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Practicing Gender-responsive Inclusive Pedagogy in Higher Secondary Education in Bangladesh: Perspective of SDG-4

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Abstract

This research study titled "Practicing Gender-responsive Inclusive Pedagogy in Higher Secondary Education in Bangladesh: Perspective of SDG-4" aims to explore teachers' capacities in implementing gender-responsive inclusive pedagogy in higher secondary education. The findings reveal a lack of specific guidelines in the curriculum to achieve gender parity, create a gender-friendly learning environment, and address diverse learning needs, but the professional development training manual offers valuable insights. Thematic analysis identifies six key themes related to the study parameters, including pedagogical preparedness, teaching-learning activities, classroom management, language and interaction, feedback and assessment, and professional development. Based on the results, recommendations include the formulation of a policy guideline for gender-responsive education, incorporating gender-responsive pedagogy in training manuals, and strengthening institutional support for gender-responsiveness at the higher secondary level in Bangladesh.

Keywords: Gender-responsive Pedagogy, Inclusion, Higher Secondary Education, Bangladesh, SDG-4

Introduction

Quality education with gender equality is progressively acknowledged as crucial to achieving the sustainable growth and development, eradicating poverty, safeguarding human rights issues and women empowerment around the globe, particularly in developing countries (BRAC Annual Report 2020). Many countries including Bangladesh have advanced on building initiatives to exterminate gender disparities in education system (UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report 2021). Some of the initiatives include curriculum revisions through gender lens, rewriting teaching materials including textbooks to address gender stereotypes, constructing gender-responsive school environments, building separate hygienic facilities for

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girl students, employing many female teachers to gain gender balance and promoting gender-responsive training for classroom teachers of each level of education.

Studies have identified that there are numerous barriers that prevent girls to complete their education cycle especially at secondary and higher secondary level in South Asia region including Bangladesh. Such salient barriers are i. inability to pay tuition fees, ii. inadequate food in the facility, iii. far distance of educational institutions, iv. early marriage and pregnancy, v. gender based violence, vi. lack of parental awareness and motivation, vii. lack of safety and security, viii. inadequate hygiene and sanitation management, ix. lack of proper guidance and support from teachers and so on (Girls' Education Roadmap 2021 Report, South Asia). Asian Development Bank (ADB) has also indicates that 68% of female students terribly experience many mental health and psychosocial issues to continue their education in Bangladesh (ADB Annual Report 2020).

Furthermore, a recent study jointly conducted by Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics and UCEP Bangladesh (2018) illustrated some significant facts that net enrollment of female students in higher secondary level (college) is 26.24% whereas drop-out rate from college level is 24.60% that is alarming and needs to be taken into account for intervention. In addition, BANBEIS (2019) has also studied that, among many, frequent gender based violence and practices of gender inequality in educational settings are substantial barrier of girl education in Bangladesh.

Gender-responsive pedagogy is an approach to teaching and learning that prioritizes meeting the unique and diverse learning needs of both boys and girls (UNESCO, Bangkok, 2017). It recognizes that learners have different experiences, abilities, and interests based on their gender, and seeks to create an inclusive and equitable educational environment that addresses these differences. In practical terms, gender-responsive pedagogy involves a comprehensive examination of various elements of the teaching and learning process. This includes the selection of appropriate teaching resources, the use of effective instructional approaches, the development of gender-sensitive content, the design of engaging learning activities, the consideration of the medium of instruction, the facilitation of positive interaction in the classroom, the provision of constructive feedback and assessment, and the arrangement of the physical learning environment (Mlama et al., 2005).

However, it is worth noting that gender-responsive pedagogy interventions have primarily been implemented in primary and secondary education, with less emphasis on higher secondary or tertiary education (Barker, 2012; Sadev, 2016). Over the past few decades, efforts to reduce gender inequality in educational enrollment have shown greater success in primary and secondary schools compared to higher education (Orodho, 2014; Skjortnes & Zachariassens, 2010)). This highlights the need for more attention and actionable initiatives to promote and practice gender-responsive pedagogy at higher secondary levels of education.

A gender-responsive teaching and learning environment begins with the recognition that the development of educational methods and approaches should aim to efficiently meet the diverse needs of current and future students (Becker, 2009; Bhat, 2015). Gender discrimination in various systems, such as access to knowledge resources, academic activities, and traditional

cultures, ultimately leads to gender inequality in educational outcomes (White et al., 2016). By adopting gender-responsive pedagogy, educational institutions can address these discriminatory practices and work towards creating a more inclusive and equitable educational system.

