



National Academy for Educational Management (NAEM)

**Investigating the scope of fostering democratic norms
through student engagement in the Bangladeshi secondary
schools**

NAEM Research 2020-21

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The research team

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Abstract

This research investigates the scope of fostering democratic skills using students centred classroom activities to the secondary school students in Bangladesh. Empirical research (e.g., Jacobs and Power, 2016; Dadvand 2015; Sriprakash, 2010) supports the fact that student engaging classroom activities has the potentiality to help students equipped with some required democratic skills. For example, in this study students' *ability to listen to other, argue logically, think critically, take informed decisions*, or students' *eagerness to understand and accept different perspectives* have been considered as some democratic skills necessary for the Bangladeshi students. Data of this research was collected using semi-structured interviews and focus group discussion (FGD). Eight secondary school teachers, both from rural and urban schools, took part in the interviews. Four FGD sessions with the students of class 8 and 9 were recorded. Interviews and FGD were conducted in Bangla; were audio recorded, and later transcribed for thematic data analysis. Findings of the study demonstrate that teachers and students' hold positive mind set up towards the requirements of democratic skills. Students appear to be keen to acquire those democratic skills, and teachers though eager to help students but lack confidence about the actual practices. Findings also are suggestive of some external and internal factors as impediments for a seamless facilitation of democratic skills to the students. While outside school environment emerges as major external factor; large class size, hectic workload, relatively limited time slots for a large class size appear as some internal factors. Pedagogical implication here adheres some training provisions for the teachers which will enable them to come up with specific teaching strategies to help students fostering democratic skills.

**National Academy for Educational Management (NAEM)
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Project Summary

- 1. Research Project Title:** Investigating the scope of fostering democratic norms through student engagement in the Bangladeshi secondary schools
- 2. Group No.:** 14, NAEM Research 2020-2021
- 3. Thematic Area:** Innovation in curriculum
- 4. Implementing Institute:** Institute of Education and Research (IER), University of Rajshahi & NAEM
- 5. Advisor:** Dr. Golam Kabir, Professor, Department of Botany, University of Rajshahi
- 6. Team Leader:** Rubaiyat Jahan, Professor, Institute of Education and Research, University of Rajshahi
- 7. Team Members:** Subarna Sarker, Assistant Professor, Institute of Education and Research, University of Khulna; and Md. Ayet Ali, Assistant Director, Statistics (Res. and Doc.), National Academy for Educational Management (NAEM), Ministry of Education, Dhaka
- 8. Objectives of the Research Project:**
 - a) explore teachers' and learners' role in relation to student engaging classroom practices at the secondary schools
 - b) examine the scope of simulating the development of competences associated with democratisation
 - c) underline the embedded cultural, social and political context that support or impede democratisation efforts at classrooms in Bangladesh
- 9. Project period:** 01 Year from July 2020 to June 2021
- 10. Budget:**
 - a) Total Approved Budget (Taka): 3,99,000.00
 - b) Total Expenditure: 3, 99,000.00 (Taka)
 - c) Balance Amount: Nil

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

To the school goers' first societal experience comes in the schools (Bisland, O'Connor, and Malow-Iroff, 2009), this sparks a key point that nature of classroom culture impacts the learners' mind shaping as far as their perceptions and practices of civic sense and democratic values are concerned. As literature suggests, the quality of democracy is intertwined with the quality of education (Biesta, 2007), and education has the potentiality to enable a 'culture of democracy' (Acemoglu et al., 2005). Realizing the connections between education and democracy, for the last two decades, educators and researchers portray an array of visions on the features of democratic education within different nation states. Focus of interests of the mentioned educators centre on the contribution of school in developing democratic cultures in a given society. While some educators think of promoting democratic values and attitude through the course contents, others put forward the ideas of teaching the students to participate actively and constructively in the democratic processes (Roth, 2003). Consequently, as a means of option, student-centred pedagogy was introduced in diverse contexts globally because of its promises of making learning more democratic (Sriprakash, 2010) and potentials to promote democratic citizenship among children and young people (Anderson-Levitt, 2003).

Likewise, since mid-90s policy makers of Bangladesh brought changes in the curriculum with a view to better teaching-learning and embraced student centred pedagogy, which in a sense opens up opportunity here to explore the scope of inserting the democratic norms and values to the learners through student centred pedagogy. For an emerging democracy like Bangladesh it is certain that learners need to know and practice of democratic culture; and classroom should be a key hub to acquire those skills. As discussed in Nath and Chowdhury (2009) moral, civic and democratic value laden competencies are required for a democratic society in Bangladesh and those should be prioritise since the primary schooling. As a matter of the fact, teachers can play a pivotal role in ensuring democratic education (in terms of facilitating democratic cultures) in schools (Thornberg and Elvstrand, 2012; Englund, 2006; Dworkin et al., 2003). In clarifying the significant role a teacher possibly can play for democratic education Howes, Davies and Fox (2009, p,22) rightly stated that "teachers who represent and constitute the school organization and embody educational values, whose understanding of pupils determines so many possibilities for pupils to engage or disengage, and whose practice shapes the context for learning". In addition to this, with a view to facilitating democratic practices teachers can create collaborative learning environment, adopt dialogic approach

to pedagogy, develop learners' critical thinking abilities, and manage power sharing in classroom decision making process (Dadvand, 2015). Interestingly, these aforesaid features of student engagement in classroom practices are quite common under the level of student centred pedagogy in Bangladeshi secondary education, and hence opens up the opportunity to investigate those practices in relation to fostering democratic norms to the learners.

It is expected that teachers here in Bangladesh need a more proactive role to confer democratic culture in the learners. Teacher's need to mentor the learners on relevant features of democratic practices during classroom activities. In classroom activities under the rule of student centred pedagogy it is possible that along with the intended teaching-learning content teachers will guide learners acquire knowledge relevant to democratic participation (Reich, 2007). Under this reality, this proposed research will examine prevalent student engaging classroom activities in relation to exploring the scope of facilitating democratic norms and values to the learners at the secondary educational contexts of Bangladesh. It should be mentioned beforehand that this research would be qualitative in nature, and classroom activities of teaching-learning Bangladesh and Global studies would be focus of interests.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Innovations in the Bangladeshi school curriculum have in reality fetched varied challenges for the teachers. Structured classroom pedagogy that the existing curriculum endorsed tends to delimit the scope of the practicing teacher to work as a 'change agent'. With a view to facilitating vibrant classroom atmosphere student centred pedagogy that constitutes teaching-learning strategies such as group/pair work, collaborative learning, debate, peer checking, etc have been incorporated in the curriculum. Teachers also seem interested in using these teaching strategies, though the opportunity to maximise the learning outcomes in form of fostering democratic norms appear to be undermined. In a recently concluded study Gomes (2020) found that school teachers here in Bangladesh seemed to have a very minimal understanding of democratic, moral civic and citizenship ideals. A critical look though reveals the fact that practicing school teachers of Bangladesh are unaware about the philosophical underpinnings of such student engaging activities, they rather espouse a 'technicist' view (as conceptualised by Halliday, 1998) of teachers' role relying heavily on the curriculum demand. Being the teacher educator (the researchers of this project) our personal reflection is that teachers here in Bangladesh hold student engaging classroom activities as only to tap learners' content oriented critical insights undermining the good social impacts embedded in those activities. Thus, applications of a narrow variety of those activities (such as group/pair work) are evident in the Bangladeshi context.

