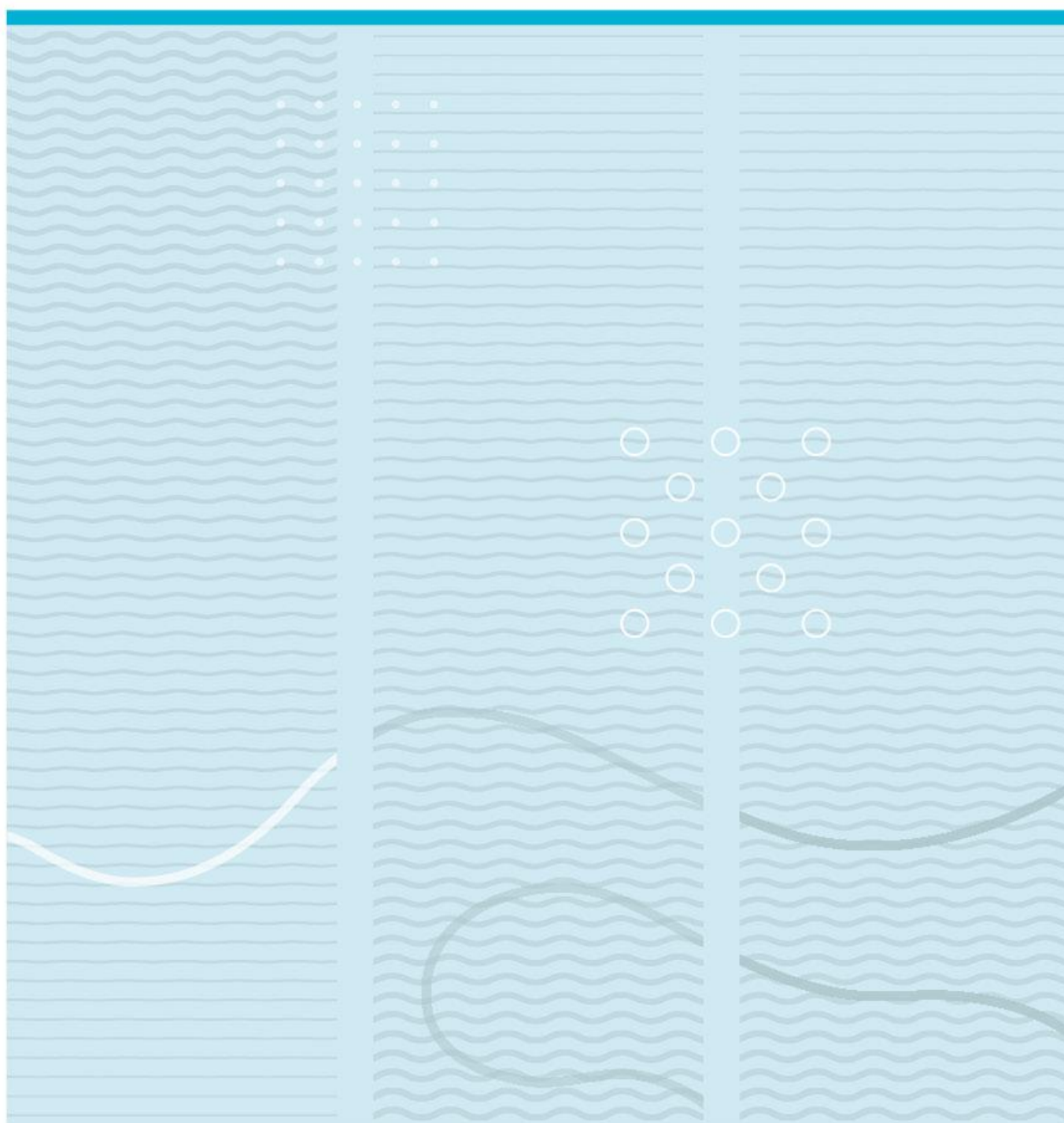


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# **Democratic values in public primary schools in Bangladesh: A qualitative investigation**



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This thesis is worth 45 study points

# Abstract

The People's Republic of Bangladesh is a democratic country according to the national constitution. The country has a strong history of student participation in active democracy based activities since before its liberation in 1971. Student participation for a country's democratic freedom is crucial for this economically developing country. Yet, establishing democratic, moral civic education and citizenship values were undermined for long time in the primary school education system in Bangladesh. The National Education Policy 2010 pointed out the importance of democratic, moral civic and citizenship perspectives in securing future democratic citizens. This thesis is an attempt to identify understanding, existence and practice of democracy related values at seven public primary schools in Bangladesh. The study has a qualitative approach to investigate the topic and used purposive sampling of teachers. The analytical framework is developed by discussing Gert Biesta, John Dewey and Patricia White's viewpoints on democratic values. Democratic values of participation, freedom and courage were the outcome of the framework discussion, utilized to assist in the inquiry of the main research questions of this thesis. As data collection methods, document analysis and semi-structured interviews were used to investigate the two research questions of this study. The national constitution of Bangladesh, national education policy (NEP) 2010, education guidelines by the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) and curriculum by National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) were used as primary documents to investigate the first research question. Individual and group interviews were conducted at seven schools to gain insight from participating teachers on democratic understanding and practice. With the help of the analytical framework's outcome, the findings of the two research questions indicate that participants have a very minimal understanding of democratic, moral civic and citizenship ideals. In terms of practicing and teaching values related to democracy to young students, the participants require more training and time to adapt the new pedagogical changes that were introduced by NEP 2010. In this study, participant teachers indicated their willingness to teach moral values to students and acknowledged their shortcomings due to cultural practice, politics and faulty bureaucracy.

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# 1. Introduction

This is an investigative study on the practice of democratic values at public primary schools in Bangladesh. The study looked into the situation of the primary education system and understanding of democratic values in the country. The main discussion was formed on information of actual practices of such values in public primary schools, according to education policy.

The report on primary and basic education in Bangladesh claimed that primary level education is foundational for fulfillment of human potential. Primary level education works as stepping stone towards secondary and later higher education. This report indicated that educational and moral progress of students in primary school is not fulfilling the determined competencies developed by National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB). According to the report, moral civic and citizenship value related competencies are important for future democratic society and require extra attention from the primary schooling period (Nath & Chowdhury, 2009). As developing countries face constant threat on democracy and human rights practices, it is more important for them to promote democratic ideals among students. Some of the most influential actors to provide values to young and adult students are family members, teachers and communities. There are several academic programs providing and developing curriculum based values for secondary or higher level students in Bangladesh. However, these approaches and programs for secondary and higher level students are not suitable for primary level students because of their age, understanding and behavior. Acknowledging differences in learning capacity and approach, Alam (2011) defines democratic values differently according to age groups. He argues the idea of democratic values cannot be the same for an adult and a child due to development of understanding and experiences. He suggests that primary school teachers need to revise understanding and practice of democratic values according to age group capacity. It is necessary to acknowledge the differences in understanding democratic values due to the diverse age range of primary school students.

I considered Alam's argument of differentiated understanding of democratic values among different age groups in primary schools interesting for this study. In addition, I reflected on both content and context aspects of primary education in Bangladesh. Being a developing country and a former British colony, the country's educational development has

influences from historical content and context. Due to this insight, this thesis touches upon content and context aspects of primary education while investigating knowledge and practice of democratic values.

## **1.1 Rationale of the study**

Value based education in Bangladesh has been a common topic to national and international academics for long period (Ardt et al., 2005; Unicef, 2015). Despite being a common topic, sufficient academic studies, articles on value based education (specifically on democratic and moral values) related to primary level education in Bangladesh are difficult to trace. Throughout this thesis period, I have located several academic studies and articles on related topics from higher and university level education in Bangladesh. These facts indicate insufficient research on value education from the primary school level in Bangladesh. This thesis aims to gather data from sample teachers at public primary schools and critically analyze collected data to understand teachers' views and practice of civic, citizenship and democratic values. Through this process, I intended to develop a clear idea of the process of child value formation through competency guided primary school curriculum. To be precise, this study attempts to investigate the process of teaching and practicing certain democratic values by participant teachers at public primary schools. Those certain democratic values are integrated in primary school curriculum and advised by the national education policy 2010.

The relationship between education and values has been explained by scholars from different perspectives. In the book *Models of Democracy*, David Held presents the importance of democratic values in the education and learning process of children. He argues it is important for every child to develop their reasoning ability of other's point of view through civic schooling. This ability of reasoning and understanding requires cognitive challenge, which schools should provide through civic, moral value based education systems (Held, 2006, p. 251). Related to the importance of cognitive aspects, Haydon (1993) holds that the cognitive aspects of certain values (which are commonly referred to as democratic values, such as individual autonomy, justice, tolerance, freedom of expression and so on) are the most distinctive features of and necessary for democratic education.

In the article "Bringing politics into the nursery: early childhood education as a democratic practice", Peter Moss (2007) discusses democratic practices for young learners and students. He proposes that children have their own voice, opinions and right to participate in collective decision making processes. These features make children competent citizens.



Democratic practice for children means having their voices heard being heard by other children and adults. It is important to recognize these expressions as their right and competence to participate in collective decision making in a democratic atmosphere. The concern is to develop children's understanding of moral ethics and values related to democracy through civic education which requires teachers' contribution in value oriented teachings. In addition to this kind of education's relationship to human rights, it also develops children's tolerance and collaboration with others which is an element of multiculturalism and multicultural education.

The Council of Europe has active role in education for democratic citizenship, civic and multicultural education. The White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue (2008) by the Council of Europe noted that European citizens need to acquire intercultural competences in order to participate effectively in a culture of democracy. The competencies should be taught and learned by European citizens as these cannot be acquired automatically. In this process, the Council of Europe developed a model with necessary competencies to plan, develop and teach students to become democratic citizens. This model has four categories: values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and critical understandings (Appendix B). These categories hold a total of 20 competences which are considered as essential for ensuring democratic citizens in the future (Barrett, 2016). As there are selected competences by the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) of Bangladesh to teach primary school students about democracy and civic education, I took interest to look at both competences from Europe and Bangladesh in the process of this study.

According to Tomaševski (2001), all governments have obligations to ensure the right to education to all citizens. To uphold that obligation, governments have to make education available, accessible, acceptable and adaptable towards all youth and adults. Tomaševski uses the 4-A scheme (availability, accessibility, acceptability and adaptability) to interconnect education with values, human rights, multiculturalism, responsibility, duty of governments and people. She argues that all the components of the 4-A scheme are strongly connected and complement each other. In addition, she expresses the importance of clear understanding of the interrelationship between the rights to education and rights in education. Schools and teachers must have a clear understanding to provide human rights and civic education to students. Acknowledging Tomaševski's argument, I find the topic of this thesis belongs within the field of human rights and multiculturalism.

## 1.2 Research questions

The main purpose of this study is to investigate how democratic values are understood and practiced by a sample of public primary school teachers in Bangladesh. To achieve the objective of this study two main research questions are developed. These are:

I) What kind of democratic values are assigned to the public primary schools by the government?

II) How are democratic values practiced at public primary schools according to education policy?

The first research question aims to build up knowledge about the government's interest in democratic education and democratic future citizens. To collect information for the first research question, I concluded that reviewing and analyzing the national curriculum 2011 for primary education, the national education policy 2010, the national constitution of Bangladesh, and education policies earlier than 2010 were necessary. This process of document analysis is a part of my data collection method for the first research question. The second research question is directed towards practice of democratic values at public primary schools according to the instruction of educational policy. I interviewed teachers of public schools for the purpose of collecting necessary information for the second research question.

## 1.3 Context and significance

This section of the first chapter establishes background knowledge on educational policies, cultural perspectives, and values and virtues (practices) from historical and current circumstances in Bangladesh.

### 1.3.1 Background

Bangladesh is an independent South Asian country. This country was part of British India (from 1757 until 1947) and Pakistan (from 1947 until 1971). The country gained independence from Pakistan on 16<sup>th</sup> December 1971. The population literacy rate of Bangladesh was 17.61% after liberation in 1971. The whole education system of the country was based on Sir Charles Wood's Education Despatch of 1854 before a newly formed Bangladesh Education Commission recommended a new education policy in 1971. The national constitution came into force on the 16<sup>th</sup> December 1972. According to the constitution of Bangladesh, education should be free and compulsory for all children in the

country as fundamental principles of the state policy (GoB, 1972). The first education committee report of the country was produced in 1974 where aims of education were installing values such as truthfulness, honesty, fairness and responsibility. On the other hand, the country had no curriculum to teach those values to students in school (Pereira, 2016). During two military regimes after independence of the country, education was used as a tool to promote nationalism. In that period, religion became a strong influence in shaping the country's education policies towards more non-secular ideals (Rahman, Hamzah, Meerah, & Rahman, 2010). As an outcome, the country's education system has three different divisions: (a) general education which includes science, arts, social, business studies, (b) madrasa education which is Islamic faith based education and (c) vocational education which is a skilled based education system (Pereira, 2016).

A universal primary education program was introduced in Bangladesh to improve the literacy rate and to extend physical facilities available for primary education. The compulsory Primary Education Act was introduced by the Bangladeshi parliament in 1990 (Dalin, Ayono, & Imtec, 1994, ch-5) which indicated the government's willingness to improve the primary education situation for future generations. A process to introduce and implement 'Education Policy 2000' was cancelled due to the change of governing power in the country. The process for another new education policy began in 2009 and a policy draft was developed within four months. That draft was shared through several media platforms to collect feedback from academics, general citizens and policy scholars before finalizing the policy. With the help of several offices of the United Nations (UN), the Bangladeshi government produced the National Education Policy (NEP) 2010 that included several aims and objectives where democratic values like sense of justice, human rights awareness, discipline, free thinking, honesty, and non-discriminating moral character in the education system are visible (MoE, 2010).

### 1.3.2 Values in primary education of Bangladesh

According to article 17 of the constitution of Bangladesh, "establishing a uniform mass oriented and universal system of education and extending free and compulsory education to all children to such stage as may be determined by law" (GoB, 1972). To develop a primary level education system, the Bangladeshi government has been undertaking several Primary Education Development programs (PEDP). The PEDP-3 for 2011-2016 was extended to 2017 which has objectives to reform decision making processes in institutions, a

more child-centered approach, accountability and transparency of teachers and moreover increase the quality of education. Expected transformation to more communication oriented teaching has an aim to increase intellectual ability of students according to NEP and Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) guidelines. The DPE has been active in promoting free primary level education since NEP 2010 in the country. Despite the fact that the Bangladeshi government has several legal documents to ensure quality education for a future democratic society, GPS teachers have different a understanding of those legal instructions and practice in classrooms (Salam, 2015).