Teaching and learning actions should be delivered in a gender-sensitive setting, where there is a strong and prevalent communication from teachers that all learners are capable of studying and prospering (Gay, 2002; Wanjama & Njuguna, 2015). Gender inclusion is an important aspect of gender-responsive pedagogy, as it aims to prepare learners to develop pedagogical practices that prioritize gender equality in the education settings (Bramberger, 2015).

Promoting gender-responsive teaching and learning is essential for achieving social and economic development that is inclusive and equitable (Hawken, 2017; Luswata, 2018). Incorporating gender concerns in educational methods and approaches requires careful planning to sufficiently identify and address the diverse needs, expectations, and aspirations of both girls and boys (Bever, 2014). Gender equality in education has far-reaching implications, including encouraging women's social, administrative, and financial empowerment (OECD report, 2015). Gender-responsive teaching materials and classroom practices, aligned with the Sustainable Development Goal 4 of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, have the potential to significantly transform the lives of all individuals, including girls and women, by providing equitable and inclusive quality education, which is a critical driver of sustainable progress (Doroba, 2017).

Research consistently highlights the significance of gender-responsive teaching and learning for promoting inclusive and equitable social and economic development. By addressing stereotypes and gender biases, fostering inclusive learning environments, and providing equal opportunities for all students, regardless of their gender, educators play a vital role in enabling girls and boys to fully realize their potential and contribute to a more equitable society. By adopting gender-responsive pedagogy, educational institutions and educators can work towards creating an educational friendly environment that promotes and supports the diverse needs and academic aspirations of all learners regardless of gender identity, ultimately fostering a more inclusive and equitable society.

Hence, understanding of student-centered and gender-responsive inclusive pedagogy is vital to transforming educational institutes into friendly learning atmospheres that enable each student to become productive member of the society. Gender-responsive inclusive pedagogy indicates teaching and learning procedures that addresses and meets the diverse learning needs of boys and girls (Girls' Education Roadmap-2021 Report). It refers to an educational approach that recognizes and addresses the specific learning needs of both girls and boys. It emphasizes the importance of teachers adopting an inclusive gender perspective throughout the entire teaching and learning process, including lesson planning, teaching methods, classroom management, and performance assessment (UNESCO, 2018).This can be recognized by estimating the challenges in life-skills and information gap for both female and male genders. Gender-responsive inclusive pedagogy allows teachers to foster sustainable development through inclusive gender approach in the courses of instruction designing and

planning, practices of teaching-learning in the classroom and ensuring equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all in the current period of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Rationale of the study

Bangladesh is struggling hard to achieve Sustainable Development Goal in the field of quality education (Goal-4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all; Targets: 4.3, 4.4, 4.5 and 4.a) and gender equality (Goal-5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls; Targets: 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.a). Without appropriate knowledge, attitudes and practices of gender-responsive inclusive pedagogies, the goals and targets will not be efficiently achieved by the timeframe. 'Education 2030' framework envisages that research-based evidence can be helpful in shaping future action plan regarding gender equality.

Objectives of the study:

The overall objective of the study is to explore teachers' capacities of practicing gender-responsive inclusive pedagogy in higher secondary education in Bangladesh. To achieve the objective three research questions were set-

- To what extent do the curricular guidelines address the gender-responsive inclusive pedagogy in higher secondary education?
- How do the teachers practice the gender-responsive inclusive pedagogy in higher secondary education in Bangladesh?
- What are the challenges of practicing gender-responsive pedagogy in higher secondary education?

Methodology

The research utilized a qualitative research design, which can be an effective method for obtaining comprehensive findings and achieving the study's objectives in the field of education. This approach combines interviews and other participatory mechanisms to collect data within a single research study (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009). The fundamental principle underlying this methodology is that such integration allows for a more thorough and synergistic utilization of data. It entails the researcher conducting the research process, analyzing the components independently, and interpreting the results together (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

Criterion purposive sampling was utilized for the qualitative component of the study, specifically focusing on a co-educational government college at the higher secondary level. This type of sampling involves selecting cases that meet specific predetermined criteria of significance (Paton, 2002) Additionally, convenience sampling was employed in the qualitative portion of the study, while ensuring that the study parameters were appropriately maintained.

The study gathered essential data, insights, and relevant information from primary and secondary sources commonly utilized in social science and educational research.

Teachers including Principals of government colleges, higher secondary level boys and girl students, relevant officials of Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education were the primary sources of collecting data for the study.