As the studies (Altinyelken, 2015; Sriprakash, 2010) suggest, classroom activities with such strategies (e.g. group/pair work) may potentially open up opportunities for the learners to practice various facets of democracy (e.g. eagerness to understanding and accepting different perspectives) in the classroom along with what they intend to learn.

In addition to this, although in the Bangladeshi National Education Policy (2010) it is clearly stated that one of the aims of education is “to show tolerance for different ideologies for the development of a democratic culture and to help develop a life-oriented, realistic and positive outlook” (clause 9), yet at the implementation level, for example, in the curriculum or in teachers’ manual no such indication was illustrated. Hence, teachers seem unsure and reluctant about the ways to help the learners with teaching democratic norms; whereas it is apparent that learners need to learn democratic practices before one expects from them. Therefore, it is imperative that empirical research is required to examine the scope of facilitating democratic practice among the learners through the existing student engagement in classroom practices.

1.3 Rationale of the study

In the present context of globalisation, it is a challenging and difficult task in parts of the Bangladeshi curriculum to decide what the most worthwhile knowledge for citizenship is. We need to think about the new meanings of citizenship and provide Bangladeshi students with the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enable them to assume their role as citizens. Democracy can only become visible or viable in Bangladesh if its citizens understand and practice it. This can be done by taking informed decisions in the curriculum. Exclusivity of this project lies with its attempt to highlight the deliberate mode of teaching and facilitating democratic culture to the Bangladeshi students.

Empirical research across the states (e.g. China, Turkey, India etc) has been conducted to date to understand the relationship between student centred pedagogy and democratization process (Jacobs and Power, 2016; Kennedy, Kuang, and Chow, 2013; Sriprakash 2010). Compared to global literature, a few research (Gomes, 2020; Sultana, 2014) was conducted in Bangladesh to understand teaching practice of democratic values and skills to the school students. For example, Gomes (2020) tried to identify understanding, existence and practice of democracy related values at primary schools in Bangladesh. However, no research in Bangladesh is done so far to examine the potentiality of student centred classroom practices in relation to facilitating the teaching of democratic practices, though globally an array of research has been accomplished. As it appears, this research project eventually will fill one significant research gap.

1.4 Objectives of the study

Primary objective of this research project is to investigate the existing students engaging classroom activities devised for Bangladesh and Global Studies classes with a view to exploring the scope of developing democratic norms in the secondary level students of Bangladesh, and in doing so this study will –

- a) explore teachers' and learners' role in relation to student engaging classroom practices at the secondary schools
- b) examine the scope of simulating the development of competences associated with democratisation
- c) underline the embedded cultural, social and political context that support or impede democratisation efforts at classrooms in Bangladesh

1.5 Scope of the study

This study can be of great use to the education policy makers as well as to the teacher educators in Bangladesh. As this study sets out to investigate the scope of fostering democratic norms and values within the existing student centred classroom practices, hence the education policy makers here in Bangladesh can introduce some ideas (if find relevant) like that in future curriculum innovation.

In addition to this, teacher educators can use the findings of this research in developing teacher education programme modules if they are convinced that learners deserve training of democratic practices, and for this teachers require training too.

Lastly, for the data collection purposes students and teachers will get exposure to issues of democratic norms and values, and the scope of practices those democratic norms within the existing classroom practices; therefore teachers and students will be benefited from this research.

1.6 Limitation of the study

The key associated limitation of this research project is that the findings should not be generalised for overall Bangladesh, as the data sample is relatively small compared to the whole representations of secondary classes.

Second limitation is related to practicality issue. Due to COVID situation, though required, no data from classroom observation was retrieved.

Chapter Two: Review of Literature

Relevant literature required for this project will essentially cover (i) defining characteristics of student centeredness; (ii) relationship between student engagement in classroom practices and democratic practice; and (iii) Prevalent classroom situation at the secondary social sciences classes in Bangladesh.

2.1 Defining characteristics of student centeredness

Firmly based in constructivist learning theory developed by cognitive psychologists such as Piaget and Bruner as well as socio-cultural learning theorist Vygotsky and pragmatist Dewey, learner-centeredness is an example of how students can construct their own knowledge rather than receive it in a passive way. Rather than listening to teachers' lecture, students need to be actively doing the work. Student-centred teaching is teaching where the focus is on the learners' interaction with content which is meaningful and easily accessible as well as with other students, and where the teacher takes a supporting role as facilitator, due to the importance placed on the learning process that gives the students the chance of independence.

Schweisfurth (2013) elaborates on her learner-centred definition by explaining three justificatory narratives- *cognitive*, *emancipation*, and *preparation*. The cognitive narrative is in line with the thinking of Vygotsky (1978) and Bruner (1966); intrinsic motivation is stimulated in the learner so that they are engaged with the cognitive learning process. Furthermore, the emancipation narrative emphasises learner autonomy as being important reiterating Dewey (1916) and Freire's (1972) ideals of personal freedoms for the learner in the educational context. Allowing students more freedom to satisfy their curiosity is in conflict with teacher centeredness. Moreover, the preparative narrative develops soft skills and a culture of inquiry which are the foundation of a successful knowledge economy. This last narrative, preparation is particularly relevant for Bangladesh as education is seen by many as an integral part of economic growth and what is perceived as the importance of education in the first place.

Brindley & Bagshaw (1984) explain how teachers who have a student engaging approach to teaching regard their practice. As a matter of the fact, student learning is arranging and categorising new experiences, with the teachers as a resource who can show that learning takes place everywhere, not just in the classroom. As a matter of fact, teacher may play a crucial role in facilitating democratic practices within the existing classroom practices.

2.2 Relationship between student engagement in classroom practices and democratic practice

Pedagogy ultimately relates to power relations within classrooms and beyond, and to the differential unequal positioning of teachers and students. In many countries, relationships within classrooms tend to be hierarchical, teachers enjoying an unquestionable authority position. Student-centred pedagogy or at the least student engaging classroom practice questions the substantive forms of such teacher authority, and strives to change these power relations so that students and teachers relate to one another on a more equal footing. Learning is defined as a co-construction, a joint endeavour between students and teachers, not a one-way transmission from teachers to their students. That is why student-centred pedagogy has often been associated with the promise of child-friendly, participatory and democratic learning environments. It has an in-built potential to promote democratisation of classrooms. Hence, it is not difficult to see the resonance of democracy with student-centred pedagogy among educationists and policy-makers (e.g., Sriprakash, 2010; Schweisfurth, 2013). According to Dewey (1966), who is one of the most influential intellectuals who advocated democratic education and provided much theoretical inspiration to the development of progressive pedagogies, democratic learning environments can be created and stimulated by facilitating participation of all students and organising group activities to allow students to engage with each other towards a common purpose.