Two recent master theses from the University of Oslo, Norway (Salam, 2015; Sultana, 2014) show differences between written values in legal documents like the constitution of Bangladesh and NEP 2010 and the reality of practicing values in public schools. The studies attribute these differences to several cultural, demographical and societal factors. Geographical location, religious values, cultural practices and economic condition can be recognized as some of the main influences of mandated legal responsibilities of teachers as well as the practical approach of teachers towards young students. The objectives of education described in the NEP 2010 are about inspiring students to be good citizens with sense of justice, awareness of human rights, discipline, free thinking capability, honesty, friendliness, and moral character in a non-discriminating system (p. 6). Emphasis on responsive behavior (p. 7) from teachers at primary education to attract students in joyful, learning friendly environment is also part of the NEP 2010 (MoE, 2010). In accordance to NEP 2010, the constitution of Bangladesh and third primary education development program (PEDP-3) was produced with the objective of providing child friendly learning to primary school students through improved teaching systems and decentralization of school administration and management. PEDP-3 instructed reforms in teaching pedagogy and accountability of teachers for each child's learning (DPE, 2011).

According to the mentioned educational policies and government documents, several competencies related to democratic and moral values offer support to develop a framework for this thesis. Most of the documents suggest development of spiritual, moral, social and human values as objectives of primary education. The list of 29 terminal competencies by NCTB (Appendix-A) reflects similar importance. The 29 terminal competencies by NCTB are combination of values, attitudes and skills for primary school students. According to the DPE, all primary school students will achieve the selected 29 terminal competencies through the curriculum and classroom activities. It is important to point out that teachers have

complete responsibility to introduce and teach several of those terminal competencies which cannot be achieved through class curriculum. Primary school students are expected to learn and practice competencies such as respect, responsibility, honesty and freedom of speech from teachers. In this matter, the understanding of those value based competencies and teaching techniques of teachers play a vital role in ensuring the proposed 29 terminal competencies reach every student. I perceive that the 29 terminal competencies contain social, moral, spiritual, human aspects reflecting values, attitudes, skills and knowledge. These components of attitudes, skills and knowledge are important for a discussion of value based education and part of the theoretical framework of this thesis.

I would like to acknowledge that different perspectives on values due to contextual diversity are important while developing discussions in this study. Walton (1990) supports the argument of different understanding of values in cultures and states, “Well, we just can’t judge another culture, for the values of every community are different.”

### 1.3.3 Significance

It is well known to the world that Bangladesh is a developing country with a very large population. Being one of the poorest countries on Asian continent, the education system in Bangladesh has been in continuous discussion at the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and several institutional bodies of United Nations. In this regard, several studies have been done on the quality of education and education system in Bangladesh which are available for academics and policy makers. Through several years of academic learning in Norway, I acknowledge the role of young children as the future leaders in any country. In relation to this, I feel the importance of democratic upbringing of young children and students in my home country Bangladesh. Acknowledging the very little academic information about young children and student’s value based education in Bangladesh, this study might fill in a small piece of a large gap. The information about the government’s mandate for value based education for primary school teachers and data from interviews with teachers can be a contribution in reducing the information gap in the academic world and policy making process in the future.

## 1.4 Thesis outline

This thesis has six chapters providing the entirety of information on the study I have completed. A brief introduction of each of the chapters is given below as a glimpse of the entire thesis.

In chapter 1, an introduction of the study is provided as well as the aim, purpose and research questions of the thesis. Brief background information of the topic and significance of the study is also presented in the first chapter.

Chapter 2 contains an overview of previous research studies relevant to the topic of this study. The sections in this chapter have separate discussions on how values are understood, the relationship between education and values, and localized perspectives of values. Discussions are based on existing academic information related to this study. This chapter develops a foundation of academic knowledge on the topic of value based education. This knowledge aims to assist understanding and analyzing the findings of the study in later chapters.

Chapter 3 provides the theoretical framework for this study where different concepts of democracy and value based education are available. Each section of this chapter has a particular discussion on how democracy and education is related according to Gert J. J. Biesta, John Dewey and Patricia White. Arguments from these scholars for the importance of democratic values in primary school education are available in different sections of this chapter. Largely, the chapter discussions provide guidance for the research questions and aims of this study.

Chapter 4 holds the complete methodological process exercised for this study. In different sections of this chapter, explanations regarding the selection of study approach, data collection methods, sampling strategies and data analysis procedures are available. In addition, justification on ethical considerations, trustworthiness and limitations of the study are part of this chapter.

Chapter 5 contains the main findings from the data collection process and analysis. Discussions and analysis of findings are available in different sections, which were developed using the theoretical framework. Each section has detailed discussions and arguments to answer the research questions with the help of the theoretical framework. The aim of this

chapter is to discover the relationship between research questions and theoretical discussions using the data collected on the study topic.

Chapter 6 is the final chapter with formal concluding remarks on the entire study. This chapter holds the summary of a long journey of this study from the beginning to the end. This chapter suggests the necessity of future research on democratic schooling in the Asian context.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1 Introduction

The literature review of this study was an ongoing process up until the final submission, to assist in contextualizing and responding to the two research questions. I attempted to find existing academic literature, studies relating to democratic and civic education, value based education and competencies in education to enrich and supplement knowledge in this thesis period.

I required sufficient knowledge on the existing research of globally recognized democratic ideals and values and value based education for young students. The majority of educational research studies have a tendency to focus on either quality of the educational processes or classroom practices. This study empirically looks into classroom practices according to the educational policy in Bangladesh. As Merriam (2009) recommends to have a set of references and abstracts related to the topic of research, I included civic and citizenship education, and moral and value education related research as a set of reference. To locate and obtain essential literatures, I used keywords and terms in the university library database. Some of those keywords and phrases were ‘value based education’, ‘democratic education’, ‘civic education’, ‘citizenship education’, ‘moral education’, ‘democratic schooling’, and ‘Asian democratic education’.

It was difficult to get a hold of relevant studies on the education system in Bangladesh with the mentioned keywords and topics using the university’s physical and online library. I assume there are sufficient resources available locally in Bangladesh related to the mentioned topics which are not available online. Therefore, those resources were not accessible for me from Norway. To keep my research attainable and within my capability, I decided to mainly use scholarly resources related to democracy and value based education. I must acknowledge that the empirical studies on quality, value and democratic education in Bangladesh by Salam (2015), Pereira (2016) and Sultana (2014) provided me great information and understanding on the topic. These are the main empirical studies I managed to assemble as a contextual reference for this thesis. Moreover, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) offered important principles which guided the development of this thesis. The CRC principles of non-discrimination to children, devotion to the best interests of the child, the right to development and respect for the views of the child were used in investigating the empirical data of this thesis.



## 2.2 Value based education

According to the online Cambridge Dictionary, the meaning of ‘values’ is ‘the principles that help you to decide what is right and wrong, and how to act in various situations’. In relation to human values, Rokeach (1973, p. 5) thinks that a value is an enduring belief and a mode of conduct which is personally or socially preferable to an opposite mode of conduct. While referring a value as a belief and mode of conduct, Rokeach distinguishes between terminal and instrumental values. Instrumental values include moral and competence related values. Terminal values are mainly social and personal values. According to him, terminal values incorporate freedom, excellence, self-respect and happiness.

The definition of ‘education’ is also highly debated throughout history. W.B. Gallie termed education as an essentially contested concept, which can be understood differently according to conception, interests and values. Countries have been developing their educational policies and curriculum according to their interests and priority of values, beliefs and political orientation. Two functions of education can be reproduction of skills and reproduction of consciousness or shared understanding (Carr & Hartnett, 1996, pp. 19-22). These two functions of education play a major role in shaping and developing generations and their interests, behaviors and lifestyles. Most of the modern governments understand the importance of an educated civil society for a country’s economic and social developments. Due to this understanding of governments, educational policies and curriculums are instructed to provide civil, moral and social value based education to students.

The book *Civic Education in the Asia-Pacific Region: Case Studies Across Six Societies* by Cogan, Morris, and Print (2002) provides preliminary understandings of civic education in four Asian countries along with the United States of America and Australia. The Asian case studies in this book examine the nature of civic education in Hong Kong, Japan, Taiwan and Thailand. The authors acknowledge the emergence of value based education in Asian countries in the past decades, together with globalization and economic growth. Asian governments’ intention to become similar to or better than Western developed countries encouraged their educational policies to include value based curriculum. Different Asian countries used diverse terms such as civic education, political education, citizenship education, values education and moral education in that process. Due to this, the term ‘civic education’ has received various definitions in the Asian region. The authors define the term

‘civic education’ as the formation through the process of schooling of the knowledge, skills, values and dispositions of citizens. The summary from the case studies indicate the four Asian countries promoted values according to each country’s own political nature and history. Hong Kong’s educational system encouraged Chinese values, social harmony, patriotism and love of the motherland which is People’s Republic of China. The educational system in Japan emphasized good relationships to develop a democratic peaceful nation, the nation’s history and economics, but little encouragement for participation in community activities. Taiwan’s value education focused on civic knowledge, moral behavior, civic values related to social cohesion and democratic values. Their value based education system aimed to prepare citizens to respect other cultures. Thailand promoted cognitive civic knowledge, Buddhist principles and respectful behavior in their educational system to ensure future active citizens can live peacefully in a democratic society with the Monarch as the supreme head of Thailand. The authors looked at the practice of civic values and found that schools and teachers in Asian countries had various descriptions and implementation patterns. Teachers in Asian countries also showed a tendency to avoid controversial issues and difficulties in actual practices of civic values. However, encouraging student participation in school and community activities was common among the four Asian countries (Cogan et al., 2002).

Moss (2007) provides a great argument on the importance of democratic education for early childhood and young students. His arguments are based on four existing issues in the European educational system as obstructions to democratic practices. Moss argues that: (1) Establishing central democratic values in children’s institutions with a business approach in the European context is incompatible. (2) Children’s institutions (schools) might experience conflict in power, interests and perspectives by providing democracy in the educational system. (3) Due to diversity, Europe holds different views on democracy. Children grow up experiencing several democratic paradigms which are not similar. There must be recognition of different democratic views. (4) There is a requirement of a uniform European understanding of democracy related to children. Moss (2007) claims that educational institutions such as schools can be one of the many possible places to practice democratic ideals by children and youth. Moss argues for the influence of democratic practice in early childhood and young age from two contemporary developments: first, the growth of policy interest and second, the current importance of democratic practice. The first argument is related to the purpose of early childhood and primary educational institutions. As globalization managed to influence almost every component of societies, the quality of children's growth depends on their educational syllabus. The second argument is related to a

trend of less voting in the population and less interest in traditional and formal democratic politics.

A great importance was drawn on democratic practices in classrooms by activities, teachers' contribution and atmosphere in the study of Pass (2007). In that study, Susan Pass concluded by saying that teachers must develop and provide practice space for students to take part in democratic activities. By having that space, students can graduate with meaningful requisite skills to contribute in a democratic society. To enrich the discussion of democratic practices by teachers and students, I consider the concept of deliberative teaching important. The assumption of this type of teaching model is that students' learning and their development of democratic values evolves more through deliberative teaching than conventional teaching practices. This teaching practice focuses on communication, promotes listening, respects other's opinions and develops argument building capacity among students (Andersson, 2015). This idea of the communicative deliberative approach was actually developed by Habermas (Andersson, 2015). Jürgen Habermas discusses the deliberative approach in his discourse theory of democracy where all participants must see others as equals. He claims that communicative power of participants in a democratic system is an important aspect of democracy. Opinions from all participants in a democratic process forms communicative power, which builds the concept of a communicative deliberative process (Olson, 2014).

The IEA International Civic and Citizenship Study (ICCS) 2016 provides vast information of young people's engagement in building democratic societies from several countries. This is the world's largest study on this topic through collaboration of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), The Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) and Laboratorio di Pedagogia Sperimentale (LPS) at Roma Tre University. This was a large scale, ongoing, comparative study with systematic structure and used research questions to gather data from participants. This study included 94,000 students and 37,000 teachers from 3,800 schools in 24 countries. The average age of sample students was 14 years during the study period. Out of the total twenty-four countries that participated in the study, sixteen countries were from Europe, five from Latin America, and three from Asia. The purpose of the study was to investigate the ways in which young people are prepared to undertake their roles as citizens in a range of countries in the second decade of the 21st century. The key research questions investigated were: a) how is civic and citizenship education implemented in participating countries? b)

what is the extent and variation of students' civic knowledge within and across participating countries? c) what is the extent of students' engagement in different spheres of society, and which factors within or across countries are related to it? d) what beliefs do students in participating countries hold regarding important civic issues in modern society and what are the factors influencing their variation? e) how are schools in the participating countries organized with regard to civic and citizenship education, and what is its association with students' learning outcomes? After analyzing all collected data, the findings of ICCS 2016 informed that civic and citizenship education was part of teachers training education in every participant country which encouraged teachers to create space for students to express themselves in classrooms through discussions and arguments on social and political issues. Civic knowledge of participants, one of the components, was linked to student gender, background and socioeconomic status (parental occupation and books in home). Difference in understanding and practicing of civic knowledge among all participants was found due to socioeconomic status. Another component was students' interest and engagement on social and political issues and activities. There was no association found between active participation and civic knowledge. Parental and personal interest was found as the strongest determinant of expected civic engagement. Though the ICCS study does not include any South Asian countries, it is important to acknowledge and understand how young students from ICCS participating countries are preparing themselves to play an active role in democracy and civil society (Schulz, Ainley, Fraillon, Losito, & Agrusti, 2016). In relation to democratic practice in the primary level classroom, I included the study by Brough (2012) in this section. The study examined what happened when three teachers, located in three primary schools in New Zealand, explored the democratic principles and practices inherent in student-centered curriculum integration. A participatory action research method was used with data collection methods of semi-structured interviews, observations, focus group meetings, work samples and discussions for this study. To investigate the level of social transformation, critical theory was used in the research. As most studies on democratic schooling are conducted in the middle years of schooling, this study provided research data from the primary level schooling process from the New Zealand context. Research questions were focused on raising student thinking, participation and increasing voice in classrooms. The findings for this study show that including negotiations wherever possible increased student motivation and learning outcomes. It also showed that primary school students can be part of developing their curriculum. This research showed that redistribution of classroom power

among primary school students allowed their voices to be heard and it is possible to introduce student-centered curriculum integration in primary level schooling.

## **2.3 Localizing democratic values**

This thesis required the recognition of possible influences of traditional, cultural and religious understanding and value practices in Bangladesh. It took an extensive exploration to locate studies done on contextual differences in understanding ethics and values. A preference to include studies done with Asian context or with Asian participants was given while searching for literature on possible contextual influences in value considerations.