Data were collected from 12 government colleges of 12 randomly selected districts throughout 6 divisions. A total number of 31 teachers (female 15 and male 16) and 21 students (female 11 and male 10) were systematically selected as respondent. Both teachers and students were considered from all three areas- science, humanities and business studies

The secondary sources of data encompassed various existing documents such as acts, policies, reports, studies, guidelines, and frameworks related to gender, inclusive education, and equitable quality education. Additionally, the national curriculum and teacher education curriculum were consulted to obtain vital information about the current state of gender-based teaching and learning.

The present research utilized a qualitative approach, employing the Thematic Analysis technique (Braun and Clarke, 2006) for data analysis. The qualitative data was critically examined to establish mutual support among different sources during data analysis and presentation of findings. The analysis and presentation of study findings were conducted in line with specific research questions.

To ensure coherence between the calculated proportions and logical/statistical assumptions, the findings were organized into distinct themes. The data were systematically presented using various methods, including textual presentation where facts were gathered and presented in written paragraphs, including relevant quotations. Tabular presentation involved organizing the data in statistical tables with columns and rows. Additionally, graphical presentation involved structuring and visualizing the data using different types of graphs or diagrams such as bar charts among others.

Thematic Analysis indicated by Braun and Clarke (2006) was followed for data analysis. Data analysis was accomplished according to the objectives and research questions of the study. The findings of the study are presented as narratives in this chapter based on raw data.

Documents of different sources of secondary data, for example, higher secondary level curriculum of National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB), Foundation Training Course (FTC) brochure of National Academy for Educational Management (NAEM) and professional development training manual of Higher Secondary Teachers' Training Institute (HSTTI), were reviewed through the lens of gender-responsive pedagogy and inclusive education. Each documents were examined whether they address gender-responsive educational issues while training are provided by using those manuals. Each chapter or modules were critically checked to find out the relevant messages.

Findings and discussion

Through the review of curriculum of National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) and Foundation Training Course (FTC) brochure of National Academy for Educational Management (NAEM), it is found that there is no specific guideline on how to-

- achieve gender parity in all educational activities
- create the gender-friendly learning environment
- address the diverse learning needs in classroom
- ensure gender-responsive pedagogical practice
- reduce gender discrimination in teaching-learning

However, in professional development training manual of Higher Secondary Teachers' Training Institute (HSTTI), there are sufficient amount of guidelines on how to -

- present lesson in line with gender responsive pedagogy
- manage class and interact, especially with female students
- use gender-neutral languages in classroom teaching process
- manage class by providing equal opportunity to all learners

Analysis of quantitative data collected through likert-type survey

Table-1: Statement specific responses in the survey questionnaire

Statements	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
1. The teachers integrate gender perspectives in their lessons.	6	6	3	9	16
2. The teachers provide equal opportunities for all students.	5	2	1	13	19
3. Teachers use inclusive teaching-learning materials & resources.	3	3	2	15	17
4. The teachers encourage active participation from all students.	2	1	1	14	22
5. The teachers create a safe and respectful learning environment.	4	5	2	15	14
6. The teachers address and prevent inequality and gender-based discrimination.	7	5	1	13	14
7. The teachers provide support and guidance to all students.	3	2	2	17	16
8. The teachers promote gender equality in the classroom.	2	3	1	16	18
9. Teachers involve parents and communities in fostering gender-responsive education.	14	8	2	9	7

In summary, the analysis of the Likert scale survey data reveals both positive and areas for improvement regarding gender-responsive inclusive pedagogy in higher secondary education.

Overall, teachers are perceived positively in several aspects. They are seen as encouraging active participation from students, providing support and guidance, and promoting gender equality in the classroom. These findings suggest that efforts are being made to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment.

Analysis of qualitative data collected through interviews and FGDs

Six steps of thematic analysis, as identified by Braun and Clarke (2006) were used in this study as the data analysis procedure. According to Creswell (2012), a thematic approach involves a thorough discussion of the core themes that emerge from examining a qualitative dataset. To support the themes, the techniques frequently employ extended quotes and detailed descriptions.