Research that focuses on the correspondence between classroom activities and democratic practices seems to state that teacher-students' mind set up and academic environment create an advantageous situation for better learning. For example, a study (De Baessa, Chesterfield, and Ramos 2002) investigated the relationship between pedagogy and democratisation in school. The authors examined the extent to which an active learning environment through student engaging activities helps to promote the democratic behaviour of rural children from different cultural back grounds. This study points to a positive relationship, suggesting that active learning helps children to take part in their own learning and contributes to democratic behaviour through participatory activities. They conclude that classroom environment can have a significant influence on democratic behaviour (e.g. helping behaviour, turn taking, directing others, expressing opinions), and participation in student-directed small groups is particularly seen as key to this process. However, another research (Sriprakash, 2010) of the similar in nature comes up with a different finding, and clarifies that there remains an ambiguous relationship between student-centred pedagogy and democratization process.

Jacobs and Power (2016) identifies seven key elements (*learner autonomy, teacher as co-worker, focus on meaning, alternative assessment, learning climate and think skill, student-student interaction, and motivation*) of student centred learning and relates those with some significant phenomena (e.g., *decision making, knowledge generation, understanding, evaluation, embracing diversity, cooperation and motivation*) of democratic societies. For instance, *decision making process* of a society has been associated with learner autonomy of student centered pedagogy of classroom practices. While learner autonomy in classroom pedagogy refers to student can take part in decision making process or can solve a problem by themselves; adversely the absence of it certainly exposes a top down teacher centered practices. Likewise, *embracing diversity* in student centered practices has been linked to rich social climate and thinking ability. While social climate refers to respect for diversity in its any form and ability grow a mentality for the respect of diversity; absence of it reveals a disruptive attitude towards difference of opinion. As a matter of fact, it goes without the question that student centered classroom practices can help fostering democratic skills to the learners.

2.3 Teachers' beliefs and its relevance to classroom teaching practices

To explore the scope of teaching of democratic norms, values, and skills to learners it would be worthy to record teachers' beliefs on democratic culture as well as their beliefs on teaching those skills. Teachers' belief system comes under the concept of teachers' cognition and teachers' cognition refers to teachers' mental states, which encompasses teachers' self-reflection, beliefs and knowledge about teaching, students and content of teaching; and awareness of problem solving strategies in classroom teaching (Kagan, 1990). Empirical literature (Sampermans, Reichert, and Claes, 2021; Sugesti, et al., 2020; Knowles, 2018; Sanchez and Borg, 2014; Bisland, O'Connor, and Malow-Iroff, 2009; Phipps and Borg, 2009; Borg, 2006) examined the correspondence between teachers' beliefs and their actual or reported teaching practices, and findings suggested mixed results depending on teaching contexts, taught subjects, and disciplines. For example, Knowles (2018) found a positive co-relation between teachers' beliefs about citizenship education with their actual teaching strategies. Whereas, on the other hand, Bisland, O'Connor, and Malow-Iroff (2009) concluded that the teachers' beliefs were not related, disconnected, inconsistent, or misaligned with teaching practices in social studies. Those findings were similar to Phipps and Borg (2009) who observed both consistency and inconsistency in the teachers' beliefs on English grammar teaching with their actual teaching. Contrary to this, Sugesti, et al. (2020) in a study at the Indonesian context claimed that there was a relationship between teachers' experience with their cognitions about their English language learner. That is, teachers' experience affects teachers' beliefs, and these beliefs eventually affect what teachers' do in the classrooms. Apart from those perspectives, Phipps and Borg (2009) also defined core and periphery

belief systems of the teachers and argued that while core beliefs are almost static in their existence, periphery beliefs can change due to emerging educational factors.

2.4 Prevalent classroom situation at the secondary social sciences classes in Bangladesh

According to Schiro (2012, p.151), this philosophy believes that social science education can “provide the means of reconstructing society” and can “educate ‘the masses of humanity’ to critically analyse themselves in relation to their society, understand the ills of their society, develop a vision of a better work based on a conception of social justice and actualise that vision”. Secondary education in Bangladesh consists of three major streams which are general, madrasa, and vocational. General streams holds the largest portions of institutes (approximately 67%). As articulated in the secondary curriculum (2012), teaching-learning activities of secondary level would be participatory, and the new curriculum mentioned some methods and techniques like question and answer, group based cooperative method and demonstration methods. However, according to Education Watch report (2019) classroom practices in social science classes are still traditional. Teaching is lecture based in most of the time and emphasize is on memorization in learning. The current teaching-learning practices demonstrate that though the evidence of student centred pedagogy is missing to a larger extent in Bangladesh but some glimpses of student engaging activities surely exist.

For this study, evidence of student engagement in classroom practices will help to maximise the scope to foster and develop democratic norms and values in the students.

2.5 Concluding remarks

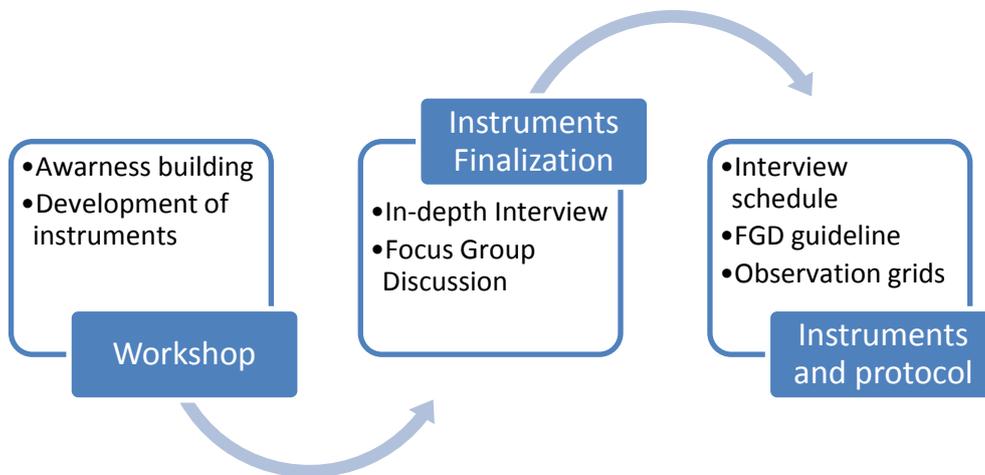
From the discussed literature we tried to put light on the fact that student centred pedagogy holds a democratic philosophy and student centred classroom activities can be used to facilitate democratic norms, values, and skills to the students. In addition to this, literature on teachers’ beliefs focuses on the congruence between what the teachers perceive about teaching and what they actualise in real practices. Understanding of those empirical research papers will help us to pin down the findings of this study from the theoretical point of views.

