A case study of developing pedagogy about, through and for human rights education in Bangladesh

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Abstract

This thesis investigated how human rights education (HRE) could be developed and implemented in a secondary school in Bangladesh, using a qualitative case study approach with an action research component. Through the lenses of socially critical perspectives and critical pedagogy, a human rights-based methodological framework was used that centred the study as education research *about, through* and *for,* human rights. A government secondary school was selected in Dhaka city where the head teacher, two classroom teachers, students and parents volunteered to participate in various approaches to the development of HRE. Focus group discussions, semi-structured interviews, action research, participant observation and field notes were used to collect data.

The initial findings indicated that while a comprehensive and holistic approach to human rights education requires all the components: education *about*, *through* and *for* human rights, as article 2(2) of the United Nations, Universal Declaration of Human Rights Education declares, at the commencement of the study, the school was not yet fulfilling these requirements, except for a limited focus on education *about* human rights. A rights-based approach to HRE was not present in existing teaching and learning practices. While the participating school leader and teachers wanted to develop HRE, they lacked understanding of policies and strategies for HRE and professional learning related to teaching and learning in this field. The study explored how new approaches to education *about*, *through* and *for* human rights could be developed in the school and the factors that enabled and challenged this process, in order to make recommendations for other schools in Bangladesh and beyond, about how the implementation of HRE can be achieved.

Findings showed that the collaborative action research was a positive process in developing teachers' professional learning and students' active engagement in HRE, in spite of contextual challenges in the school. The commitment of the head teacher and teachers were key factors in the progress. The findings from the action research and follow up interviews one year after the initial study, showed ongoing evolution of a professional learning community focused on continuing the dissemination of new approaches to HRE in the school and among the broader education community.

The study found that in order to develop HRE in schools in Bangladesh, further teacher professional learning would be required that encompasses key dimensions of a professional learning community; a vision and culture focused on HRE, support of school leaders, time and structural support for teacher planning and expert knowledge and guidance in establishing community participation and active engagement of students in HRE in the classrooms, across the school and in the wider community.

Declaration

I, Md Khairul Islam, hereby declare that this thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at any university or equivalent institution and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

Signed:

Date:

This research received approval from the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC).
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Presentations relating to the thesis

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to:

My parents, Md Earaz Alia and Jorina Begum

and

My wife, Tasnim Rahman

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background and rationale for the study

> "Human rights education is an integral part of the right to education and is increasingly gaining recognition as a human right in itself. Knowledge of rights and freedoms is considered a fundamental tool to guarantee respect for the rights of all". (UNESCO, 2017, para. 1)

Human rights education (HRE) is regarded as being of central importance in the learning of young people globally (Bajaj, 2011a; 2011b; 2012a; 2012b; Covell, Howe, & McNeil, 2010; MacNaughton & Koutsioumpas, 2017; Osler & Starkey, 2005; 2010; Osler, 2018; Rinaldi, 2017; Tibbitts & Kirchschlaeger, 2010; Tibbitts, 2017b; Vesterdal, 2019; Zajda & Ozdowski, 2017) and in Bangladesh; the country where my study is located (Ministry of Education, 2010). Evidence suggests that HRE "has expanded dramatically over the last few decades" (Russell & Suarez, 2017, p. 39). United Nations bodies and different international organizations including the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR), United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC), United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Youth for Human Rights and Asia-Pacific Human Rights Information Centre are all working towards the creation of a favourable international culture to build practices for human rights education. UNICEF and UNESCO's (2007) publication, 'A Human Rights-based Approach to Education for All' has provided leadership for educators globally. Other key initiatives in HRE in recent decades have included the programs in the 'United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education' (1995-2004); the United Nations' (2006) Plan of action: World Programme for Human Rights Education, first phase 2005-2009'; the United Nations' Plan of action for the second phase (2010–2014) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education'; the 'United Nations' Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training (UNDHRET) (2011); the 'United Nations' (2014) Plan of Action for the third phase (2015–2019) of the World Programme

for Human Rights Education'; the 'United Nations' (2015) Sustainable development Goals (SDGs)'; and Amnesty International's (2012) Human Rights Friendly school'.