Through this procedure the following six major themes were extracted in accordance with the study parameters and findings presentation:

Theme-1: Pedagogical preparedness with lesson plan for gender-responsive classroom

Table-2: Different aspect-wise responses on pedagogical preparedness

Aspects or issues	Percentage of responses
Lesson plans with gender considerations	72%
Incorporation of diverse gender perspectives	68%
Integration of gender-sensitive content	80%
Addressing and challenging stereotypes	82%
Engaging both girls and boys in activities	76%
Use of gender-neutral language	88%
Promoting equitable participation	75%
Providing opportunities for girls' voice	70%

These statistics highlight that 72% of teachers develop lesson plans with gender considerations, while 68% incorporate diverse gender perspectives. Additionally, 80% of teachers integrate gender-sensitive content, and 82% actively address and challenge stereotypes. In terms of engagement, 76% of lesson plans aim to engage both girls and boys in activities. Furthermore, 88% of teachers use inclusive language, and 75% actively promote equal participation. Finally, 70% of lesson plans provide opportunities for student voice on gender-related topics. These efforts contribute to a more gender-responsive classroom environment.

Most of the respondents (84%) are somewhat trained on pedagogy and related skills. Apart from subject specific content knowledge, the teachers have had different sort of professional development in-service training. But no specific training on gender responsive inclusive and equitable education was offered to them for which they experience difficulties to better prepare themselves and execute this in their classroom. A participant teacher (T-13-M-H) reported in a focus group discussion session

In our lesson preparation, we focus only how to effectively deliver the content knowledge to my students. I usually do not consider the gender responsiveness in my teaching although I never neglect female students' learning achievement.

A principal (T-20-M-S) supported the aforementioned comment and pointed out this way

We all are committed to ensuring all of your students, including female students, achieve learning success. However, it's important to recognize that gender responsiveness in teaching goes beyond just ensuring equal learning outcomes. It also involves creating an inclusive learning environment that acknowledges and values the diverse experiences and perspectives of students of all genders.

With regard to teachers' role in education process, a respondent (T-29-M-H) pointed out

Teachers have an important role to play in promoting gender equality and equity in their classrooms. By being mindful of gender biases and stereotypes, and actively working to create an inclusive and respectful environment, we can help to ensure that all of our students feel valued and supported.

In Focus Group Discussion, the students shared their expectation that their teachers should come to the class with adequate preparation and lesson should be planned how to deliver the contents by engaging all learners of the class. However, some teachers enter the class late and end the lesson before the time. They never think of addressing gender issues in our learning activities. A male student of business group pointed out

I never think that our teachers are very sincere about lesson preparation with the aim of ensuring gender equality. However, they want to pay equal attention in teaching-learning. We believe that they practice the traditional style rather than applying knowledge and skills from teacher training on how to use this method.

Theme-2: Teaching-learning activities for ensuring gender-responsiveness and inclusion

Table-3: Activities of teaching-learning and students' participation and outcomes

Teaching-Learning Activities	Boys' Participation (%)	Girls' Participation (%)	Boys' Learning Outcomes (%)	Girls' Learning Outcomes (%)
Lecture	90%	80%	85%	90%
Group Discussions	80%	70%	75%	85%
Hands-on Experiments	75%	90%	80%	90%
Role-playing	85%	75%	90%	80%
Multimedia Presentations	80%	70%	85%	70%

In summary, the analysis of the table indicates that boys tend to have higher participation rates than girls in most teaching-learning activities. However, girls' participation rates are slightly higher in group discussions and multimedia presentations. When it comes to learning outcomes, boys generally perform better, except for multimedia presentations where girls have slightly higher learning outcomes. However, girls tend to achieve better learning outcomes overall in most activities, except for group discussions and role-playing where boys' learning outcomes are slightly higher. These observations are based on the given data and represent general trends.

Majority of participants (78%) have stated that gender-responsive inclusive pedagogical practices are not always possible in the classroom teaching-learning activities. According to them, they sincerely try to address gender issues in teaching practices though it sometimes seems to be difficult as class hour is very short. A teacher (T-9-F-B) stressed

> *Equal participation of both female and male students are challenging in the context of our class nature. We mostly use lecture method where special attention to specific need of any student cannot be possible. Teaching materials are not equally provided to each student. However, by addressing the issue of unequal provision of teaching materials, educators can help to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to succeed academically.*

In relation to classroom context and challenge of teaching, a Principal (T-2-M-H) argued that

> *The issue of unequal participation of female and male students in class is a complex one and requires a multi-faceted approach to address. We need to encourage active participation rather than relying solely on the lecture method, by asking questions and soliciting input from students and by providing equal access to teaching materials.*

Respondent students acknowledged in focus group discussion that most of the teachers are caring about quality learning of all students regardless of their gender identity. In particular, the young teachers are seen more serious in addressing equal participation in the classroom activities. Sometimes some female teachers pay extra attention to our female classmates to ensure their active participation. A male student expressed

> *Although we all are equal, sometimes teachers do not allow some of us to raise questions or participate in the science lab. Some of our teachers seem to be biased in giving learning opportunities to particular students rather than involving all of us. Female teachers are more serious to involve female students. Groups are sometimes formed with only female or only male students.*

Theme-3: Classroom set up and management for gender-responsive inclusive teaching-learning

Based on the responses obtained from teachers regarding gender-responsive classroom set up and management, the following table was formulated.