Chapter Three: The methodology of the study

This chapter illustrates the methodology of the said research in detail. It explains the nature, sampling techniques, data collection and analysis procedure of the research.

3.1 Nature of the study

Concerning the specific objectives, this study was qualitative in nature. Three instruments (semi-structured interview, FGD, classroom observation) were finalized on the basis of a daylong workshop with 20 participants. Given below is the research design:



Workshop for this project will serve two key purposes. *Firstly*, participants will be made aware about the potentiality of student engagement in accordance with facilitating democratic norms to the students. And *secondly*, the discussion of the workshop will help the researchers to finalize interview and FGD schedule for the teachers and students. 8 participants were interviewed later. This research project followed simple sequence of (i) (iv) semi-structured interview with the secondary school teachers. (ii) classroom observation, and (iii) FGD with the secondary school students. However, due to pandemic situation no classroom observation was possible to do.

3.2 Sources of data and methods of data collection

Data were collected from the primary sources, directly from secondary school students and teachers. School documents related to students' classroom practices were scrutinised. Semi-structured interview and FGD were the methods that were used for data collection.

3.3. 1. Focus group discussion with students

A total of 4 FGDs were conducted with students from 4 schools. The participants in each FGD session were ranged from 5 to 7 persons, and were students of class 8 and 9. 3 group of FGD were from urban schools and 1 group was from rural secondary school. The researchers arranged the sessions in a venue convenient to the participants. Two researchers conducted each FGD session. The FGD sessions were guided by a written guideline covering indicators of the study. At the same time, the researchers allowed variation of response on contextual aspects regarding their statement. All the sessions were audio recorded and were transcribed later for the purpose of analysis. Some tentative issues that were discussed in FGD are given in *annex 1*.

To maintain the ethical issues of the participants, oral consent was taken from the parents as well as the students. No actual names and gender of the participants were disclosed in this study. In this research participant students will be identified as S1, S2, so on and so forth.

3.3.2. In-depth interview with teachers

For the interview, 8 secondary school (both from urban and rural context) teachers were selected purposively in order to understand the classroom practices as well as to get an in-detail explanation of the responses of the students. Participant teachers have the teaching experience of a minimum period of 5 years; and they primarily teach either English or Bangladesh and global studies. Discussions in the interviews primarily centred round the issues related to their understanding of democratic practice, and use of student centric classroom activities to facilitate democratic values to the students.

The participant-specific open-ended (semi-structured) questionnaire was followed during interview sessions. The participants were asked through general opinions to their viewpoint of a particular theme with reasoning. Tentative issues for the interview are given in *annex 2*. All the interviews were conducted in Bangla, then transcribed into English for the purpose of data analysis. To maintain the ethical issues of the participants, oral consent was taken from the participant teachers. No actual

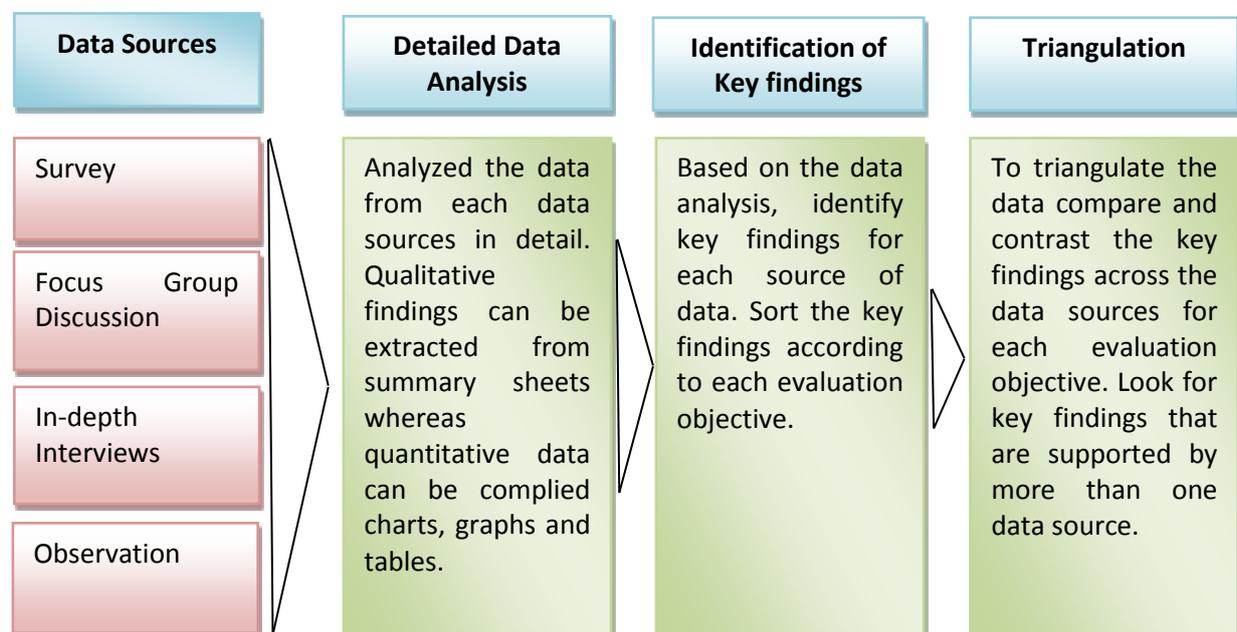
names and gender of the participants were disclosed in this study. In this research participant teachers will be identified as T1, T2, so on and so forth. Demographic details of the teachers are given below:

Teachers name	Subject taught	Context
T1	English	Urban
T2	English	Urban
T3	Bangladesh and Global studies	Urban
T4	Bangladesh and Global studies	Rural
T5	Bangladesh and Global studies	Rural
T6	English	Rural
T7	English	Rural
T8	Bangladesh and Global studies	Urban

3.4 Data triangulation

Data were triangulated in two ways: by methods and by respondents. As there are four ways of data collection, therefore, a number of variables were triangulated through data sources as well as from the sample. The details data triangulation process is given in the below figure 1.

Figure 1: The triangulation process to ensure the quality of data



3.5 Ethical considerations

In considering the human as the subject, the issues related to the research ethics is very important (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The present study followed the ethics guideline prescribed by the British Educational Research Association (BERA) in terms of administering the data collection process. Besides, from the beginning to end, this study also considered the ethics checklists given by the (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

However, To ensure the proper ethical procedures, a total of four measures were taken. Firstly, the study objectives explained clearly to the participants so that they can give their consent after realizing the study intention properly. Secondly, the discussions related to the inducements, benefits or compensations to be offered to the participants were done before collecting data. Thirdly, the analysis of risks was also analyzed. According to the nature of the current study, there is nothing which might be unsafe to the participants; however, the potential risk was analyzed in each of the data collection procedure.