Sullivan, Shamir, Walsh, and Roberts (1985) provide evidence that democratic values and attitudes are differently emphasized in different countries which have similar democratic orientation. That evidence came from their comparative study on tolerance where the authors consider two different democratic contexts among sample countries. One of the contexts referred to a practice of generalized support for democracy and related fundamentals. The other context was considering support for low level civil liberties when they conflict with other values. Schwartz (1992) suggests that a basic value system is universal, but people in different countries give importance to one set of values over another due to their cultural context. Schwartz's argument was based on an extensive study with 200 teachers from 20 countries. The participants of that study rated 56 values according to their understanding as guiding principles of their life. The findings from that study suggested that people develop different value understandings dependent upon culture (Matsuda, Harsel, Furusawa, Kim, & Quarles, 2001; Peffley & Rohrschneider, 2003).

The importance of local context in developing educational strategies and curriculum always mattered and still matters in Asian countries due to region's cultural diversity (Lee, Napier, & Manzon, 2014). Schulz et al. (2010) reflected the importance of culture in their ICCS International Report on civic knowledge, attitudes and engagement. This study was conducted on lower-secondary school students in 38 countries. The realization of that study was that 'regional contexts are important for civic and citizenship education as they shape roles of people as nationals.' Countries in Asia are very versatile with their own histories and traditions. The authors of the report reflected the differences between civic and citizenship education. According to them, civic education focuses on understanding, processes, knowledge of formal institutions and civic life. In other hand, citizenship education contains

participation and engagement in civic and civil society, in addition to understanding and knowledge of civic life (Schulz et al., 2010).

Considering differences in Asian values, it was necessary to gather research information from Asian countries on democratic education. While searching for academic studies on democratic education in Asian countries, I realized different terms and synonyms are commonly used in most research done on Asian education systems. Moral education, civic education, citizenship education and value based education are some of the main terms used by empirical studies in Asian countries. From a vast number of search results on value based education, I chose studies done by several Asian academics. This decision to prefer studies by Asian scholars was an attempt to develop knowledge from research data and scholars' views from being Asian.

Kennedy, Kuang, and Chow (2013) conducted a survey study with students from Thailand, Hong-Kong SAR, Republic of Korea, Chinese Taipei and Indonesia. The study investigated the relationship of civic knowledge, student participation at school and selected traditional values. They found that traditional values in individual Asian societies are different and need to be examined carefully in targeting or defining civic and moral values. The study analysis expressed that it is important to recognize that values do not work in the same way in every society due to their existing civic knowledge. The authors think the influence of traditional values in Asian societies must not be underestimated. They also emphasize that there must be a balance between traditional values and modern values of active citizenship in an educational system and practice in developing Asian countries. Therefore, while designing educational policies, Asian governments must consider that balance to avoid the conflicting of values during actual implementation at schools. It is important to acknowledge that this study was a part of a bigger International Civic and Citizenship Study (ICCS). Evidence from this study provides data from Asian students on their civic understanding and practice.

In the process of narrowing down from Asian understandings of civic, moral, citizenship and democratic values to a more localized understanding in Bangladesh, I used studies done by Bangladeshi researchers. Nath and Chowdhury (2009) explore the quality of primary education in Bangladesh. This study was done before the government of Bangladesh introduced NEP 2010, but findings from this report show the importance of democratic practices in Bangladesh's educational system. Major findings of the report indicate the

importance of proper school infrastructure, atmosphere, and behavior of school authorities and employees play a crucial role in developing young students' learning process. Their analysis emphasized aspects of participation and concluded that advancement of learning at primary schools does not take place in accordance with the education policy. They think that to achieve nationally determined competencies, all parties related to the schooling process (e.g. students, teachers, school authorities and policy-makers) have to participate in knowledge learning processes. It is very necessary to provide safe spaces for sharing own thoughts in developing quality education which includes democratic ideas as well. One of their many recommendations is to improve the level of understanding of educational aims and competencies by providing teachers and authorities with civic, moral and value oriented trainings.

Related to the report by Nath and Chowdhury (2009), I gained access to two master theses by Salam (2015) and Sultana (2014) at University of Oslo, Norway. These two theses explored the quality in teaching and learning processes and practices of democratic values in Bangladesh's educational system. The thesis by Sultana (2014) explores the situation post NEP 2010 and the practicing of democratic values in secondary level education in three schools. She finds an absence of a constructive approach in the secondary level education system, which might be disturbing democratic education processes. She acknowledges the importance of culture, tradition and understanding of democracy and political influence in the educational system of Bangladesh. Her thesis recommendations are to develop democratic classrooms and collaboration between policy makers and educators to carry on future democracy in Bangladesh. Sultana developed a theoretical framework using three values (freedom, justice and tolerance) to analyze her collected data. She argued that the values of freedom, justice and tolerance are the core democratic values in the secondary schooling system in Bangladesh. Sultana developed an argument on freedom as a core value by reflecting on Paulo Freire's 1970 book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. She used the banking concept of education by Freire to uphold her argument on the importance of freedom as a value in the education system. In the mentioned concept, Paulo Freire criticized and considered traditional teaching a submissive act. Freire thought traditional teaching demands students to learn without questioning where and how the knowledge was developed. Freire thought that proper education can be understood as practice of freedom. In her thesis, Sultana criticized the educational system of Bangladesh as an outdated educational process by discovering that teachers at schools dominate and limit students' freedom for active participation (Sultana, 2014, p. 19).

Similarly, the thesis by Salam (2015) looks into the quality of teaching and learning in primary level education. He conducted the study in both public and private primary schools in Bangladesh. I found the information related to public primary schools in his thesis as very helpful and related to my study. Findings from Salam's research on mainly public schools' teaching quality show few determinants of education quality. Salam's analysis of the situation in public primary schools shows that teachers continued practicing traditional teaching methods as they do not feel comfortable with the modern teaching instructions of NEP 2010. Besides, the student-teacher ratio remained high and schools experience a lack of proper infrastructure facilities for value based education. Salam's analysis also pointed out that teachers have insufficient understanding of values and moral civic knowledge and teachers required proper training on new curriculum and education policy. He suggested that it is significant to provide proper teachers' training to all teachers to be able to implement value based education. The teachers' training of NEP 2010 aims to increase behavioral strengths, efficiency of modern teaching materials, update professional ethics and knowledge of teachers. The newly developed trainings also expect to inspire teachers to take part in research work, analyze problems, and to be conscious of their duties and responsibilities (MoE, 2010). Salam (2015) recommends carrying out more research on related topics as he acknowledged the insufficiency of current knowledge. In addition, he emphasized the importance of classroom atmosphere, teachers' understanding, and education policy follow-up process as important to related issues.

## **2.4 Summary**

This chapter tried to introduce already existing research which is related to the topic of this study. This study is mainly looking into democratic ideals and practices by the teachers at public primary schools in Bangladesh. Due to that, this chapter included an overview of several studies on democratic, moral and ethical values from Eastern and Western contexts. I narrowed down the literature by seeing possible associations between democratic values and virtues and education from global and local perspectives.

I consider the importance of discussing differences among understanding of values due to geographical, cultural and traditional diversity. This chapter tried to summarize knowledge of Asian educational systems and teachers' approaches towards value based education. I attempted to narrow my focus to South Asian countries and their democratic education related studies to enrich this chapter. As a result, I can summarize this chapter by expressing that



civic education has always been a concern for most of the Asian countries. However, currently only a few Asian countries with economic growth have managed to integrate and implement a moral education system with values those express democratic ideals. Those developed Asian countries with value based education systems have an interest to follow or compete with developed Western countries who have a long history of value based education. Even if those Asian countries introduced Westernized value based education systems, they kept some part of their own understandings of values and citizenship in the knowledge process. The poorer countries in Asia are still struggling to establish proper democratic and moral value based education systems. The education system that expresses democratic ideals are mainly visible in higher level schooling, but almost not considered important for early or primary level schooling in the Asian context. Most research on moral or democratic values from Asian countries are based on higher level schools and university level education systems. I managed to locate only a few studies on democratic schooling that relates to primary education. The studies on the education system in Bangladesh indicate that the country's educational system in theory has very progressive views and interests. Yet, in reality the practice and process of moral and democratic ideal based education is far behind in actual practice. There are also differences in conceptualizing the meanings of moral and democratic values among teachers due to cultural, educational and maybe religious differences. The studies on Bangladesh's education system point to the significance of student participation in the schooling process. They also emphasize the importance of freedom that is related to participation activities.

### 3. Theoretical framework

In this chapter, I attempt to discuss and explain the theoretical process utilized to investigate the research questions of this study. This chapter presents two main concepts - 'democracy' and 'value based education'. These concepts carry an extensive range of discussions. For the purpose of this study, I focused on the relationship between these concepts in existing theoretical debates. In the book *Democratic Theory*, Cunningham (2015) brought out several historical understandings of democratic theory. According to him, there are three main approaches (meaning of democracy, value of democracy and actual democratic practices) to all democratic theory considerations. The differences in approaching democratic theories among scholars are mainly their considerations on these three approaches. Theories and arguments by Gert J. Biesta, John Dewey and Patricia White were particularly relevant in understanding and analyzing democratic value based education in Bangladesh.

While developing the discussion of analytical framework, I acknowledged the competence model with 20 competences by Council of Europe (Appendix B). The Council of Europe considers those selected competences essential for ensuring democratic citizens in future by enabling students to participate effectively and appropriately in a culture of democracy. They use the term 'culture of democracy' which contains democratic values, attitudes and practices. The model categorized 20 essential competencies into sections on values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and critical understandings. According to the model, the value section holds human rights and dignity, cultural diversity, democracy, justice and equality related competencies. The attitudes section consists of cultural beliefs, practices, respect, civic-mindedness, responsibility and tolerance abilities. The skill category carries critical thinking, listening and observing skills, adaptability, co-operation and conflict resolution skills. The knowledge and critical understanding section cultivates abilities to help communication, self and world knowledge and perspective (Barrett, 2016). With the help of this competency model, the Council of Europe has been attempting to educate young students in European countries to become future democratic citizens. The idea is to educate young students with these values in the early stages of their education to build a foundation for value based choices and actions in the future. The later sections of this chapter hold discussions linked with these four categories to develop a framework for analyzing participant interviews in this thesis.

### 3.1 Meaning of democracy

The literal meaning of democracy is ‘rule by the people’. Biesta (2006, p. 121) takes this literal meaning and existing different interpretations of democracy when arguing his opinion. According to him, the meaning of democracy is always changing, getting challenged and undecided because of its nature of continuous reassessment of what it means and entails. Biesta’s view of democracy is influenced by Dewey’s conception of democracy, as he agrees with several components of Dewey’s explanation of democracy. Likewise, Biesta operates in the conjunction of democracy and education. He argues that our understanding of the relationship between education and democracy differ as our ideas about democracy are different. He thinks societies follow the centuries old idea that rational individuals are needed in democratic society; therefore, schools were given the task to deliver such individuals. Following that task, the concept of installing knowledge, skills and values in children became a well-known mechanism to link education with democracy. In the process of defining democracy and education, Biesta divides the role of education in democracy by (a) education *for* democracy and (b) education *through* democracy. Education *for* democracy is a process where education prepares young students for future democratic participation. Biesta adds knowledge, skill and value as three components in this process. On the other hand, education *through* democracy allows children, teachers and school authorities to practice democratic values in teaching institutions. Relatively, according to Dewey (1997) democracy is not only a governmental structure, it is mainly about communicative living and combination of living experiences.

*A democracy is more than a form of government; it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience. (p. 87)*

Dewey considers that every democratic society must have an educational system where individuals (students) can develop interest for social relationships and habit for social changes. His democratic ideals of education offer a breakdown of social class, race and inequality as individuals participate in communicative living and accept mutual interests. Both Biesta and Dewey expressed their arguments about the ‘meaning of democracy’ from their own perspectives. According to Biesta (2016, pp. 25-42), Dewey thinks that participation is the central educational mechanism. However, there are pseudo-participatory activities which exist in schools where students are controlled by teachers. These pseudo-participations do not provide any advantages of proper participation without a setup or controlled class setting. Education is something that educators and students do together as

argued by Dewey. It is a communication process of participation in a collaborative activity in Dewey's educational theory. In relation to this section's discussion, the competency model by the Council of Europe emphasizes the importance of participation in the culture of democracy. Barrett (2016) suggests that selected competencies are essential to enable civic and democratic participation by students at school and in daily life. An educational system has a responsibility to provide opportunities of active participation to students. He claims that democratic participation requires appropriate institutional structures. That hints at the importance of the democratic education process as essential in school systems to enable students' proper and active democratic participation. Despite the fact that the competency model was developed for the European educational system, it is compatible with the educational system in Bangladesh. Related to their views on the meaning of democracy, my understanding is that both 'education *for* democracy' and 'education *through* democracy' complement each other. One cannot be achieved without proper presence of the other at any level. Allowing young students to freely participate (which is education *through* democracy) in a democratic learning process surely ensures a chance of practice of democracy in the classroom (which is education *for* democracy) and maybe at other levels in the future. Based on aforementioned reasoning, I consider participation as one of the main components of democracy that is extremely important for this study. I believe that young students can adopt values strongly by practicing in a given space. This is more likely Biesta's education *though* process, alongside Dewey's argument of democratic space provided by an educational system in a country.

### 3.2 Value of democracy

In relation to democracy and political governance, Dewey (1997, p. 87) argues, 'a democracy is more than a form of government; it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience'. Promoting the importance of democratic value based education systems for a society, Dewey thinks 'a society must have a type of education which gives individuals a personal interest in social relationships and control, and the habits of mind which secure social changes without introducing disorder' (1997, p. 99). In his book *Democracy and Education*, Dewey discussed educational aims, interests and values where he found a relation to democratic aims, awareness and values. He believes the best way to teach and learn democracy is to practice. For Dewey, the term 'value' has two different meanings. One meaning indicates the price of a thing, which is intrinsic. Another meaning of 'value' denotes a distinctively intellectual act to value (Dewey, 1997, p. 249). The intellectual

comparing and judging act is the value related to education and democratic ideals. This study connects the intellectual ideal of value to its relationship with democratic education.