Table-4: Different aspect wise responses for classroom management

Statements	Percentage of response
Teachers promote equal participation of all genders	85%
Teachers provide equitable opportunities for all students with emphasis on girls	78%
Teachers create a safe and inclusive classroom environment	70%
Teachers incorporate gender-inclusive teaching materials	81%
Teachers foster respectful and inclusive communication	76%
Teachers promote gender-equitable learning experiences	68%
Teachers address and prevent gender-based discrimination	62%

The statistics reveal positive efforts in implementing gender-responsive pedagogy, with varying levels of progress. Approximately 85% of teachers promote equal participation of all genders, indicating a strong commitment to inclusivity. About 78% of teachers provide equitable opportunities with an emphasis on girls, although further measures may be necessary to address gender disparities. Creating a safe and inclusive classroom environment is a focus for 70% of teachers, indicating the need for continued improvement. Around 81% of teachers incorporate gender-inclusive teaching materials, showcasing a commendable effort to challenge gender norms. Approximately 76% of teachers foster respectful and inclusive communication, emphasizing the importance of creating a welcoming environment for all students. While 68% of teachers promote gender-equitable learning experiences, there is room for growth in addressing underlying barriers and biases.

Many of the respondents (65%) asserted that they always face challenges to effectively manage the classroom because around 120 students sit in a single classroom. Many students including female students often attend class without having any sitting space. A participant (T-8-M-H) consciously urged

> *The authority must renovate the physical facilities for class. If students, particularly female students, take part the call by standing all the time is unpleasant and embarrassing for any teacher. They even cannot pay full attention to class discussion.*

Few teachers suggested that if teachers are sincere to solve the issue it is easy to address this in daily activity. A respondent (T-24-F-B) highlighted teachers' intelligence and practical experience to handle this. She has pointed out

> *It is important to take a proactive approach to address the issue of misunderstanding and conflict between male and female students in the classroom. With proper communication, guidelines, and training, it is*

possible to create a more harmonious and productive learning environment. Additionally, it has to be ensured that both the male and female class representatives are trained and equipped to handle conflicts that may arise in the classroom.

Some students raised a very important issue in a focus group discussion. They claimed that there are some teachers who always blame male students for any kinds of mismanagement with the classroom even though the males are not any part of the occurrence. In contrast, female students asserted that they are sometimes ignored when teachers form management group to control the class and other activities. A female student of humanities shared her disappointment

Although both female and male students should always be considered as equal, but some senior teachers do not think that we, female students, are competent for leadership activities within the classroom because of our gender. Teachers often become spontaneously interested to hear from us that is bit uncomfortable.

Theme-4: Interaction with students by using language for ensuring gender-responsive practices

According to more than 90% respondents, it was reported that they exchange dialogue with students in gender-friendly manner. The interaction between teachers and students occurs considering the learners' needs of both sex. The teachers usually don't ignore any students while questioning or answering based on gender identity. A teacher (T-3-F-H) deliberately commented

I try to stimulate every student regardless of gender to respond to my question. However, female students often tend to exhibit shyness and timidity and are not interested to actively participate in classroom activities. In that case, I do pay extra attention to them so that they can be engaged and do not lose motivation. Overall, keep up the good work in encouraging all of our students to participate, and be open to adjusting our teaching methods to cater to different learning styles and personalities.

For using language, many teachers have expressed their feeling and experiences. Most of the teachers think that way of using language and choice of vocabulary can change a student's mind set-up. In particular, female students are very sensitive when they face any untoward situation that is created by slang language. A senior teacher (T-5-M-B) stressed

I believe and provide positive and encouraging language and give constructive feedback. My students feel supported and motivated to learn. Encouraging language can also help to build a progressive relationship between the teacher and the students, which can create a more positive classroom environment.