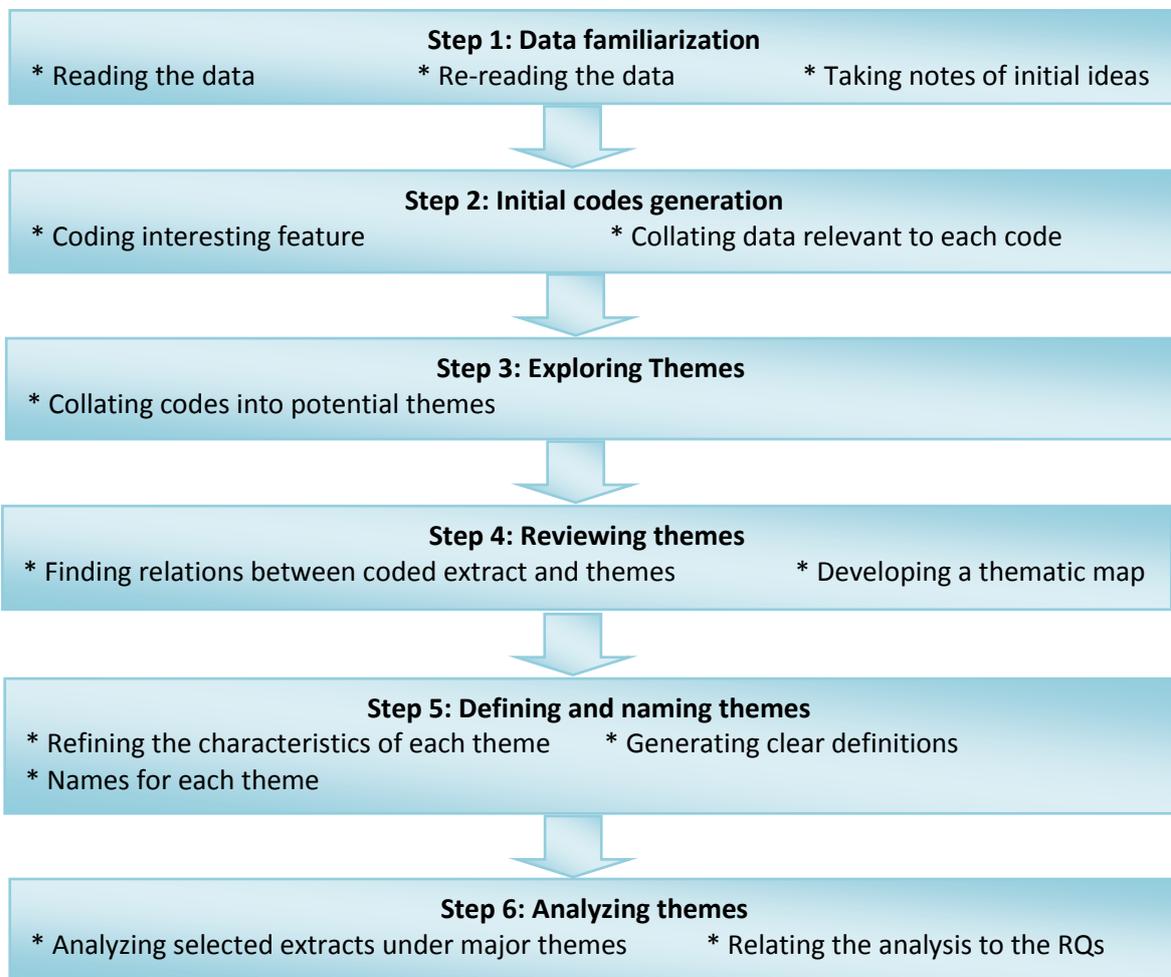
Moreover, finally, the collective effort of maintaining the issues of Informed consent, confidentiality, and debriefing activities was ensured. In ensuring these four measures, no one was forced to provide data as well as data were collected only after getting their positive consent. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), these issues are covered in most Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) and the research team is inevitable to follow these procedures.

3.6 Method of data analysis and presentation

As discussed above, qualitative data were collected from the teachers and students. To understand the data as well as to triangulate these, the data-driven thematic analysis were incorporated (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The systematic procedure of reading data with meaning identification of words, sentences and paragraphs can code the purpose of developing themes as well as concepts which can help to summarise the data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The raw data were categorised based on the concept of the existing theories and then developed the new theme considering the existing situation and then constructed the thematic map (Cohen, Mannion and Morrison, 2011). The major themes, then, were incorporated into sub-themes and made these aligned with the specific objectives of the study. As the thematic analysis can identify the new theme and patterns of similar options from the

participant's responses; therefore, the below data-driven thematic approach were followed in this study.

Figure 2: Data-driven thematic analysis cycle (Adapted from Braun and Clarke, 2006)



For presentation and dissemination purpose, the final report of the study followed the official guideline of the NAEM. As a glimpse is already given in the research circular published in the NAEM website, the structure of the report is started by explaining the problem statements, rationale, scope and limitation as well as with the study objectives. Literature review and methodology are given next after the introduction chapter. The findings of the study explore the entire variable, and the discussion chapter is going to provide necessary arguments based on evidence and relevant supported literature.

3.7 Data collection framework

The conceptual understanding and framework of the study are presented here in two ways. Firstly, the study team is going to explain the total study procedure by providing a matrix by the specific objectives. Secondly, the overall study structure is discussed considering the existing theories, methodology and expected findings.

In the below table 1, the sample taken for this study, methods of data collection including tools and instruments are given.