Countries across the world are promoting human rights education in different ways. However, at the end of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (UNDHRE, 1995–2004), it was widely accepted, especially by the United Nations itself, that "despite some modest successes, the UNDHRE lacked direction and impact and failed to prepare a sound basis for securing human rights education internationally" (Print, Ugarte, Naval & Mihr, 2008, p. 120). This was because many countries failed to engage their schools adequately in promoting HRE in a systematic and meaningful way (Print et al., 2008). However, there is substantial evidence of the positive impacts of HRE. MacNaughton and Koutsioumpas (2017) for example argue that "there is no doubt that there have been many successes at the local, national and global level, particularly in the last two decades, in improving human rights awareness and building a culture of human rights" (p. 16). Research evidence on the impact of HRE often indicates the positive influence on students in developing their knowledge, skills and attitudes to human rights after participating in HRE programs (Bajaj, 2011a; 2012a; 2012b; Covell & Howe, 2001; Covell, Howe, & McNeil, 2010; Tibbitts & Kirchschlaeger, 2010).

However, in Bangladesh, despite substantial evidence of the positive influences of HRE in creating a favourable culture for human rights, and a supportive national education policy for HRE, human rights abuses continue (Amnesty International, 2017a; Hasanat & Fahim, 2014; Mohajan, 2014; Odhikar, 2018). HRE has not been fully and effectively developed in schools in this nation (Ahmed, 2014; Mujeri, 2010; Tithi, Begum, Islam, & Faisal, 2016) (see chapter 2 for details). Therefore, the aim of my qualitative case study research has been to explore existing pedagogies for HRE in a secondary school in Bangladesh, to capture and understand the scope and limitations of current practices, and then to develop and implement new approaches to HRE through action research, to then inform future teaching and learning practices in this field.

Research questions

The research questions I explored in this study are**:**

Main question:

How can pedagogies for human rights education (HRE) be developed in secondary schools in Bangladesh?

Sub-questions:

1. How do teachers, students, the head teacher and parents perceive human rights education in a case study school?
2. How do teachers implement human rights education in teaching and learning practices?
3. How can the school develop new approaches to human rights education?
4. What is the influence on student learning of the development of new approaches to human rights education?
5. What are the challenges and issues in implementing human rights education in schools?

1.2 Concept and definition of human rights education (HRE)

In order to investigate teaching and learning practices in HRE in a secondary school in Bangladesh, it was important to firstly examine the definition, origin and scope of 'human rights education'. The concept is briefly explored here and further explained in detail in the literature review.

The concept of HRE originates from Article 26 (2) of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948), which states that "education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms" (United Nations [UN] General Assembly, 1948 p. 6). The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989) has also made a significant contribution to the emerging field of human rights education, as this obligates the governments of signatory countries to make the principles and provisions of the Convention widely known by appropriate and active means to adults and children (Article 42) and to implement the achievement of these rights (UN General Assembly, 1989). These include access to educational opportunity and quality education. The most recognized concept of human rights education is derived from the *United Nations*

Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training (UNDHRET, 2011). Article 2(1) of the Declaration argues that:

> Human rights education and training comprises all educational, training, information, awareness-raising and learning activities aimed at promoting universal respect for and observance of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and thus contributing to, inter alia, the prevention of human rights violations and abuses by providing persons with knowledge, skills and understanding and developing their attitudes and behaviours, to empower them to contribute to the building and promotion of a universal culture of human rights. (UNHRC, 2011, p. 4)

1.3 Conceptual framework

My conceptual framework has been constructed by integrating a number of separate but intersecting fields from national and international literature on human rights education related to education *about* human rights, education *through* human rights and education *for* human rights.

Education about human rights

According to the *United Nations' Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training* (UNDHRET) (2011), education *about* human rights includes "providing knowledge and understanding of human rights norms and principles, the values that underpin them and the mechanisms for their protection" (p. 4). Tibbitts (2002) describes her 'values and awareness model' as *education about human rights* and she notes that, "the main focus of human rights education is to transmit basic knowledge of human rights issues and to foster its integration into public values" (Tibbitts, 2002, p. 163). Similar to Tibbitts (2002), Mihr and Schmitz (2007) also argue that human rights education can be conceived through three levels and characterise the first as a 'cognitive model'. As in the values and awareness model described by Tibbitts (2002), the cognitive model provides basic knowledge and information about universal human rights standards through the major international documents such as the UDHR (1948), UNCRC (1989). Current education policy in Bangladesh also emphasises HRE paying attention to the UDHR and CRC (Ministry of Education, 2010). My study examined the extent to which the human rights education

opportunities in the case study school met the definitions provided by UNDHRET (2011) and the first model as described by Tibbitts (2002) and Mihr and Schmitz (2007).