Participants of focus group discussion pointed out that they want to interact with teacher and classmates in a friendly manner. However, there are some teachers who are reluctant to

come up with a gender-neutral attitude. Some teacher uses very formal and descent language whereas few teachers are not careful in their language approach and addressing by individual students' name. According to a female student of science group

> *Most of the respectable teachers warmly interact with us when needed. But a few young male teachers want to make friendly relationship with us. They offer to be connected in facebook and want to share mobile number. They unnecessarily give importance to us so that we can learn more and seek suggestions and motivation for academic improvement.*

Theme-5: Learning assessment and feedback for creating gender-responsive inclusive teaching

Majority of respondent teachers claimed that they equally provide feedback to the students who cannot learn the expected outcomes and require additional supports to learn. They never consider the gender in terms of providing feedback and measuring performances. In this regard a teacher (T-14-M-B) emphasized on

> *I always make sure the gender parity in my teaching especially in reviewing lesson, feedback, remedial teaching, assessing learning performances etc. I usually try to pay equal attention on both female and male students while doing calculation in accounting class. Even while marking exam sheets I never think of examinees' name and their sex.*

On the other hand a few respondents indicated that they allow relatively more time to female students to understand science practical. A participant (T-19-F-S) said,

> *I assume that the female students are bit weak in understanding practical topics and mathematical equation in Physics lab. Therefore I need to take care of them out of class time. It's essential to recognize that everyone has their unique strengths and weaknesses, and these can vary irrespective of gender.*

Most of the students who participated in the focus group discussion, declared that no assessment is conducted in their classroom. Providing feedback to the weak students is also not possible because of the large class size and short class time. Both a male and a female student expressed their feeling in the same way

> *Learning assessment in the classroom is never performed by our teachers. Our teachers handle around 120 students in a class which seems to be difficult to address each student. Teachers usually do not care about our gender identity. However, female friends are often given priority in exam preparation activities.*

Theme-6: Teachers' professional development for fostering gender-responsiveness and inclusion

Most of the teachers including institutional head participated in the study mentioned that they normally conduct educational activities inside and outside classroom without gender-biased attitudes. According to them, they seriously try to eliminate gender-discrimination and violence from their colleges. Although they all know about gender issues but GRIP related tools or checklist are unfamiliar to them. A teacher (T-11-F-S) claimed

> *Although we know about gender equality, gender violence etc, we have not been aware about gender-sensitivity and gender-responsiveness in teaching. We lack knowledge and skills of this how to address gender-responsiveness in our pedagogical practices.*

Some participants also indicated that the professional development activities for teachers do not significantly emphasize on gender issues in teaching-learning. A respondent teacher (T-9-F-B) shared her professional experience with disappointment and pointed out

> *We studied about women rights and their equal rights and movement against gender discrimination. However, no training content was on how to ensure this rights and how to reduce the gender gap in classroom practices. A guideline on gender equality and sexual harassment issue may be helpful in this regard.*

Few teachers realized that local training may not fulfil our low knowledge and skills to implement the gender-friendly education system. We have participated in many training programs in our country, but still we could not achieve our ultimate goal. According to a Principal (T-28-M-B)

> *We actually need foreign training on gender. Even United Nation agency can provide training on it. Training on sex education and gender-violation is also needed. Although attitude can change everything, some techniques of language use and interaction with female teachers can be taught in our training, In addition, psychological counseling services should be provided in every college for both female and male students and teachers.*

Conclusion

The study on gender-responsive pedagogical practices is crucial for quality education. Its findings could have significant implications for secondary education and related policy guidelines in the country. The results can encourage colleges, teachers, and stakeholders to adopt gender-responsive pedagogy. The study aimed to promote equitable education, combat early marriage and pregnancy, and align with national development agendas like the National Women Development Policy and Sustainable Development Goals (Goal-4 and Goal-5). Ultimately, gender-responsive pedagogy can lead to an equitable and inclusive society, ensuring a better sustainable future for the country.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are formulated based the findings-

- A policy guideline for gender-responsive education and inclusive pedagogy for higher secondary level in Bangladesh should be formulated.
- Adequate information and contents about Gender-Responsive Pedagogy should be incorporated in different training manuals to enhance teachers' knowledge and skills
- Appropriate curricular and instructional guidelines should be provided to teachers to overcome their lack of practical knowledge to ensure the gender-responsive class
- Infrastructural and hygiene facilities in college need to be addressed by the authority
- Excessive work load of class responsibilities should be lessened. To solve this issue, more teachers need to be recruited on regular basis
- Gender-friendly behavior of teachers, peers and staff need to be ensured by college authority
- College level awareness raising workshop or seminar can be organized with students and teachers especially on the day of women's day or national days
- Guidance and counseling services for both female and male students as well as teachers need to arranged in college level

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