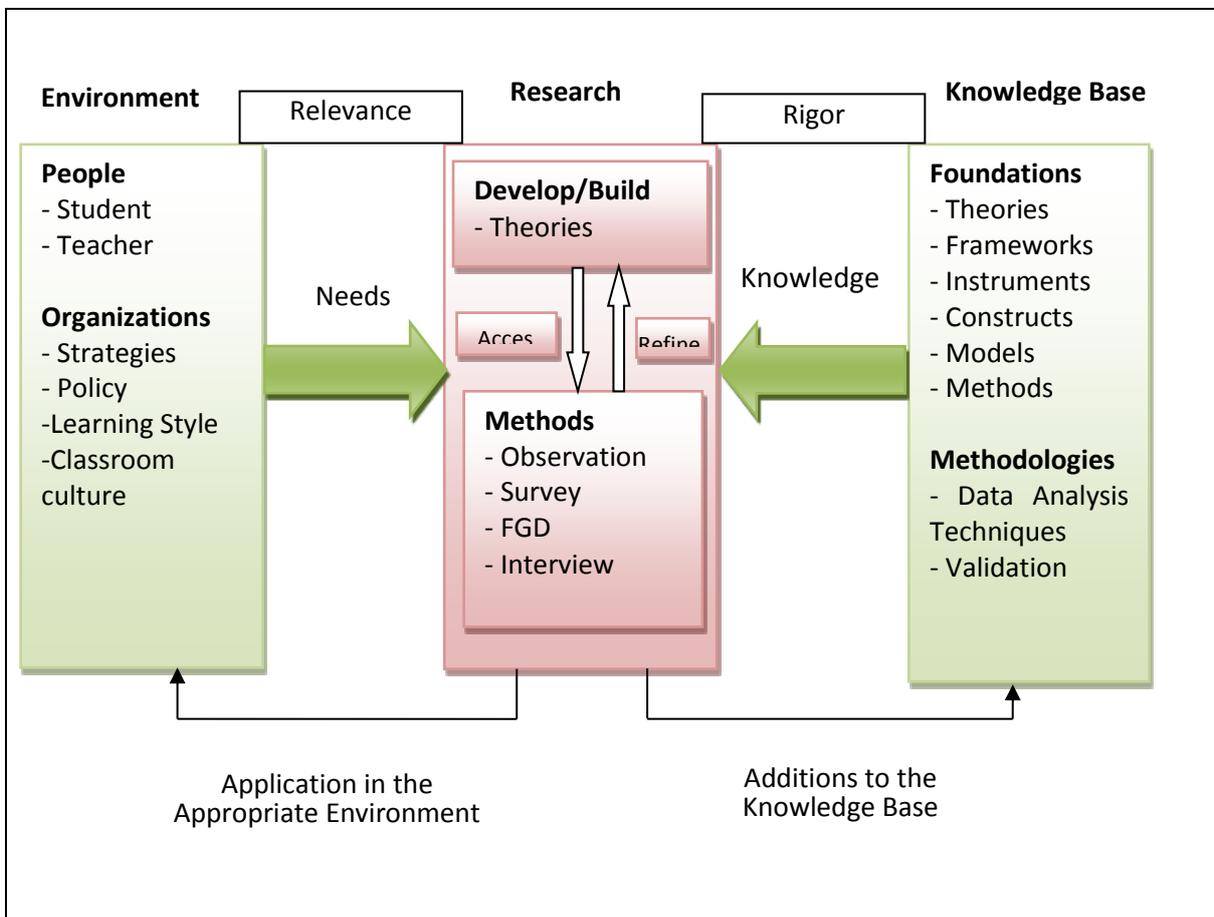
Table 1: Sample, method and techniques for data collection by the specific objectives

Specific objectives	Major issues for investigation	Data collection method	Sample	Unit of the analysis group	Tools
Specific objective 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of an environment for learning that accommodates different student engaging teaching activities -Activities involving the student, instructor, content interactions - Determination of course content in terms of the balance of power between teacher and students 	Classroom observation	2 schools x 6 classrooms = total 12	Classroom	Observation checklist/guideline
Specific objective 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relationship between teaching learning activities and development of democratic competences 				
		Interview	8 teachers from 2 types of secondary schools	Teacher	Semi-structured interview guideline
Specific objective 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Key features of student-centred classroom activities - Teachers' and learners' role in relation to teaching democratic norms through student- 	FGD	4 FGDs	Students	FGD guideline
		Interview	Same as the specific objective 2		
		Classroom observation	Same as the specific objective 1		

	centred classroom activities		
Sample at a glance			
Secondary school	: 2	(will be selected purposively from Urban and Rural areas)	
Assistant teachers (Bangladesh and Global Studies and English)	: 8	(4 from each school category)	
Students	: 5 – 7	(for each FGD session)	
Classroom observation	: 2	(each classroom will be observed at least 6 days, thus total days are 12)	

Figure 3 shows the conceptual framework of the study that is created based on the existing literature mention above. There are three types of bases in this framework such as environment, research and knowledge base. The environment base of the student-centred education creates demands in-line with the relevance and after applying the knowledge with enough justification, building theory is possible. The sub-topics of each of the part is given in the below figure.

Figure 3: Conceptual framework of the study based on the study environment, research and knowledge base



Chapter Four: Data Analysis and Findings

This chapter illustrates the data analysis in detail according to the data collection tools. The subsections are organised on the basis of key themes emerged from the analysed data of semi-structured interview and FGD. The key themes are as follows: (i) A positive mind set up towards democratic practices, (ii) References of how student engaging activities reflect democratic practices, (iii) Necessary condition required for fostering democratic practices, and (iv) Required pedagogy for fostering democracy.

4.1 A positive mind set up towards democratic practices

Data retrieved from FGD as well as from interviews reveals that the participant teachers and students hold a positive mind set up regarding the democratic norms and values. While students talk of benefits of having democratic practices, teachers narrate the ethical obligations of not having democratic practices during classroom activities.

For instance during FGD, couple of students expressed their understanding of benefit of group work in classroom activities by stating that

“we all don’t think alike. What I will think, not necessarily other will think the same. Therefore, when we will solve a problem using different thoughts coming out from among us, it would be better comparing to do something alone” [S5]

and

“when one will realize that everyone in the class is listening to her, she may feel empowered and encouraged” [S2]

It is interesting to note that the mentioned above statements are relatable with Jacobs and Power (2016). Jacobs and Power (2016) identifies seven key elements (*learner autonomy, teacher as co-worker, focus on meaning, alternative assessment, learning climate and think skill, student-student interaction, and motivation*) of student centred learning and relates those with some significant phenomena (e.g., *decision making, knowledge generation, understanding, evaluation, embracing diversity, cooperation and motivation*) of democratic societies. While first statement qualifies some key phenomena e.g., embracing diversity and cooperation of democratic societies; the second statement qualifies learner autonomy and motivation.

Again another opinion of a student surely reflects Kumaravadivelu’s (2001) idea of transformative practices when he stated that *“we are not going to stay at school forever, right. So, those (argue*

logically, listening to others) are going to help us in real life situation. Practicing those at school surely will help to develop our mentality” [S3]. The utterance of S3 shows his attitude to acquire skills for real life purposes.

All the participant teachers agree with the necessity of democratic practice (if possible at all) in classroom during student engaging activities. For example, in response to a question “why student should listen seriously to each other during debate or discussion” here is one statement made by a teacher:

“it is important that when one will say something other will listen, or atmosphere will be chaotic. Besides, it is unethical not to value others’ opinion ” [T3]

This above statement on part of the teacher is significant in the sense that this reflects a teacher’s belief. Research on teachers’ belief claims that a teacher is usually guided by his belief system and it influences his/her teaching (Sanchez and Borg, 2014; Phipps and Borg, 2009). Phipps and Borg’s (2009) idea of core-peripheral belief can be associated with the teacher’s statement as he ideally believes the importance of democratic practice (here in form of listening to others’ opinion) but not sure he can maintain that in his own classroom for all the time.

