Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, Sylhet, Bangladesh. Before conducting interviews, we had obtained informed written consent or thumbprints (for those who were illiterate). We assured the participants that we would only use their data for research purposes and that no report or publication would include their names or other identifiable information. We kept the participants' information completely secret, and only the authors had access to the data set. Paper-based and e-data archived for futureproofing up to publication in a renowned journal. Security against data loss through accidents, unauthorised access, and disaster has been ensured by storing the data on password-protected devices. Paper-based data is stored in a locked cabinet as well.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no potential conflict of interest.

Author Contribution Statement

Moni Paul (MP), Akash Saha (AS) and Sanjay Krishna Biswas (SKB): Conceptualisation, methodology, and developing the first draft;

SKB: curation of data; MP, AS and SKB: Conducting empirical research and visualisation of data; MP and SKB: Guidance and Supervision; MP: check validation of data; AS: developing the final draft; SKB and MP: editing, reviewing and finalising the manuscript.

Informed Consent

Before conducting interviews with participants, informed written consent was acquired from each of them.

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Data Availability Statement

Upon request, the corresponding author will provide the data underpinning the study's findings based on valid justification.

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