Progressing from the previous discussion, Biesta thinks that democratic education for students has three mechanisms – knowledge, skills and values. The knowledge component builds up a foundation for students about democracy and its processes. In the skill part, students develop their personal and communal democratic practices. The value component provides room for students to support their democratic practices and ideals with a positive attitude toward democracy (Biesta, 2006, p. 123). He believes that participation as an action has intimate connections with freedom. Without freedom there will be no action (participation) by anyone or others (Biesta, 2016, p. 105). The competence model by the Council of Europe expresses the importance of freedom in the value section discussion. In relation to practicing a culture of democracy, it is important for students to value human rights and dignity, cultural diversity, justice and equality. To do so, fundamental freedoms, freedoms of others and freedom of expression are very important mechanisms to learn (Barrett, 2016). A good understanding of personal and others freedom motivates young students to participate in activities. This means freedom is a precondition for the active participation of students in class. George H. Wood (1988), a scholar on democratic schooling, supports Dewey's view and recommends that education for democratic empowerment and citizen participation include the teaching of critical literacy, cultural capital, student decision making, social alternatives and democratic values. He thinks democratic values in the classroom must provide value to cooperation over individualistic competition. He promotes classrooms and schools as islands of democracy where students can learn interconnectedness and own autonomy.

Related to Biesta and Dewey's notion of the value of democracy, Patricia White (1996) argues that democratic willingness is important in addition to knowledge and skill components. White recognized Williams (1987) notion of ethical values rest in disposition (willingness). Through democratic willingness, values of democracy turn into actual virtues of individuals. White argues that schools should provide well thought, carefully planned citizenship education with obstacles to show courageous actions of students. Courage, as a virtue, has an important role in transforming the values of democracy into actual practice and action according to White (1996).

### 3.3 Practice of democracy

Throughout ‘the democratic conception in education’ chapter (p. 81-99), John Dewey (1997) refers to schools as must for community life and argues preparing young individuals for future democratic life through citizenship and democratic education through educational institutions. He also emphasizes freedom as a tool of self-realization and happiness. According to him, freedom as a personal quality is something that must be achieved, as freedom is not original or natural to humans. Dewey argues educational institutions must allow freedom in the process of gaining knowledge. While promoting intellectual freedom in the educational process, he wrote:

*Regarding freedom, the important thing to bear in mind is that it designates a mental attitude rather than external unconstraint of movements, but that this quality of mind cannot develop without a fair leeway of movements in explorations experimentation and application. (Dewey, 1997, p. 357)*

This argument by Dewey provides support for a democratic schooling approach, which includes the practice of values and virtues in public schools. Evaluating Dewey’s view on freedom in education, I understand the importance of opportunities to explore and explain for the students in schools. As Dewey conceptualized freedom as a mental attitude, I found a connection to my knowledge of the educational system in Bangladesh from personal experience and from reviewing recent studies for this thesis.

Patricia White (1996) presents relevant arguments on educational values that promote democracy. According to her, merely teaching about democratic values (e.g. justice, freedom and personal autonomy) is not sufficient to ensure a productive outcome. She recommends that schools must provide a safe place to learn democratic values and practice related virtues by making a suitable atmosphere and policies. She thinks only then students will develop values, virtues and social confidence to practice those in everyday life. Patricia White discusses several important virtues related to the practice of democratic values. Courage is one of those virtues which she thinks is related to Biesta's education *for* and *through* democracy processes. Biesta’s education *for, through* democracy needs student participation, which requires developing the courage of students. James Wallace (1986) (mentioned in White, 1996, p. 16) describes courage as an act by a person who believes that: a) it is dangerous to do, b) it is worth taking risks to do, c) it is possible not to do. In addition to this, White proposes an additional point: d) a person believes that it is sufficiently alarming to do

where most people might not do it. In relation to democracy, White argues that it is important to have open minds to accept important qualities and tensions in understanding the notion of courage. Courage is strongly related to situations and contexts, as it needs a different set of dispositions according to what a situation requires. White argues that as an objective of democratic education, teachers must encourage students in developing courage. My understanding of White's encouraging courageous attitudes is that at first teachers have responsibilities to provide space to students to be courageous. Only then can students be encouraged to be courageous in explaining their voice or attitudes. Necessary encouragement processes prepare young students to acquire and develop knowledge and skills in schools. White thinks developing courage to make decisions for self and the common good from a young age creates a strong foundation for future democratic involvement. The competency model considers courage as a requirement for taking responsibility, challenging norms and correcting wrong actions. The act of courage is part of attitude related competencies in the model (Barrett, 2016). From a contextual perspective, courage is necessary if there is no existing platform to speak out in the classroom or school settings. Encouragement can amplify that courage once there is an existing platform to speak at school or other places. I interpret this process as getting involved in courageous attitudes or actions related to participation, which is another focused value of this thesis.

White argues that commitment to democracy and preparation for dynamic citizenship is required from educators (teachers) and students. This commitment will develop the value of courage to participate among students in the learning process. As courageous actions involve making an effort with something of proper knowledge, it is important for teachers to assist students to gain sufficient knowledge on democracy. She acknowledges that developing courage should not be the main concern of teachers or students, but it will happen through carefully planned execution of citizenship education (White, 1996, p. 3). She uses Rorty (1986)'s formula of using competence and 'confidence in competence' for the best preparation for courageous action.

### **3.4 Summary**

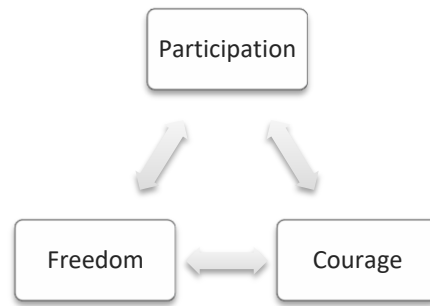
The meaning of democracy is one of the core components for this study. Biesta's arguments on the meaning of democracy provided a base for the meaning related discussion. American philosopher John Dewey's perspective of democracy has similarities to Biesta's democratic perception in education. Being an educational reformer, Dewey's contribution in

*Democracy and Education* provided a strong link between philosophical and institutional understandings of democracy. Though Dewey's contribution was made earlier to Biesta's philosophical views, Dewey's thoughts on the importance of democratic education and process towards democratic education is still relevant to the modern world. Focusing on Bangladesh for this study, Dewey's arguments are very logical to ensure future democratic citizens. The analytical framework discussion on Dewey and Biesta's arguments indicate great importance of freedom and participation in the educational process for young students. The competency model for European students affirmed similar attention to freedom, participation and courage for future democratic citizens.

Patricia White's arguments on practicing values such as courage in schools is a very important indicator for the analysis process of this study. Acknowledging Patricia White's arguments on importance of ensuring democratic citizens in the future, it seems appropriate to focus on courage as one of the main values for this thesis. I share a similar understanding as Patricia White – that courage is both a value and a virtue which can help students to thoughtfully determine to promote and defend democratic values when required. As cultural and traditional practices in Bangladesh have a stronghold on the educational system and classroom hierarchy, students do not have enough space to speak out for their rights or question teachers easily. This indicates a lack of courage among students as a result of a very traditional view on educational hierarchy. This is an important reason to consider courage as one of the focus values as opposed to the vastly researched value 'encouragement'. Students should have an opportunity to learn, develop and practice courage in educational institutions from a young age. Once inherited properly at a young age, the value of courage can become a virtue in the future for an entire generation of youth. This is a process of nurturing values that Dewey, Biesta and White argued and agreed upon in their own contributions on democratic value based education

Based on the arguments and discussions in this chapter, I consider participation, freedom and courage as values which are strongly interlinked in the context of educational policy and classroom practice in Bangladesh. Merging arguments of Biesta, Dewey and White with the previous chapter of literature review, my logic is that to have freedom among students, there must be courage and space to participate. Similarly to having courage in the classroom setting, there must be spaces for freedom and participation. Likewise, to participate in the classroom, students must have courage and freedom as preconditions. A diagram can be an easy way to visualize these relationships among values.





Therefore, I used these three mentioned values to represent democratic values in public education in Bangladesh. This chapter's discussion and arguments guide the later chapter 'finding and analysis' to understand information according to my research questions.

## **4. Research methods**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Through this research, my main purpose is to investigate how democratic values are understood and practiced by public school teachers in primary level education. To investigate the purpose of this study, two research questions were used: I) What kind of democratic values are assigned to the public primary schools by the government? II) How democratic values are practiced at public primary schools according to education policy?

The first research question required contextual information of the educational policies in the country. To answer the first research question precisely, a proper document analysis of previous and current education policies for primary school seemed to be the most appropriate method. Conducting interviews as a data collection method seemed the most practical and appropriate to understand awareness of democratic values and ways of practicing by teachers to answer the second research question.

In this chapter I present an overview of research design and methods used for this research study. Participant sampling, fieldwork, analytical approach, ethical considerations, issues of trustworthiness and limitations of this study are other sections discussed in this chapter. This chapter ends with a brief summary of the entire methodological discussion.

### **4.2 Rationale for qualitative approach**

Consistent with the two research questions of this study, to investigate democratic value based understanding and practices in primary level education within public schools, a qualitative research approach was indispensable. As a qualitative approach allows researchers to study the desired topic in depth and in details (Patton, 2002), it harmonized with the purpose of this study better than other existing methods. Also as this approach sees through the eyes of the people and helps to understand the social world using its participants' point of views (Bryman, 2012, p. 399), a qualitative approach provides meaningful understanding and explanation of interview data. As this research is focusing strongly on the understanding of the meaning people (primary level teachers in public schools) have constructed (Merriam, 2009, p. 13), I was convinced to select qualitative methods for this study.

### **4.3 Rationale for research methods**

Based on a qualitative research approach, I found a case study design as the most suitable for this research as it requires collecting and analyzing data from several distinguishable cases (public primary schools) (Merriam, 2009, p. 49). In this research, a small number of primary level teachers from selected public schools shared their personal understandings and ways of practicing values related to democratic ideals through interviews.

An inductive approach of this qualitative research will help building concepts and theories through the data collection and analysis process (Bryman, 2012, p. 404). Though it will be an inductive approach, Bryman (2012, p. 27) acknowledges the use of existing theories as a background to qualitative investigations. Realizing the influence of existing theories, I therefore admit my knowledge of that information. It is unavoidable and non-disposable knowledge which I must take into account while completing this study.

### **4.4 Research sample**

The purpose and research questions of this study require two different types of data sources to maximize information to analyze and understand the study topic. The research question 2 (How are democratic values visible in the teaching practices in government primary schools?) requires data collection through interviews from primary level teachers at public schools in Bangladesh. One of the most appropriate sampling strategies for a qualitative study is purposive or purposeful sampling. This form of sampling allows the researcher to discover, understand, and gain insight of the study aim by selecting a sample that provides the most information (Merriam, 2009, p. 77). This sampling process is also known as non-probability sampling.

A typical purposeful sampling process was used to select samples for this study as it reflects the interests of the study topic. A two-step strategic non-probability sampling process was used, that started with selecting organizational level (schools) and resulted with final person samples (teachers). To conduct purposive sampling, I determined necessary selection criteria in the selection of samples to be studied.

According to DPE (2016), Bangladesh has 63,601 public primary schools and 322,766 primary level teachers. Considering the data collection period and practicability in Bangladesh, my initial selection of public primary schools were situated in Dhaka. Being the capital city, Dhaka offered several renowned public schools as potential organizational samples for this study. Originally, I approached 10 public schools situated in different areas of the city to participate in this study. The reason for selecting different areas was to achieve sample diversity. I visited the mentioned 10 public schools and had meetings with the head-masters about the rationale of this study. Initial responses from head-masters were very cooperative after the meetings. However, most of the head-masters needed to talk with school administrative committees before I could conduct my interviews at their school facilities. After a month long communication process, six public schools responded positive to be a part of the study. Additionally, I approached three public schools situated outside Dhaka with an intention to collect a wider understanding of the topic from teachers. Only one school from a Southern district of the country responded positive to be interviewed. Therefore, a total of seven schools composed the final organizational samples for this study.

The second step of the sampling process was to locate interview participants from the seven organizations. Due to the aim of this study, the priority was given to those who had teaching experience of 5 years or more and were responsible for several classes at the school. Furthermore, I decided to maintain a gender balance in sample group. As for ethical considerations, I coded every interview session name from each school to comply with proper anonymity. Information about the seven school samples is provided in Table-1.

Table -1: Information of sample schools

School	Number of students	Number of teachers	Student teacher ratio
PS-1	834	10	83:1
PS-2	421	9	47:1
PS-3	742	16	46:1
PS-4	742	16	46:1
PS-5	756	16	47:1
PS-6	928	20	46:1
PS-7	100	6	17:1

## 4.5 Data collection methods

Qualitative research does not generally require fixed instruments and samples (Yin, 2011, p. 131). Therefore, I used two different data collection methods in this study. I chose document analysis and interviews as main data collection methods after reviewing existing research on related topics. In the next sections, I discuss the detailed process of using the two mentioned methods according to the goal of this study.

### 4.5.1 Document analysis

Document analysis is a systematic process for reviewing and evaluating data materials. It is possible to combine document analysis and other data collection methods in investigating the same topic (Bowen, 2009). In light of the fact that this is a qualitative study that required review of policy and official documents, I selected document analysis as a data collection method alongside with interviews. Document analysis was used in investigating research question-I of this study.

Consistent with the purpose of this study, I reviewed the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2010 and guidelines from the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) as main documents. Furthermore, other documents related to the study topic and aims became part of the document analysis process to provide additional knowledge and information. In this process, national curriculum for primary schools, academic journals, reports, books and previous research became part of document analysis method.

Several additional documents were found and used during the document analysis process. These supplementary documents are somehow related and/or provided additional information to main official documents of this study. These supplementary documents include:

- 1) Annual sector performance report by DPE 2016
- 2) National student assessment (NSA) 2015 report
- 3) Bangladesh Education Sector Review report by World Bank
- 4) Report of SHARE 2016

The information on educational values, moral ideals, democracy and human rights were scattered in different sections in the selected official documents. Relevant sections from

selected official documents were conceptually analyzed as this method clarifies the essential meaning of policy concepts or describes appropriate usage for the concepts in other cases (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997, p. 470). It was very difficult to locate specific terms such as ‘democratic values’ and ‘value education’ in these documents. I was required to review selected sections of these documents several times in order to understand the relationship between democratic values and education. These documents had several mentions of moral civil, citizenship and social values related to educational purposes and aims. I considered using these words and terms as they conveyed the same or similar meaning as democratic values. The process to use particular words and terms became a foundation for coding in the analysis part of this study.

I went through every document carefully during the document analysis process. Sometimes I performed a line by line reading of document sections to figure out important meaning for further analysis processes. Meanwhile, I kept note of insightful information from documents in a journal for potential use during the analysis of interview data. It was convenient to have coding words and terms while performing document analysis as those provided direction and guidance to explore research question-1.

#### 4.5.2 Interviews

In order to pursue research question-II, semi-structured interviews were conducted to collect data from participants. The semi-structured interview provides freedom to participants in how they want to reply, while the researcher (myself) has full control of the interview session (Bryman, 2012, p. 471). This approach was appropriate to break down the unpleasant formal atmosphere between interviewer and the interviewees. In addition, it enabled two-way interactions and brought out several points of view on the research topic from interviewees.