4.2 Reference of how student engaging activities reflect democratic practices

When asked to narrate their actual classroom activities that can be referred as analogy for democratic practice reflective activities all the participants speak of group work, pair work, debate, problem solving activities. One teacher’s explanation is worth mentioning:

“ during group work when one speaks the other listens... collecting all the members’ opinion the team leader summarizes their point of views and that essentially reflects all the members’ opinion. I guess, it’s a good example of democratic practice” [T1]

It is interesting to note that this above stated saying is reflective of Dadvand (2015). Dadvand (2015) states that to foster democratic practices teachers can create collaborative learning environment, adopt dialogic approach to pedagogy, develop learners’ critical thinking abilities, and manage power sharing in classroom decision making process. Students seem to enjoy narrating their experience of group work. For instance, one student during FGD said that *“among us, one will write and another one will read it out in front of the class. While some of us will provide ideas, and some can consult books. Again, one can be assigned to gather new ideas from other groups” [S2].* This is a good example of

classroom experience that can easily be linked with Jacobs and Power's (2016) illustration of *cooperation* in democratic society.

4.3 Necessary condition required for fostering democratic practices

Participant teachers during interviews put forward their insightful views on the required condition for ensuring teaching democratic skills using day to day student engaging classroom activities. While most of the teachers talked of educational settings and educational environment; one teacher from the rural context specifically spoke of socio-political condition in which the school is situated in discussing necessary condition required for fostering democratic practices. Relevant analysed data exposes both *external* and *internal* factors as the required condition.

External factor

Borg (2006) provides a framework to demonstrate how external factors (e.g., teachers' economic stability, health condition, wellbeing, community where they live, etc) mediate and influence inside classroom atmosphere and their teaching. The similar issue, here more specifically socio-political atmosphere, seems to echo in the statement of a teacher given below:

"to my mind, democracy depends on overall condition of the state as well as of the society. For example, whether a teacher can express his views to students without any hesitation or not... if teachers are afraid to be opiniated that will eventually influence the students. I think, to ensure democracy it is highly required that practice should begin from the top" [T4]

Internal factors

As mentioned, most of the teachers thought that less workload, small class size, 'not hectic' class schedule can ensure a school condition if wanted to foster democratic skills through daily teaching, which can be regarded as internal factors of an educational setting. One example is given here:

"immense workload and large class size are key issues in actualizing those... if teachers can feel relax (by taking relatively little number of classes) they can enjoy what they are doing..." [T2]

Researchers such as Sinprajakpol (2004) and Sugiyama (2003) discuss how varied internal factors such as large class size, sitting arrangement, resource and logistics influence and impacts classroom teaching. The mentioned statement of teacher is identical with the researchers.

4.4 Required pedagogy for fostering democracy

When teachers were asked to respond whether they need additional anything to help students make democratically skilled most of the teachers talk about time management issue. For example according to one respondent:

“time management for a teacher would one issue. Teacher needs to be really active for all the time. If teacher remains active, all the students will be active too. Besides, a monitoring on part of the school administration can be needed” [T5]

Some of the respondents though talk about training facilities to be equipped with some specific strategies to facilitate democratic norms and values during regular teaching. Given below couple of statements are reflective of that:

“ ... a precise lesson plan will be needed. How am I going to arrange group work, and how am I going to monitor activities, something like that” [T6]

and

“some training would be helpful. Say, some specific techniques will be learnt, and then can apply during teaching” [T7]

Interestingly, no participant teachers pointed out the curriculum or textbook issue in their discussion, which is contradictory to the findings of Altinyelken (2015). Altinyelken (2015) did research in the Turkish context where teachers put great emphasis on the quality of textbooks as primary requirement.

4.5 Concluding remarks

As mentioned earlier, due to pandemic situation and because of the ongoing lockdown situation in the country no classroom observation was possible. Hence, triangulated data of interviews and FGD was used to interpret the major findings of the research. Having said that it can be claimed that this research was primarily qualitative in nature, and findings portray the actual scenario of the researched arena.

Chapter Five: Discussion, Implications and Conclusion

This final chapter elaborates the main findings in relation to stated objectives of the study, and discusses pedagogical implications based on the triangulated data of semi-structured interview and FGD. This chapter ends with discussing future directions for further research.

5.1 Summary of findings

Analysed data lend support the facts that both the teachers and students hold a positive mind set up towards teaching and learning democratic skills. Teachers believe that student engaging classroom activities can be used for facilitating and teaching democratic norms and values to the students.

Participant students seem to value the necessity of democratic norms and values. Many of the students during their discussion in FGD expressed the value of the ability to listen to others, or of the collaborative learning. Students' views are aligned with Jacobs and Power (2016) as the researcher argued how some elements (e.g., discussion, debate, etc) of students centered activities directly reflect some facets (e.g., cooperation, decision making, etc) of democratic society.

Some external and internal factors (as mentioned by teachers) need to reconsider prior to teaching democratic skills to the students. Most importantly, for the seamless implementation of teaching democratic skills to the students some training provision is highly required.

Some major findings in relation to stated objectives of the study discussed below.

5.1.1 Prevalent student engaging classroom activities

The first objective of this study is to examine teachers' and students' role and responsibilities in relation to student engaging classroom activities. Findings suggest, both the teachers and students admitted of some student engaging classroom activities, though not frequently it happened. While students seem to enjoy those activities and are keen to be active participants, teachers are cautious about time management issues given the 50 minutes time slot for a large class size. As emerged from data group work, pair work, problem solving activities are few student engaging classroom activities prevalent in current teaching learning practices of Bangladeshi secondary schools.

However, it is to be noted that those aforesaid classroom activities are from the respondents' reported experience. Without validated those claims from classroom observation, no conclusive generalization can be done. In fact, empirical research on Bangladeshi school teaching-learning practices state that there remain a lecture based teaching, and students are to an extent passive listeners.

5.1.2 Scope of teaching democratic skills to the students

The second objective of this research refers to scope of developing democratic skills to the secondary students of Bangladesh. From the respondents' views, as the data indicates, scope of teaching and facilitating democratic norms, values, and skills is always there.

Research on teachers' cognition illustrates the correspondence between teachers' belief and actual teaching practices. Phipps and Borg (2009) argues that teacher's 'core beliefs' impacts positively to his/her actual practice. Though data of this research does not prove whether the participant teachers' statements belong to their core beliefs but it will not be wrong to assume that the participants' positive mind set up towards teaching democratic skills to the students certainly open up the scope of teaching those. Again, Dadvand (2015) is of opinion that to foster democratic practices teachers can create collaborative learning environment, adopt dialogic approach to pedagogy, develop learners' critical thinking abilities, and manage power sharing in classroom decision making process; and those are reflective in the statements of the participant teachers of this study.