An interview guide (appendix-C) with reasonably detailed questions related to the study topic was used in the interview process. The guide was based on theoretical framework and literature reviews done for this study. In addition, knowledge from the document analysis assisted in preparing the interview guide. As Bengali is the main language for communication, I translated the interview guide to Bengali for participants. During the interview sessions, I used a merged version of interview guide with both English and Bengali language for more clarification. Although the interview guide was used during interview sessions, I allowed participants to add anything related to education, values and practice in their response. I added follow-up questions during the interviews in order to collect relevant

information from participants. As follow-up questions and interventions can be influential during interviews, I stayed alert during all interview stages. However, I must not deny that my timing of interventions and follow-up questions might influence participant response to some extent.

Each interview session was allocated approximately one hour considering the availability of sample participants during and after their working hours. However, I was prepared to exceed the allocated time, which is possible for semi-structured interviews (Yin, 2011). In this way, I conducted six interviews in Dhaka and one in the South-Western district of Bagerhat during the month of July 2017. Complying with local protocol, I met the head-master of each sample school before conducting interview sessions with teachers. Being public school teachers, participants needed permission from the head-master to provide necessary time for the interview session. The head-masters of selected schools provided necessary assistance to select interview participants. As mentioned before, I prioritized teachers with 5 or more years of experience who had responsibility for several classes at the schools. Due to the hectic teaching schedule of participants, I managed to conduct five individual interviews and two group interviews for this study. The two group interviews were conducted during the lunch break as that was the only time teachers had available during school working hours.

I was organized to record interviews using a voice recorder as an instrument of data collection. That would give me additional attentiveness to the interviewee and increased accuracy of collected data (Patton, 1980, p. 247). Simultaneously, I was prepared to collect interview notes during sessions. Before starting every interview session, participants (both individual and group) were informed and asked if they would allow the recording of the interview session. Unfortunately, in each of the seven interview sessions the participants denied to be recorded. Due to the disapproval of participants, I could not record any of the interview sessions for this study. Without the assistance of a voice recorder, I had to adopt a system of abbreviations and informal note-taking techniques. It was the best possible way to collect interview data as original as possible. I recited and reconfirmed quotes and statements with participants during the sessions to note interview data as authentic as possible. Because of additional reciting and reconfirming process, the interview sessions took extra time. The average time for one interview was more than an hour for this study. A constant development process of note-taking techniques and abbreviations was part of the data collection period. This process assisted my data collection and moderation skills for every next interview.

## 4.6 Analytical approach

The purpose of this qualitative study is to investigate how teachers understand and practice democratic values at public primary schools. Data was gathered from legal documents and semi-structured interviews. As qualitative analysis depends on the insights and conceptual capacities of the analyst (Patton, 2002, p. 553), I used an inductive analysis process to analyze collected data as inductive research does not require a hypothesis in advance. Merriam (2009, p. 15) thinks this is an important characteristic of qualitative research that allows researchers to gather study data in the process of building concepts and a hypothesis. This is opposite of a deductive process that tests a hypothesis in most quantitative studies. According to Bryman (2012, p. 712), an inductive approach brings a relationship between theory and research, in which theory is generated out of the research. This analysis process discovers main patterns (if any), themes, and categories from collected data by connecting small pieces of information into bigger phenomenon. The study findings come out of the collected data through the researcher's inductive analysis method (Patton, 2002, p. 453).

As this study had a small sample and limitations, I acknowledge that it would be rather impossible to create theory from the collected data. Hence, I focused on analysis and representation of information in this thesis. The findings of this study may provide new information and facts to existing concepts and theories. Due to the characteristics of this study with semi-structured interviews and documents as data sources, I found the content analysis technique as the most appropriate. An inductive content analysis process analyzes the contents of qualitative interviews, field notes and documents (Merriam, 2009, p. 205). All collected data was coded according to significant traits from the interview transcription. I focused on the meaning of interview data for coding and interpreting. As qualitative research allows researchers to use any suitable analysis technique, I developed several categories from interview data using the interview guide.

Every interview for this research took place in Bengali, which is the official language of Bangladesh. All raw interview data was translated from Bengali to English immediately after collecting interviews with each participant. This was an additional time consuming process which required exact translation of words and meaning without any bias from the researcher (in this study translation was done only by me). This translation process was essential before I started analyzing interview data.



I had more than 100 pages of transcribed interview data from interviews for further analysis. Using the document analysis process, interview guide and transcribed interviews, I looked for certain terms associated with citizenship and democratic ideals. Later those terms were used as a coding system to analyze the transcribed interview data with the help of the theoretical framework. It was absolutely necessary to read transcribed interview data several times during the coding, categorizing and analyzing process to bring out the exact meaning which participants intended. The aim of reading several times was to find relations between all interviews which indicated traits and codes for the analysis process.

## **4.7 Ethical considerations**

This section provides an overview of ethical issues relating to samples and anyone related to this research study. As interviews are interventions (Patton, 2002, p. 405), the concern for ethical issues in social research is mainly between the researcher and the research participants according to Bryman (2012, p. 133). I notified and collected an approval from NSD to conduct this research study, which required personal data from interview participants. By following NSD guidelines I ensured four ethical standards: (i) no harm to participants, (ii) informed consent, (iii) non-invasion of privacy, and (iv) no deception to participants argued by Diener and Crandall (1978). Additionally I received a letter from Høgskolen i Sørøst-Norge (HSN) which confirmed this research information and interviews as the most important component during my fieldwork period.

To gain additional support for ethical guidelines in the interview process, I contacted the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) of Bangladesh. As every interview participant was supposed to be a public school teacher employed by the government of Bangladesh, it was useful and necessary to inform DPE about this research project. I was instructed to submit an application requesting permission to obtain official recognition and assistance to conduct fieldwork for this research in public primary schools. As instructed, I submitted an application and was denied any official DPE assistance for necessary fieldwork related to this study.

In every process of communicating with interview participants, it was important to ensure that no physical, social or economic harm will occur by providing information through the interview process. Voluntary verbal and written information (consent form) remained priority and were available for every participant. To start the interview process, all interview participants were contacted with a consent form, HSN letter and NSD approval letter. By

every interview participant signing a voluntary consent form, I intend to avoid any future ethical issues.

In addition to a consent form, I considered participants' rights of choice (to withdraw and of refusal) related to demographic information as priority during the interview process. I made it very clear to every interview participant that they have a right to withdraw from the interview process at any time they wish, as part of protecting participants' rights. Personal demographic information and perceptual interview data was carefully stored in confidential storage throughout the study process. Extra cautionary measures were taken while transporting interview data from Bangladesh to Norway by encrypting files in a personal portable storage device.

## **4.8 Trustworthiness**

The validity and trustworthiness of qualitative research has been a common concern. Validity involves examining the components of research (Merriam & Merriam, 1998, p. 199). As shown by Bryman (2012), the validity and reliability approach can be used in both qualitative and quantitative research. An alternative approach in relation to validity for qualitative research is the trustworthiness and authenticity approach by Lincoln and Guba, 1985 (cited in Bryman, 2012, p. 390). Trustworthiness validates research findings, expresses worth of paying attention to the research and argues to raise questions on the research issue (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

I chose the trustworthiness approach to validate the foundation of this research, gathered interview data, analysis process and outcome through the four criteria of creditability, transferability, dependability and conformability provided by Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 300). The mentioned four criteria reviewed this research for any kind of influence, bias and possible errors. The term creditability in the trustworthiness approach is equivalent to the alternative of internal validity in the conventionalist paradigm. This criterion ensures that the research data was collected properly and analyzed with maximum authenticity from samples' understanding and social context (Bryman, 2012; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The criterion of creditability for this research was completed by writing raw interview data (in the Bengali language) right away during every interview session and reconfirming the meaning and understanding of raw data from every interview participant after each session. Additionally, every interview participant was informed and invited for further checking of their own interview transcript in English for comments and accuracy of meaning to support

credibility of trustworthiness, but every interview participant denied collaborating with further engagement to comment on transcribed data due to their anonymity and lack of good understanding of English texts.

The transferability criterion of trustworthiness looks for relation in uniqueness and significance in social contexts. This criterion parallels external validity which is related to the generalization of social context of primary data. Transferability disagrees somewhat with the question of generalization as experiences differ due to situation and contexts. Keeping that in mind, this research required a strong understanding of education and values in the context of Bangladesh. The background of societies and peoples' understanding of educational values and democracy concepts of societies in Bangladesh supported the transferability criterion of trustworthiness.

The criterion of dependability alternates reliability of conventional research and deals with the auditing component of research (Bryman, 2012). It was argued in Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 316) that credibility requires dependability. As the criterion of creditability for this research was ensured already, the dependability criterion earns its validation by design. In addition, discussions and tutorials on research method, research questions, interview guide and ethical guidelines were conducted with fellow students and teachers prior to actual fieldwork. After fieldwork, discussions and meetings with the research tutorial responsible and thesis supervisor on reviewing research design, methodology, framework, findings and analysis were part of ensuring dependability of trustworthiness.

The conformability criterion of trustworthiness is related to objectivity. Bryman (2012, p. 392) argues that complete objectivity is not possible in social research. Being the only interviewer for this study, and from the same country, I maintained focus on this criterion by verbal (language), physical (behavior) and visual (attire) communication during every interview session. However, it is not possible to declare that all of those proceedings provided absolute objectiveness. But I have performed every possible way to reach maximum objectiveness throughout the research process and findings.

Considering all the criteria discussed above with sufficient necessary concern and focus throughout entire research process, I believe this research can be recognized as trustworthy and an academic contribution in social research discipline.

## 4.9 Limitations of the study

The topic of this study is very sensitive and complex. Within the given time period to collect necessary data and complete the study report, I managed to touch only the surface of the broad topic. I expected to encounter several common challenges and limitations for this study like every other research work. In this section, I explain major challenges during the fieldwork period and the measures I had taken to deal with those challenges.

At the early stages of this study, I was aware of a relatively small sample size and numbers. Acknowledging the qualitative approach of this study, I knew that selected teacher samples will not represent the whole primary school teachers' community in Bangladesh. With the given two month period of data collection for research question II, it was one of several limitations of this study.

Earlier in the ethical consideration section, I mentioned the bureaucracy related experience in collecting an official permission to conduct fieldwork at public primary schools in Bangladesh. The entire fieldwork period was two months (June and July of 2017) which placed a very tight schedule for necessary communication relating to the full fieldwork process. I tried my best to contact and convince the Department of Primary Education (DPE) of Bangladesh from the first week of my fieldwork period. The process to submit and collect a DPE decision on the application to authorize this research in public primary schools took more than two weeks, which I judged as an illustration of bureaucracy process of Bangladesh governance.

After collecting an unsupportive DPE decision for this fieldwork, it was a tough process to contact possible public schools for interview permission. The communication processes for interview arrangements were time and energy consuming to convince head-teachers (as acting chief administrator) to assist and to provide permission to conduct interviews with teachers during and after the schooling hours. A total of seven interview arrangements were cancelled by head and assistant teachers instantly upon arrival to the public schools. The reasons for cancellations varied from personal dissatisfaction, lack of energy and time after school hours and disbelief on the consent form and anonymity. Six out of the seven interviews were conducted in Dhaka. Only one interview was conducted outside of the capital city where the school was situated in a village. I acknowledge that fact as a limitation towards diverse data. It was very noticeable that interview participants in Dhaka were more aware of modern technologies and had better access to Western culture and

understandings. The impression and expression among interview participants in Dhaka were similar to each other due to their location. I must admit that if I could manage to arrange interviews with participants from more cities rather than mostly from Dhaka, the interview data would bring more interesting aspects in this study.

As a native Bengali speaker, I did not require any interpretation assistance for translating the interview guide. As interviews were conducted in the Bengali language, I had to translate interview data into English, which is my second language. The process of translating every interview session from Bengali to English took way more time than expected before fieldwork and it was really challenging to maintain maximum integrity of raw interview meanings and expressions in the translated English version of transcribed interview data.

Being a native researcher, it is always very hard to deny complete, bias free interest for any research. I had to be aware of being free of prejudice during the entirety of the research process – from beginning to end. Another challenge related to being a native researcher with the same communicating language (Bengali) created an atmosphere for interview participants to talk more than what is related to the interview guide instruction. Behavior of interview participants towards me as the interviewer was noticeable due to age difference. I experienced similar challenges and limitations in every interview session, which can be explained as a common cultural practice towards younger generations. Another limitation that I faced throughout the data collection period was a general rejection to use a voice recorder during interview sessions. Due to fear of losing their job, lack of trust towards me and colleagues who did not want to participate in interview sessions, every interview participant denied my request to use a voice recorder. If it had been possible to record the interview sessions, I could have double checked my notes during the transcribing period.

Nevertheless, all the challenges and limitations mentioned above actually helped me to be extra careful in conducting each step of this study. Acknowledging limitations required my careful concentration to solve study design faults, increased design accuracy and ethical data process. I believe all of these challenges actually helped me in creating a detailed research on democratic value based education in Bangladesh.

## **4.10 Challenges of the study**

During the planning period of this thesis, I forecasted several challenges relating to the data collection process. Prior to the actual data collection period in Bangladesh, I found that establishing proper communication with the primary education related government offices in Bangladesh was literally not possible using emails and phone calls from Norway. Due to that, I had to plan travels to Bangladesh with sufficient time for the data collection process. I was allowed two months of travel for the data collection period in Bangladesh.

Being a citizen of Bangladesh, I predicted advantages during the data collection period. However, I experienced unwelcoming situations related to cultural hierarchy at most of the primary schools that I approached with an interview request. In Bangladesh, age is one of the crucial factors in social hierarchy and reputation. In that social hierarchy structure, I was younger than the government officers and school teachers I approached. During the conducted interview sessions, it was expected that I listen to everything that my participants mentioned. It was a challenge for me to defy that social expectation and supervise interview sessions. Due to that, I could not interfere during their answering time, even if I felt participants were leading their answers somewhere off topic. I used necessary additional questions and remarks as recovery strategy that required additional time in interview sessions. I acknowledged all related and unrelated discussions during every interview session and made notes. Those notes were expected to provide additional information about the interview area, setting and future reference during the transcription and analysis process.

## **4.11 Summary**

The research method chapter provided my methodological approach used to conduct this study. Document analysis and interviews were the main data collection methods. The instructions for thematic coding of the findings from the collected data and analysis process were developed in this chapter to secure a valid result from the study. The consideration of trustworthiness and ethical guidelines for this study remained one of the priorities in this chapter. At the same time, it was important to acknowledge the fact of being a native researcher as well as the samples and limitations of the study.

## 5. Findings and analysis

This chapter contains the key findings and analysis from the conducted interviews in relation to the literature review and theoretical framework for this study. The sections of this chapter are divided according to the discussion in the theoretical framework. These sections contain my understanding on policy documents and interview data on the meaning, value and practice of democracy in public schools in Bangladesh. Finally, a merged summary of all sections at the end of this chapter has my personal reflections of the whole study process.

### 5.1 Meaning of democracy

#### 5.1.1 Democratic ideals in legal documents

The national constitution of Bangladesh and the national education policy (NEP) 2010 were the two main documents in document analysis process. I found that these documents do not state the meaning of democracy clearly in relation to education. Due to that fact, the annual sector performance report by DPE 2016, national student assessment (NSA) 2015 report, Bangladesh education sector review report by the World Bank and 2016 report of European Union funded "Supporting the Hardest to Reach through Basic Education (SHARE)" program were also used in searching for the meaning of democracy. The 29 competencies by the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) provided important insights on the intuition of education policy makers and their vision for future democratic citizens.

In the preamble of the constitution of Bangladesh, democracy is mentioned as a fundamental aim of the state. The constitution's section-11 of part-2 expresses the importance of democracy and human rights to uphold dignity and freedom through effective participation of citizens. Respectively, section-17 of the constitution mentions:

*"The state shall adopt effective measures for the purpose of –*

*(a) Establishing a uniform, mass oriented and universal system of education and extending free and compulsory education to all children to such stage as may be determined by law;*

*(b) Relating education to the needs of society and producing properly trained and motivated citizens to serve those needs;*

*(c) Removing illiteracy within such time as may be determined by law."*

According to the cited section of the constitution of Bangladesh, one may interpret the government's encouragement to courage and participation values as serving the country in future. In relation to education and democratic ideals, the constitution states:

Section - 28 (3): *“No citizen shall, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth be subjected to any disability, liability, restriction with regard to access to any place of public entertainment or resort, or admission to any educational institution.”*

Section - 41: *“No person attending any educational institution shall be required to receive religious instruction, to take part in or to attend any religious ceremony or worship, if that instruction, ceremony, or worship relates to a religion other than his own.”*

These sections of the constitution articulate an interest of the government of Bangladesh to generate future democratic citizens. It is rational to interpret the mentioned sections as promoting an educated future society with universal acceptance of fellow human beings. A strong intention to maintain a discrimination free education process indicates that freedom is a value with constitutional support. Section- 41 of the constitution provides freedom to participate in own faith and indicates democratic value of participation as well.

The national education policy (NEP) 2010 articulates the importance of democratic culture as one of the goals of the policy. In the NEP 2010 chapter for pre-primary and primary education, cultivating humanistic, moral and spiritual values towards human rights, justice, cooperation, friendliness and respect were mentioned as aims. The policy clearly instructs for creative and interactive teaching methods to develop knowledge, skills and practice of primary school students in its ‘aims and objectives’ section of chapter 2. Some of the major aims and objectives towards democratic values for primary school students from chapter 2 of the policy document are:

- to develop a curricula and textbooks imbued with the national spirit with a view to cultivate the humanistic values;
- to help the students inculcate moral and spiritual values like idea of justice, sense of duty, discipline and etiquettes, non-communalism, human rights, accommodative attitudes toward corporate living, curiosity, friendliness and perseverance, and to encourage them to acquire scientific, cultural and human values and to shun superstitions;
- to make them motivated and capable of pursuing higher education through ensuring the qualitatively adequate marginal skills at respective levels of studies;
- to take effective steps to ensure the acquisition of essential knowledge, subject-based knowledge, life skills, attitudes, values and the sense of social awareness to



meet their basic learning needs that will enable them to move ahead to the next level of education; (MoE, 2010, p. 5)

In addition to the constitution and NEP 2010, another important document came into consideration to review. The document “curriculum for primary education 2011” was produced by the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) of Bangladesh. This document provides specific educational guidelines to primary school teachers about what students need to learn throughout the academic period. Besides instructions, this document provides information about 29 terminal competencies (appendix-A) which represent ethical, moral civil, spiritual, citizenship and democratic values to achieve from primary level education. In the national curriculum 2011, the NCTB characterized terminal competencies as the most important guidance for young students to become active citizens in the future. The term ‘terminal’ expresses NCTB’s emphasis on the significance of those selected competencies. These competencies are distributed under 13 aims of primary education and among all course subjects from grades 1 to 5. According to NCTB, every student will be introduced to and prepared with all these 29 competencies after graduating from primary school. Therefore, it was necessary to inspect these 29 terminal competencies to uncover democracy related values for this study. Some of the competencies related with democratic and civil values from the NCTB’s curriculum are mentioned below:

- “13. To be interested in and respectful to human rights, sense of internationalism, universal brotherhood and world culture.*
- 14. To feel encouraged in independent and free thinking, and practice democratic principles and procedure.*
- 17. To acquire the mentality / mental set of peaceful co-existence with affection for all irrespective of male-female, nation, religion, color including children with special needs.*
- 18. To earn an attitude of sense of sacrifice through according preference to others, to demonstrate tolerance and acquire human qualities.*
- 19. To participate actively in social activities and become aware of one's own responsibilities and rights.” (NCTB, 2011)*

The mentioned competencies from NCTB’s curriculum reflect similarities to the competency model developed by the Council of Europe. The terms such as ‘world culture’ and ‘sense of sacrifice’ are certainly not common among popular academic literature as these terms hold contextual aspects. I could assume that with these mentioned two terms, NCTB expressed universality and humanitarian aspects of primary education. Seeing the similarities in competency related objectives between the value education system of Bangladesh and Council of Europe, it was interesting to look into both local and international perspectives on values and ideals. Acknowledging the contextual understanding of mentioned competencies, I

explored possible correlation with the CoE's competency model. The 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> competencies certainly express values of multiculturalism, respecting human rights, democratic practices and cooperation skills. The 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> competencies suggest skill and courage of participation, freedom, attitudes of civic-mindedness, self-efficiency and tolerance of ambiguity. Most of these attitudes, values and skills are part of the competency model by the CoE. The educational policy and curriculum of Bangladesh does not clearly mention having a value based education system or objective to create democratic citizens. However, several terminal competencies in the primary level school curriculum indicate basic value education elements when compared to the competency model of the Council of Europe. The analytical framework's discussion of Biesta's argument on the importance of skill, knowledge and value in the educational process defends the claim that NCTB's primary school curriculum and objectives are promoting value education. According to the theoretical framework, the mentioned NCTB's terminal competencies convey values, skills, attitudes and knowledge related to respect, courage, participation, freedom and cooperation. After analyzing main and supplementary documents according to the analytical framework developed for this thesis, I attempted to develop a meaning of democracy that reflects value based education in Bangladesh. It was an outcome built on through agreeing and disagreeing with arguments from both Western and Asian understandings of moral, civic and social ideals.

After reviewing the national constitution of Bangladesh, NEP 2010, curriculum and other supplementary documents, I discovered frequent use of several words and terms which convey relevant meaning of democratic and citizenship ideals. Some of those words (e.g. moral, ethical, social) were used to express value of participation alongside respect, freedom, courage and responsibility. There are certainly differences in writing style and language between academic literature and legal policy documents. In addition to linguistic and form of writing differences, there are cultural, geographical and social diversities in Bangladesh contrasting with common Western realities. In both documents (the national constitution and NEP 2010), democratic values like freedom, participation, courage, freethinking and cooperation are mentioned several times in relation to education and creating future civil citizens. Considering localized contextual understanding and placement of those words and terms, I recognized that the government of Bangladesh politicized the education system in some way. A tendency of using words and terms related to universal values and ideals was common in some recently published policy documents. As the country has been trying to establish an internationally recognized value based education system, I presume developing

legal and policy documents with universally accepted words had more priority than stable chance of carrying out the policy aims and objectives.

### 5.1.2 Participants on democracy

The first two questions of the interview guide looked for the meaning of democracy from teachers' point of view. The analysis for the collected data on these two questions was based on the analytical discussion by Biesta and legal instructions provided by the national constitution of Bangladesh and NEP 2010 in the previous section.

The first question was, "Are you familiar with the constitution of Bangladesh and the education part in it?" The purpose of this question was to inquire about the participant's familiarity with the education section of the main legal document of Bangladesh, the constitution. I must acknowledge the fact that people do not usually read a country's constitution in detail. Hence, I used this question to start the interview process by making a reference to the constitutional instructions on democratic value based education. Responses from participant teachers to the first question were very minimal. Only four participants informed that they know about the national constitution's article- 17 that has instructions for proper education with value and morals. One participant's response was:

*"I have a bit of knowledge about it. But not so much to tell exactly what is written in the constitution." (PS-6)*

This response could indicate two different realities demonstrating either the participant really knows about article- 17 of the national constitution or the participant mentioned this statement to proceed easily to the next question. Since previously interviewed participants responded with similar attitudes, the statement of PS-6 was not fully unexpected during the interview session. Three participants responded to the question with fewer words like 'a bit' and 'no'. During the interview process, an additional question of "why no familiarity?" was asked to some of the participants who provided a response with only 'no'. The participants responded to the additional question with explanations and reasons according to their perspectives. However, the three participants who answered this additional question with an explanation requested not to include their reasoning in the thesis due to their insecurity.

The second question was, “National Education Policy 2010 has given an upgraded education strategy to all government schools in Bangladesh. Can you please tell me how familiar you are with that education policy?” By this question, I intended to investigate the participant’s familiarity with the current national educational policy from 2010. According to Biesta, democracy means ruling by the people. The relation between democratic values and education was established by two important terms which are ‘education *for* democracy’ and ‘education *through* democracy’. These two terms are interlinked and a precondition for the relationship between democracy and education. The unclear explanation of democracy in NEP 2010 allows for the possibility of several interpretations of democracy. Due to that, the purpose was to locate any kind of mentioning of NEP 2010 guidelines relating to values of freedom, participation and courage. In response to the second question, most of the participants expressed that they learned about new education strategies, skill based teaching and creative classroom setups through compulsory primary teacher’s training to introduce NEP 2010. Some teachers showed discomfort with the new education policy guidelines after responding to the question as off the record conversation. All of the teachers indicated their concerns about two changes in the new education policy. The policy instruction on improving quality of education and eliminating physical punishment were common among all responses for the second question. One teacher stated that the government and education policy aimed for value and quality education but in reality it is not taking place in the schooling process.

*“After NEP 2010, we have been receiving trainings for teachers. Government increased salary of all teachers and trying to develop education quality. But in reality this improvement is not happening.” (PS-1)*

This concern of educational quality with the newly emphasized moral, civil and ethical ideals is related to value based education from a Bangladeshi perspective. After reviewing the participant’s (PS-1) full interview transcript several times to understand the mentioned statement, I recognized a sense of anger towards the government and the NEP 2010. The NEP 2010 surely challenges primary teachers to expand their traditional knowledge and boundaries to ensure proper a learning process for students. It is understandable that a number of teachers do not feel comfortable following the NEP 2010 instructions due to their lack of interest, knowledge and unwillingness to learn new teaching techniques. In this context, the aims and objectives of NEP 2010 cannot take place effectively in their classrooms and schools. As mentioned earlier, due to difference in articulating and translating foreign (English) words and concepts to the Bengali language, understanding and

use of those concepts in local settings overlap on several occasions. In this study, teachers sometimes used the words ‘quality study’ in referring to value based study.

*“I know one of the main changes is that teachers are not allowed to use physical punishment to students. I support this step as before students were afraid to get beaten by teachers in school and did not want to go school every day. Now students come to school knowing that no one will punish them physically.” (PS-6)*

The statement from PS-6 indicated there was a change in participation after introducing the new educational policy; besides, it promotes aspects of freedom and courage for students without fear of physical punishment in school. This statement showed the participant’s confidence that increased student participation meant student courage and freedom. However, proper freedom and courage according to the theoretical framework requires more than increased school attendance. Though this study did not inquire about the opinions of school students, it would be fascinating to know students’ opinions on freedom and courage in the future. The interview responses to investigate teachers’ awareness of democratic ideals can be summarized as:

- the teachers seem to have minimal knowledge about democracy in education
- few teachers showed personal interest to know about the constitution’s section on education
- the majority of the teachers showed unclear understanding of democracy by mixing democratic values with nature of education.

By looking into the findings from the first two questions of the interview guide, one may observe that teachers did not show an interest in learning the foundation of education. I considered the NEP 2010 instructions and guidelines as the foundation of education in the context of Bangladeshi primary school teaching. According to the NEP 2010, all teachers in Bangladeshi public schools are required to understand and follow newly enforced education policy. Unclear responses from participants pointed toward their insufficient knowledge of educational policy guidelines and constitutional instructions for education. The value aspects related to freedom, courage and participation were present in the findings from the interview data without significant understanding from participants. This showed that teachers lack understanding on the ‘meaning of democracy’ and their distance with the term ‘democracy’. Though the constitution and the educational policy aim for future democratic citizens and universal education, in reality the participants of this study showed the challenges of

implementing such aims in their inability to provide a clear perspective of democracy through their responses.

## 5.2 Value of democracy

### 5.2.1 Freedom, respect and textbooks

The main findings related to the value of democracy for this study were gathered through interviews. Findings from the document analysis section about values associated with democracy were used as key indicators in analyzing the participant teachers' understandings of values. The teachers were asked about their understanding of democracy or rights related values. While answering the question, most of the teachers expressed their existing understanding of values. The most common values mentioned by teachers were cooperation, respect (to elders) and freedom. One mentioned the importance of understanding racial differences.