5.1.3 Key challenges in facilitating democratic practices

The last of objective of this study is to underline associated challenges in fostering democratic skills to the students, and the analysed data demonstrates some mentionable challenges. Participant teachers mentioned of large class size, limited class time, and immense workload which can be considered as impediments to teaching democratic skills along the side with regular subject teaching.

Relevant literature such as Borg (2006) pointed out how external factors mediate classroom teaching. Similarly one teacher emphasises in interview, social-political context in which the school is located would impact largely all the efforts to facilitating democratic practice. Secondly, as some respondents said, some sorts of training for some specific teaching strategies are required for seamless teaching. Also, monitoring on part of school management can be helpful, as data suggests.

5.2 Pedagogical implication

One key implication of this research calls for a change in the existing curriculum. Unless it is clearly stated in the curriculum teachers cannot take it seriously. Besides, experiential learning is one teaching methodology that essentially relates students' lived experience with their intended learning. Hence methodological implication is that experiential learning can be introduced to ensure fostering democratic skills to the students.

Another implication is that teacher training should focus on some specific teaching strategies to teach democratic skills to the students.

5.3 Future directions

Significant number of research is required for further exploration of teaching of democratic skills to the students. For example, a research can only be done to record the necessary democratic values and skills required for the Bangladeshi young learners with a view to enrich them with critical citizenship. Further research is surely needed to develop a training module full of teaching strategies essential for teaching democratic skills.

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6. Annex

Annex 6.1 Focus group discussion guideline

১. আপনাদের ক্লাসে শিক্ষকরা লেকচার লেয়ার পাঠাশি আর কী কদরন? মাদন কী কী কাজ লেন?
২. আপনাদের কী ক্লাসে গ্রুপ বা লজাডায় লজাডায় মেমা মেমাখন করদে লেন শিক্ষক? এটা আপনাদের কী কাদজ আদব? কী েরকার এর?

৩. ক্লাদে যখন লকউ লকাদনা শবষদয় কথা বদেন েখন আপনারা অনযরা কী কদরন? ধদরন, লকউ ভুে শকছু বদে লেেদো েখন আপনারা কী কদরন?
৪. লকমন হদো যশে ক্লাদে আপনার এক বন্ধু কথা বেদছন, এই অবস্থায় আপনারা অনযরা চুপাচাপ মনদযাগ শেদয় শুনদবন। এটা আপনাদের লকাদনাভাদব লহল্প করদব শক?
৫. ক্লাদে লকাদনা একটা শবষদয় যখন আপনাদের বেদে লেয়া হয় শক শচন্তাভাবনা কদর উত্তর লেন নাশক যা মাথায় আদে বদে লেদেন?
৬. ধদরন শিক্ষক লকাদনা প্রশ্ন করদে আপনারা লেটা শচন্তাভাবনা কদর উত্তর শেদেন, এটা শক আপনাদের লকাদনা লহদল্প আদব?
৭. ক্লাদে আপনারা যা বেদবন েব যুক্তি শেদয় বেদবন- এমনটা হদে আপনাদের কী োভ হদব? কীভাদব?
৮. ক্লাদে যখন আপনাদের একটা কাজ লেয়া হদব, েখন লেটা েম্পদকে শিক্ষকদক নানা প্রশ্ন কদর ভাদোভাদব লজদন বুদে োরপর কাজটা করদেন- এমনটা করদে লকমন হদো? এটা লকাদনা উপকাদর আদব শক?
৯. এই গ্রুপ ওয়াকে, লজাডায় লজাডায় কাজ, শচন্তা কদর উত্তর লেয়া, যুক্তি শেদয় কথা বো- এগুদো আপনাদের েরকার শক না? এব শক লকাদনা উপকাদর আদব?

Annex 6.2 Interview guideline

১. আপন্র ক্লাফস শ্রাকফন্া এক গিোর্থী কথী বলফল অন্যরা কীভাক্ষব এটাক্ষক শ্রেক্ষে? ধক্ষরন্ শ্রাকফন্া একটা গবতগকতক বা অপ্রিগলত কথী বফল শ্রেলফলা, এমন অবস্থাতে তারা গক িুপিাপ শ্রাকফন্ নাগক বাধা প্রোন্ কক্ষর?
২. গে কারও গভন্নমত থাক্ষক তক্ষব তারা কীভাক্ষব শ্রসটা উপস্থাপন্ কক্ষর? ুক্তত্ত গেক্ষে বফল কী?
৩. শ্রাকফন্া একটা গবষক্ষে েন বলক্ষত শ্রেো হে তেন্ কী গভীর গিন্তন্ কক্ষর? নাগক তেংিাং উত্তর শ্রেে?
৪. আপগন্ তাক্ষের একটা গকছু করক্ষত বলফল গক তারা কক্ষর শ্রেফল? নাগক গিন্তাভাবনা কক্ষর তারপর কােটা কক্ষর?
৫. ধক্ষরন্, আপন্র ক্লাফস এক গিোর্থী কথী বলক্ষছ, এই অবস্থাতে অন্যরা িুপিাপ মক্ষ াগ গেক্ষে শুনক্ষব। এমনটা কী হেও সম্ভব? (সম্ভব হক্ষল- কীভাক্ষব; না হক্ষল- শ্রকন্ সম্ভব নে?)
৬. ক্লাফস গিোর্থীরা া বলক্ষব গন্েষ ুক্তত্ত গেক্ষে বলক্ষব- এমনটা কী সম্ভব? (সম্ভব হক্ষল- কীভাক্ষব; না হক্ষল- শ্রকন্ সম্ভব নে?)
৭. গিোর্থীরা গকছু বলার আক্ষগ তাক্ষের কী গভীর ভাক্ষব গিন্তা করার সুক্ষ াগ শ্রেো সম্ভব? (সম্ভব হক্ষল- কীভাক্ষব; না হক্ষল- শ্রকন্ সম্ভব না?)
৮. এক গিোর্থীরা গভন্নমক্ষতর শ্রেক্ষে অন্য গিোর্থীরা বক্তবয থাকক্ষল শ্রস গভন্নমতক্ষক সম্মান্ গেক্ষে শ্রসটাক্ষকও গ্রহি কক্ষর গনেক্ষের বক্তবয উপস্থাপন্ করক্ষব- এটা গক ক্লাফস িিকা করা সম্ভব? (সম্ভব হক্ষল- কীভাক্ষব; না হক্ষল- শ্রকন্ সম্ভব নে?)
৯. তাক্ষের েন একটা কাে শ্রেো হক্ষব, তেন্ শ্রসটা অন্ধভাক্ষব পালন্ না কক্ষর বরং তারা গিেকক্ষক নানা প্রশ্ন কক্ষর ভাক্ষলাভাক্ষব শ্রেফন্ বুক্ষে তারপর কােটা করক্ষব- এমনটা কী ক্লাফস প্রাগিস করা সম্ভব? (সম্ভব হক্ষল- কীভাক্ষব; না হক্ষল- শ্রকন্ সম্ভব নে?)