*“In this area, race is important. Understanding racial differences is one value. Students learn about knowledge and skills from textbooks. But understanding comes from experience. Students present their understanding as they experience. We (teachers) received trainings to explain and change (racial) perceptives. We use those trainings all time in practice.” (PS-07)*

In this statement, the participant (PS-7) included differences in religious faith, sects within religions and ethnicity while phrasing ‘racial differences’ which was explained after a follow up question. It is notable that the participant expressed the importance of experience in relation to understanding that is similar to Dewey’s conception of democracy related education. It is essential that teachers understand the importance of experience of students while teaching them moral values. The statement also emphasized the geographical position of the school, which happened to be in a rural setting. The participant (PS-7) expressed the importance of respecting, loving and being cooperative with others who have different religious beliefs by practicing in classrooms. PS-6 provided a different kind of information mentioning:

*“My understanding of values can be limited. But as government provided several trainings for primary school teachers, I was informed about several values that are meant to introduce democratic values to young students in long-term process. Those values are implemented in new curriculum and textbooks these days. Improving knowledge, skills of teachers and students are part of that process.” (PS-6)*

This particular response indicated to the curriculum for primary education 2011 produced by NCTB and the process of teachers' training. As mentioned in earlier sections, the curriculum informs about 29 terminal competencies (Appendix-A) of primary education which one is supposed to achieve by completing primary schooling (grade 1 to 5). These 29 competencies are strategically distributed in every course textbook and curriculum of grade 1 to grade 5 according to NCTB. Teachers were informed by NCTB that students will develop the necessary 29 abilities where values are included by following the provided course textbooks and curriculum in the classroom. The key information from PS-6 was the actual teachers' training to achieve skilled teachers. MoE (2010) acknowledges that earlier NEP 2010 teachers' training was not compatible with policy improvements:

*'The existing teachers' training system of our country is very traditional, insufficient, certificate based, loaded with theoretical knowledge, incomplete in practical learning, based on rote learning and conventional testing system.'* (MoE, 2010, p. 57)

That acknowledgement hinted that teachers who were trained in earlier NEP 2010 teachers' training modules possessed traditional teaching techniques. As a majority of the teacher participants in this study had several years of teaching experience in traditional techniques, their interview statements conveyed a need for modern teacher training. The statement showed a positive attitude towards knowledge, skills and practice of curriculum based competencies that include civil and democratic values. Related to question 3, only PS-3 denied answering by stating, 'I have nothing to say'. The reason behind that statement was not clarified by PS-3 during the interview session. However, PS-3 showed clear physical expression when indicating hesitation toward the question.

In summary of the section 'value of democracy', I detected that the participants showed a common tendency to share their personal ideas of values. The participants expressed unclear knowledge on democracy and rights based values. The participant teachers had a common pattern of mentioning traditional values while referring to education and democracy related values. That tendency of misunderstandings of values could be the result of extensive practice of contextually developed value understandings in a culturally hierarchical society.

### 5.2.2 Equal treatment and family teaching

To investigate sample teachers' understanding of democratic values, I asked the teachers about the significance of knowledge relating to students' religion, family condition

and economic background information to provide necessary teaching guidance. Including students' social background information was an attempt to link with Dewey's understanding of values. Considering Dewey's perception of the intellectual act of comparing and judging to value, I intended to collect intellectual judgments on students' situations from the participants. The intrinsic meaning of value concerning price and worth was not the main concern for this inquiry.

Responses from the teachers indicated they do have concern for students' background and family situations. Most of the informants expressed that the family situation influences values and behaviors of students. They pointed out struggles to practice values due to parents' discriminating attitudes toward students from poor families and different religions. The majority of the teachers think parents create barriers for students to develop cooperation, friendliness and cooperative living due to their social structure. A participant reflected that young students are respecting and allowing others to talk in class at this young age whenever they work in groups; this is a significant democratic value.

*“School dropout number is high, so we have to be very careful in school in treating students properly. Family background, financial situation, and social status affect students' upbringing. So in classroom, I always make sure that all (students) are treated same nevertheless they come from different families. Outside classroom, parents do not allow their children to talk or play with some classmates due to their religious difference, economic situation or family history. But in classroom all sit together, study together, play together. Parents do not like that and complain sometimes but I do it because it is needed.” (PS-6)*

The above statement clearly indicates the participant's struggle in practicing friendliness, respect and cooperation values with students due to social discrimination. It is a common reality in Bangladesh to encounter discrimination related to income condition, religion, family status and even gender in some places. Yet, every participant strongly pointed out their practices to treat all students the same way. All participants expressed an intention to develop cooperation, friendliness and respect among students. Those practices are part of moral, civic or democratic values as discussed in previous sections.

### **5.3 Practice of democracy**

This section prioritizes the actual practice of values related to moral, civic and democratic ideals by participant teachers. Four questions from the interview guide were used in investigating participants' actual performance of democratic values towards students. The



analytical foundation of this inquiry came from Patricia White's perspectives on practice of values and importance of student participation in the schooling process. According to the discussion in the theoretical framework, White thinks students develop courage when teachers practice moral, citizenship and democratic education processes. A concept was developed in the theoretical framework that interlinks participation, freedom and courage. In that concept, I reasoned that students can enjoy and practice freedom if courage and opportunity of participation exist. Likewise, students can achieve courage if they are given proper freedom and opportunity to participate. Also, enforcing courage and freedom are preconditions to proper student participation according to the concept. These three values are a precondition for democratic classrooms and complementary to each other in the context of public primary schools in Bangladesh. Through the inquiry for this section, I attempt to locate the relationship between these values from participants' responses.

### 5.3.1 Group work and sharing activities

Using the interview guide question 4, I purposely investigated the ways teachers practice encouraging students to express themselves. Most of the interview participants mentioned group work and personal sharing while responding to the question. Freedom of expression and freethinking are the two values related to democratic ideals that were noticeable from the interviews. PS-1 believes that students feel freedom to express themselves and show courage as result:

*“New policy makes students to make their own answers in exams these days. In addition, no physical punishment in school, so students are less afraid of teachers. Students are smarter than previous years. There is an attitude of freedom among most students which can be seen in their communication with teachers in classroom and outside. Students are more courageous.” (PS-1)*

Some participants expressed similar aspects about students' freedom to express and courage in asking questions in the classroom. Several participants mentioned that students are enjoying freedom to express their ideas by sharing, drawing, making poems, stories and posters.

*“Students have been enjoying their freedom to ask question in classroom more than before since the new education policy was introduced. Individual and group activities, presentations and sharing are common in classrooms. Now days, teachers' approach to students is not education focused but student focused. Teachers act as helping assistance in classrooms these days. It was different before with traditional teaching behavior.” (PS-4, group interview)*

Even if participants expressed the importance of allowing freedom and encouraging students, the contextual practices of freedom and courage play a significant role in the execution of such practices. A few teachers were concerned that the traditional teacher-student relationship norms would break down if teachers are friendly with students in class. One participant expressed personal unwillingness to change the traditional teacher-student relationship.

*“Since the new education policy, students have less fear of teachers. Students take advantage of the system as we cannot use traditional punishment anymore. It is important to have control which needs to be taught from childhood. Students engage in physical confrontation more than before as they know we cannot punish them like before. Students are learning to take advantage of the system. Students are absorbing the negative influence of modern media outside school.” (PS-6)*

This statement of the participant (PS-6) expresses dissatisfaction with the current education policy’s guidelines on friendly classroom settings. The traditional classroom setup in Bangladesh demanded strict respect to teachers without asking any questions, which is contradictory to freedom and safe classroom ideals. Prior to NEP 2010, it was commonly practiced by most teachers as a normal way of teaching. School administrators and teachers used physical punishment as a mechanism to discipline students prior to NEP 2010. The recent change in policy challenged teachers to modify their teaching strategies. The abovementioned statement is an example of dissatisfaction caused by that required challenge to teachers. Most of the participants justified their understanding of freedom as a response to follow up questions. A majority of the participants indicated that the concept of ‘freedom’ means allowing students to ask questions to teachers and letting students draw posters according to students’ insights. A similar understanding of freedom was found by Sultana (2014) in her master thesis. Compared to Dewey’s concept of democratic empowerment where value of freedom plays a vital role, I noticed conflicting understandings of freedom from the statement mentioned above. It is alarming for the educational system and for the students if school teachers develop an unenthusiastic attitude towards NEP 2010 teaching instructions. Teachers who hold complaints against the new way of teaching and are not open to changes in teaching attitudes might not be able to deliver all 29 terminal competencies through their teaching methods. Concerning this circumstance, proper value based trainings can be a useful way to develop motivation, skills and teaching techniques of teachers. Several participants mentioned that they allow students to do ‘group work’ as a process to develop freethinking capability among students. The participant (PS-7) expressed the importance of group work as a tool for developing values of cooperation, freedom and freethinking.

*“We let students express their ideas and views in posters. We teach drawing to students as they wish. Students have group work in class for poster making and drawing activities. Students also practice group work to clean classroom and school area, student council, first-aid response. We use multimedia to show teaching materials and collect response from students.” (PS-7)*

By evaluating the interview responses in this inquiry, it seems like the teachers have taken it for granted that group work ensures the developing of moral and civic values among students. It is possible to help students in building friendship using group work as a strategy, but it not quite possible to consider that this strategy produces proper constructive knowledge, skills and practice related to moral and democratic ideals. Through several interview responses, it was somewhat visible that teachers used tools like ‘group work’ and ‘class-captain’ to substitute their classroom responsibilities. The use of the abovementioned tools can be techniques to hide personal pedagogical lacking of skills and knowledge among teachers. It was hard to detect any information related to how critical thinking knowledge, courage and practice were developed through group work in the interviews.

### 5.3.2 Punishment free classrooms

I used the interview guide’s questions 5 and 6 to investigate the teaching methods used in maintaining an active and disciplined classroom by the participants. Two participants denied responding to the inquiry about maintaining the classroom. Other participants showed their hesitance in responding to this inquiry but provided data by choosing words carefully. Several participants stated that there is a process to select a student representative (class-captain) in the class which encourages young students to share responsibilities with teachers to maintain class discipline. As a class-captain, a student has the opportunity to develop cooperation and leadership skills, practice freedom and courage to make conversation with teachers. However, the strategy of appointing a class-captain does not guarantee that all students can develop values of freedom, courage and participation. If the process of choosing a class-captain is fairly executed among all students, then it is somehow possible for all students to experience the same opportunity of practicing freedom and courage. Several participants of this study stated that they arrange student activities and responsibilities (e.g. group work, having a class-captain) as a tool for maintaining peaceful classrooms. As mentioned before, I noticed a common attitude among the study participants who believe they are installing a sense of cooperation, courage to practice freedom and respect by arranging group work and providing responsibilities for students. The participant (PS-5) thinks teachers

need to keep an open mentality and a family atmosphere in the classroom, so students feel free and learn how to discipline themselves through group activities.

*“There is a student council available in school and a class-captain has to be selected from that student council. Class-captain assists teacher to maintain class discipline. Activities like “khude (little) doctor” group, scout club, class-captain selection processes help students to be more disciplined these days than before. Teachers have to keep open mind all time to create a family atmosphere in class. An attempt to keep students busy most time in class helps teachers to maintain discipline in classroom.” (PS-5)*

The concern which was common among most teachers was the abolishment of physical punishment in NEP 2010. The five participants who responded to this inquiry showed their dissatisfaction for the new decision of NEP 2010. Related to teachers’ dissatisfaction, PS-6 emphasized the participatory method and challenges to understand the new curriculum.

*“I understand that participatory method works well in classrooms but mandatory lectures on textbook curriculum are required. Not all subjects are easy to understand by reading textbooks. Sometimes teachers (including me) feel confused and lost while reading teaching manuals for curriculum subjects.” (PS-6)*

This statement of PS-6 indicates that primary school teachers are required to follow NCTB provided guidebooks to teach according to the curriculum. This statement hints at an underlying lack of freedom of teachers in classroom teaching practices. The teaching guidebooks demand modern techniques and knowledge from teachers. If teachers simply depend on guidebooks to provide knowledge, then the aspect of establishing individual understanding, skills and values becomes less favorable. During the whole interview process for all participants, I personally felt that teachers might have challenges in understanding the new instructions provided by NEP 2010. It was the only time when PS-6 mentioned teachers’ struggles in understanding curriculum. I noticed that the informants tended to misunderstand and merge different terms, duties and instructions from NEP as those seemed confusing to them. As a result, the teachers in this study interpreted and practiced their own version of teaching methods in the classroom. The actual teaching practice in the classroom remained heavily motivated by the traditional teaching method, as before NEP 2010.

## **5.4 Summary**

This chapter was dedicated to analyze the findings from document analysis and participant interviews. These analyzed findings were intended to provide information to

answer the two research questions of this study. The analytical framework (in chapter 3) provided necessary guidance to analyze the collected data according to the main two research questions. The first research question looked into the legal understanding and obligations of democratic education for teachers in Bangladesh. Selected legal documents provided the foundational response to this question and participant interview data showed teachers' existing knowledge on democratic values. After analyzing qualitative interview data with the help of the theoretical framework, the participants indicated a poor understanding of democratic ideals and instructions provided by the legal documents and Bangladeshi government.

The second research question was to investigate the actual practice of democratic values and teaching of democratic ideals to students at selected primary schools. Analyzed qualitative interview data on the basis of the theoretical framework indicated some kind of mixed reality from the participants. The participants showed less knowledge on democratic ideals and proper practice of freedom, participation and courage according to the theoretical arguments. However, most of the participants had an intention to improve their practices and contributions for future democratic students and classrooms. The interviewees also indicated that the current education policy is quite new in practice and teachers need more time to get used to the new teaching system. There are possibilities for improvements through time in practicing democratic values in the classroom properly according to the contextual interpretation of democratic values.

## 6. Discussion and conclusion

This chapter combines the findings from document analysis and interviews with previous studies on the topic. It contains a summary of the entire study process and analysis of findings. In this thesis study, I have investigated two research questions; i) What kind of democratic values are assigned to the public primary schools by the government? And ii) How are democratic values practiced at public primary schools according to education policy? The intention of this study was to build an awareness of the actual meaning and practice of democratic values in public primary schools in Bangladesh.

I must admit that the process to locate previous research with contextual similarity to build the literature review discussion was a challenge. I noticed an insufficiency of academic studies on democratic and civil values concerning the primary education system in Bangladesh and its neighboring countries. The existing limited research on Asian democratic and civil education provided a foundation for the literature review chapter. Some literature with Western perspectives on value based education were used to evaluate the contextual differences in meaning and practice of democratic values in Bangladesh. Acknowledging the cultural, religious and social differences between Bangladesh and Western countries, the outcome from the analytical framework was used in analyzing interview data concerning the content and contextual aspects. The values of participation, freedom and courage appeared from the analytical discussion with contextual significance in Bangladesh.

A document analysis method was used to investigate the first research question by using the constitution of Bangladesh, National Education Policy (NEP) 2010, and curriculum and guidelines for primary education. These documents preserve the basic idea of Bangladesh's ambition to uphold democratic governance in the future through value based education. However, these documents showed strong encouragement to develop religious ethics and morals. The document analysis process also indicated that the meaning of democratic values are not clearly explained which allowed schools and teachers to interpret the meaning of democratic values according to their knowledge. In theory, the NEP 2010 intended to provide essential values and competencies to every student throughout primary level schooling. NCTB's 29 terminal competencies for primary level education require not only curriculum based teaching but also proper ethics and value knowledge by teachers.

Seven semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore the second research question. The participants were teachers from public primary schools. The participants shared their personal opinions and knowledge on moral values and teaching practices in their classrooms during the interview sessions. The transcribed interview sessions provided noticeable characteristics and patterns which were used in the analysis process of this study. Based on the analytical framework's reasoning, a majority of participants indicated their weak knowledge of civil and democratic values which are universally recognized. A common pattern was located among most of the participants to incorporate values, virtues, quality of education, fundamental human rights and ethics. The awkwardness by participants in responding to value related inquiries demonstrated their lack of expertise with the NEP 2010 objectives. The participants exhibited a common knowledge of valued based education based on their previous experience of being a student, reading current news and media.

According to NEP 2010, all primary school teachers are required to participate in compulsory trainings by the government. However, several teachers had no special training as they were appointed before the new policy was introduced. It was noticeable through the interview process that teachers had minimal knowledge about the education section in the constitution of Bangladesh. Teachers were less knowledgeable about the full NEP 2010 guidelines, but all knew this policy abolished any kind of physical punishment in educational institutions. Every teacher expressed their dissatisfaction on the prohibition of physical punishment as they have difficulty maintaining classroom discipline without traditional physical punishment. Most of interviewed teachers had less or no knowledge of educational processes and changes that were introduced through NEP 2010.

The findings also indicate that participants intended to express their best teaching practices in line with NEP 2010, which can be explained differently from Western perspectives. An example can be the cleaning of the school building by students, which is considered a learning strategy for cooperation and responsibility from a local perspective. In contrast, some Western countries may not accept this kind of student activity due to their different understandings of child activities at school. Every primary school in Bangladesh follows NCTB's curriculum and guidelines (locally known as teacher's handbook). Due to that, common teaching strategies and techniques were visible among the participant teachers in this study. The number of students in a classroom is an important contextual factor in Bangladesh. As a result of the large population of the country, the number of primary school students in a classroom is higher than in Western countries. The average student-teacher

ratio of 47:1 that was found in this study was much higher than the NEP 2010 expectation of 30:1. I must acknowledge that classrooms with a larger number of students surely influence the teaching strategies and techniques. Normally, participant teachers expressed their dependence on the group work activities by students to teach most of the terminal competencies presented in the curriculum. Though students practiced participation values in group work, it was not confirmed that students had freedom to discuss the group work with teachers in advance. In addition, teaching techniques of singing, drawing, storytelling and cleaning activities were common among participants because of teachers' guidebook recommendations.

All teachers showed their concern about students' family situations (e.g. economic status, relationship of parents, religious beliefs, social status). Present day, people and societies in Bangladesh are still very traditional about the mentioned factors of family situation and these factors affect the younger generation more than the adult age group. These factors influence and contribute largely in development of values of young children, in home and in schools. According to the teachers' sharing, they are not able to overlook or escape some of family situation influences in school because of parents' interference in classroom activities.

One of the teachers shared some extra information which was not part of the interview guide and stands out from other interviews. This teacher questioned most public school teachers' educational background in relation to value practice. The concern was if a public school teacher received traditional teacher training education before NEP 2010, there is a great chance that practice of value education was not included in the training period. Therefore, it is almost impossible for that teacher to practice new value based education strategies in classrooms. This teacher thinks NEP 2010 changes on value based education will be in practice once all public school teachers get strategic trainings on value based education systems.

The 29 terminal competencies provided by NCTB (appendix-1) work as a baseline for all public primary schools in Bangladesh. All public primary school teachers in Bangladesh, including teachers participating in this thesis, are required to follow NCTB instructions and guidebooks to achieve these competencies throughout the entire primary school education period. There are many other requirements; for instance, the selected 29 terminal competencies are clearly stated in legal documents but in reality many are not included in



practice. Findings indicate dissatisfaction towards the changing education system, which was not discussed beforehand with the teachers' community properly. Participants claimed there was not a sufficient survey conducted to collect information and recommendations from school teachers for the new education policy. Higher level national and international bureaucracy delivered something new to grassroot level teachers which caused difficulty for the teachers' community in many parts of Bangladesh, as understood from expressions from a majority of teachers. During the personal sharing section at the end of interview guide, most teachers felt comfortable mentioning the negative directions of new education system after NEP 2010.

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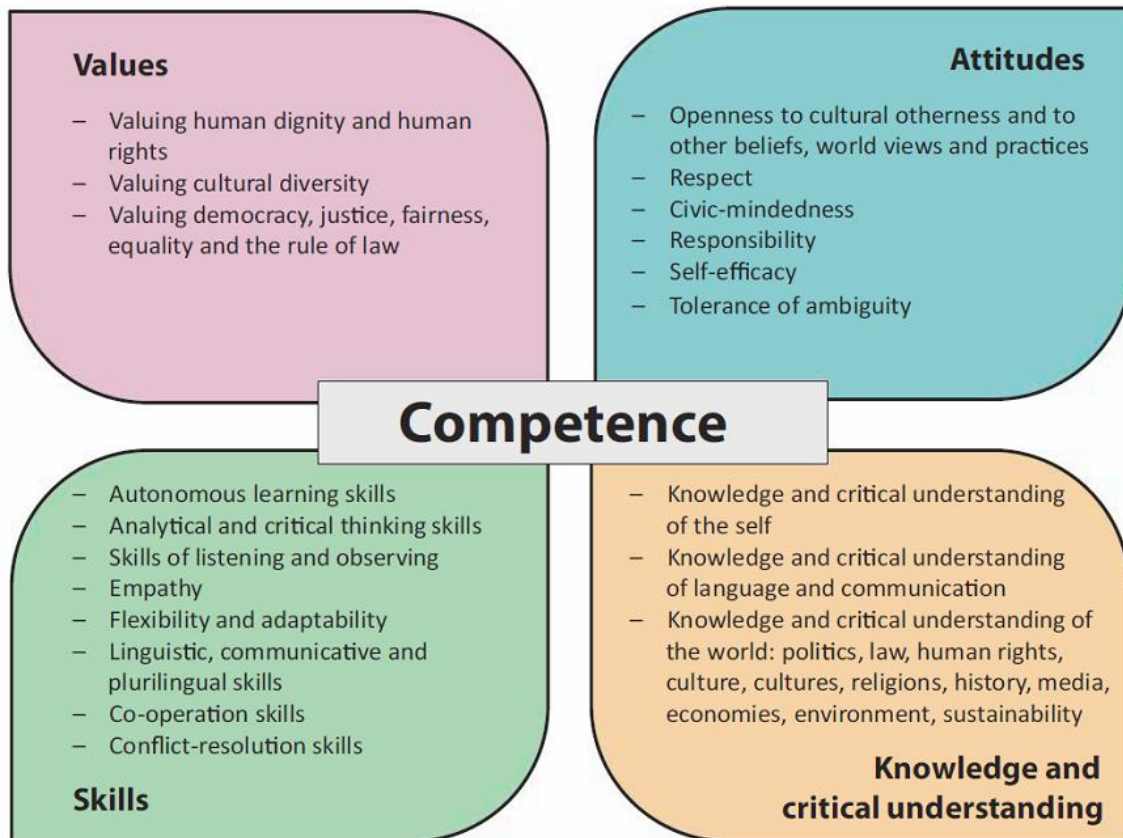
# Appendices

## Appendix-A: The 29 terminal competencies by NCTB

1. To repose / place trust and faith on Almighty Allah Ta'ala / Creator and be inspired to love all the created objects.
2. To acquire moral values and qualities of good conduct through practicing the ideals of own religious preachers and religious edicts / rules and regulation.
3. To show respect to all religious and their followers and be inspired to inculcate brotherhood.
4. To be willing to develop imagination, curiosity and creativity.
5. To express creativity, sense of beauty, fine sensibility and aesthetic value through song, fine arts and crafts and acquire capability of enjoying pleasure and beauty.
6. To gain knowledge of science through acquiring knowledge of natural laws.
7. To form habit of solving problems and earn science-mindedness through the use of science principle methods and logical thinking.
8. To acquire the basic skills of Bangla language and to use these skills efficiently in all walks of life.
9. To acquire and use the basic skills of English as a foreign language.
10. To know technology and information and communication technology and improve the quality of life through their application; to grow as skilled manpower by acquiring competence in these.
11. To acquire mathematical concepts and skill and be able to apply these in practical life.
12. To be able to solve mathematical problems through logical thinking.
13. To be interested in and respectful to human rights, sense of internationalism, universal brotherhood and world culture.
14. To feel encouraged in independent and free thinking, and practice democratic principles and procedure.
15. To distinguish between right and wrong through acquiring moral and social qualities and use these in practical life.
16. To be careful in the use and conservation of personal, family, social and state properties.
17. To acquire the mentality / mental set of peaceful co-existence with affection for all irrespective of male-female, nation, religion, color including children with special needs.

18. To earn an attitude of sense of sacrifice through according preference to others, to demonstrate tolerance and acquire human qualities.
19. To participate actively in social activities and become aware of one's own responsibilities and rights.
20. To know adversities and disasters and be skilled in and self confident to face these.
21. To do one's own work and accord due dignity to labour.
22. To know about and love nature, environment and universe; to be inspired to improve and conserve environment.
23. To play a positive role in tackling / facing the problems of changes in climate and weather.
24. To know about the impact of population on the basic needs of people and environment; also know the importance of human resources
25. To attain physical and mental development through games and sports; to acquire leadership qualities.
26. To build the habit of safe and healthful living.
27. To be inspired with patriotism and a sense of nationalism; to develop a sense of sacrifice; to actively participate in nation building.
28. To know national history, tradition and culture and to become respectful to these.
29. To know and love Bangladesh.

## Appendix-B: 20 Competences for democratic culture by Council of Europe



## Appendix-C: NSD approval



Heidi Biseth  
Postboks 235  
3603 KONGSBERG

Vår dato: 04.08.2017

Vår ref: 54588 / 3 / LAR

Deres dato:

Deres ref:

### Tilbakemelding på melding om behandling av personopplysninger

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 30.05.2017.

Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

54588	<i>Democratic values in government primary schools in Bangladesh</i>
Behandlingsansvarlig	<i>Høgskolen i Sørøst-Norge, ved institusjonens øverste leder</i>
Daglig ansvarlig	<i>Heidi Biseth</i>
Student	<i>Raxy Richard Gomes</i>

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet, og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger vil være regulert av § 7-27 i personopplysningsforskriften. Personvernombudet tilrår at prosjektet gjennomføres.

Personvernombudets tilråding forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, ombudets kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven og helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.

Det gjøres oppmerksom på at det skal gis ny melding dersom behandlingen endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for personvernombudets vurdering. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget [skjema](#). Det skal også gis melding etter tre år dersom prosjektet fortsatt pågår. Meldinger skal skje skriftlig til ombudet.

Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en [offentlig database](#).

Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 31.07.2018, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Dersom noe er uklart ta gjerne kontakt over telefon.

Vennlig hilsen

Katrine Utaaker Segadal

Dokumentet er elektronisk produsert og godkjent ved NSDs romber for elektronisk godkjenning.

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## Appendix-D: Interview guide

### Semi Structured interview guide for teachers

Research: Democratic values in government primary schools in Bangladesh

Date and time of interview:

Name of school: .....

Number of teachers: .....

Number of students: total ..... (Boys ..... Girls .....)

Teacher's personal information:

Name: .....

Sex: .....

Age range: Under 30 ..... 31-40 .....

41-50 ..... 51-older .....

Education level: .....

Teaching experience: .....

1. Are you familiar with the constitution of Bangladesh and the education part in it? আপনি কি বাংলাদেশের সংবিধান এবং এর শিক্ষার অধ্যায়/ অংশের সাথে পরিচিত?
2. National Education Policy 2010 has given an upgraded education strategy to all government schools in Bangladesh. Can you please tell me how familiar you are with that education policy? জাতীয় শিক্ষা নীতি ২০১০-এ বাংলাদেশের সকল সরকারি স্কুলসমূহে একটি আপগ্রেডেড/ উন্নত শিক্ষার কৌশল দিয়েছে। দয়া করে আপনি কি জানাবেন যে আপনি সেই শিক্ষার নীতি সঙ্গে কতটুকু পরিচিত?
3. Can you please tell me something about your understanding of values that are related to democracy or rights? গণতান্ত্রিক মূল্যবোধ বা অধিকার সম্পর্কে আপনার ধারণা কি দয়া করে বলতে পারেন?
4. Can you please share some activities in your class room where you think students can feel free to express themselves or can share their ideas with you and classmates? (e.g. freethinking capability) আপনি কি আপনার শ্রেণীকক্ষের কিছু কার্যক্রম সহভাগিতা করতে পারেন যেখানে আপনি মনে করেন যে শিক্ষার্থীরা নিজেদেরকে মুক্তভাবে প্রকাশ করতে পারে অথবা আপনার এবং সহপাঠীদের সাথে তাদের ধারণা ভাগ করে নিতে পারে? (যেমনঃ মুক্ত চিন্তা করার ক্ষমতা)
5. Can you tell me something about discipline in your classroom? How do you inform students how to keep discipline and what do you do to keep discipline in classroom? আপনি কি আপনার ক্লাসরুমের (শ্রেণীকক্ষের) শৃঙ্খলা সম্পর্কে কিছু বলতে পারেন? কিভাবে আপনি ছাত্রদের শৃঙ্খলা রাখার জন্য নির্দেশ দেন এবং আপনি শ্রেণীকক্ষের শৃঙ্খলা রাখার জন্য কি করেন?
6. What kind of teaching methods do you follow in your classroom? আপনি আপনার ক্লাসরুমে কোন ধরনের শিক্ষণ পদ্ধতি অনুসরণ করেন?
7. How do you assess or grade students of your class? Do you provide any feedback, counseling to students or their parents? কীভাবে আপনি আপনার ক্লাসের শিক্ষার্থীদের মূল্যায়ন করেন বা গ্রেড দেন? আপনি কি কোন প্রতিক্রিয়া, পরামর্শ প্রদান করেন ছাত্র বা তাদের পিতামাতার জন্য?
8. Do you have any concern about students' religion, family condition and economy, or background while teaching them? ক্লাসরুমে (শ্রেণীকক্ষে) শেখানোর সময় শিক্ষার্থীদের ধর্ম, পারিবারিক অবস্থা, অর্থনীতি, এবং পটভূমি বিষয়ে আপনার কি কোন উদ্বেগ বা চিন্তা আছে?
9. What do you think about current education system and practices are lacking to offer more values among students? বর্তমান শিক্ষা ব্যবস্থার বিষয়ে আপনি কি মনে করেন এবং ছাত্রছাত্রীদের মধ্যে কি কি মূল্যবোধের অভাব রয়েছে?
10. Would you like to share anything more that you feel you have not discussed yet? আপনি কি মনে করেন যে আপনি এখনো কিছু বিষয় আলোচনা করেন নি এবং আরও কিছু সহভাগিতা করতে চান?