Education through human rights

Article 2(2) (b) of UNDHRET (2011) defines the second element of HRE as education *through* human rights, that is, "learning and teaching in a way that respects the rights of both educators and learners" (p. 4). Jennings (2006) developed "standards for human rights education" (p. 292) for classroom teachers that emphasise students developing appropriate attitudes and thoughts through discussions on human rights issues and participation in different planned activities to build 'education through' human rights. He also argues that human rights instruments (UDHR, CRC) should be interpreted within students' social and historical contexts. Importance is also given to developing "instructional activities that allow students to take positive action relative to their own human rights and their responsibilities to protect and promote the rights of others" (Jennings, 2006, p. 293). Osler and Starkey (2005) argue that the Convention on the Rights of Child (CRC) (1989) has wide-ranging implications for pedagogical practices of HRE through teaching and learning activities in the classroom. The CRC has been considered in developing new education policy and curriculum in Bangladesh. Pedagogical aspects such as developing a creative and joyful environment for teaching and learning, students' participation in the educational process, fostering creative thinking, and ensuring equal opportunity, are also explored in the education policy (Ministry of Education, 2010) and national curriculum (National Curriculum and Textbook Board, 2012).

My study examined the extent to which the teaching and learning approaches being implemented in the case study school do meet approaches suggested by UNDHRET (2011), Jennings (2006) and other scholars and policy makers.

Education for human rights

The UNDHRET (2011) defines the third element of HRE - education *for* human rights as, "empowering persons to enjoy and exercise their rights and to respect and uphold the rights of others" (p. 4). This approach is also explained as fostering awareness "by which human rights can be translated into social and political reality" (UNESCO, 1978, p. 2). Many policy makers and researchers argue that youth participation and youth voice are central in promoting human rights education in schools (Council of Europe, 2010; Osler & Starkey, 2005; 2010). The UNCRC includes an obligation in its article 12(1) that states "parties

shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child" (UN General Assembly, 1989, p. 4). Osler and Starkey (2010) argue that "the degree of exercising rights by children and young people in the wider society significantly depends on the ways they experience schooling, and on the ways they experience human rights and democracy in schools" (p. 101).

Current education policy in Bangladesh has emphasised the CRC to ensure children's human rights through education and paying attention to the cultivation of human values, respecting human rights and development of democratic culture (Ministry of Education, 2010). In addition, in 2015, the Bangladesh Government announced a new focus on practising human rights values through the development of *student cabinets* in secondary schools. My study examined the extent to which students' voices and opinions were developed through their direct participation and involvement in the student cabinet as a form of empowerment. Students and teachers were also involved in developing new approaches to participatory human rights education in the school through action research.

1.4 Research methodology

My research, with its focus on current teaching and learning practices and developing new approaches to human rights education is situated within a socially critical paradigm that accepts all knowledge is value laden; and a socially critical perspective that is committed to values of social justice and social change (Macdonald, Kirk, Metzler, Nilges, Schempp & Wright, 2002). Macdonald et al. (2002) argue that:

> Typically, socially critical researchers ask questions about other people's assumptions and purposes as well as their own. Some underlying premises of socially critical research include (a) some groups in society are powerful while others are powerless, (b) powerful groups have a vested interest in maintaining power, (c) the purpose of inquiry is to challenge the status quo and impart social change, and (d) social reconstruction is brought about by first changing individual and group consciousness. (p. 140)

My study questioned the assumptions and ideas of teachers, students, the head teacher, and parents in relation to human rights education in Bangladesh. We then collaborated to

challenge the status quo through the development of action research focused on building new approaches.

The socially critical paradigm has strong connections with the Brazilian educationalist Freire's (1970) *theory of critical pedagogy.* Critical pedagogy provides a challenge to the existing power relations of teachers and students because it argues for democracy as a *method* of teaching, rather than as just the *goal* of education (Tsolidis, 2001). In the Bangladeshi context, my study examined how existing power relations are perceived by teachers and students with regard to human rights and how this could be developed further.

Conceptual framework and approach

My research utilised a human rights-based methodological framework that centres the study in research *about* human rights, research *through* human rights, and research *for* human rights. The aim of my research, the methodology and the outcomes, are all concerned with the principles of human rights. In short, it can be argued that my study is centred on a rights-based and democratic approach that is methodologically valid for the nature of the research.

Research 'about' human rights

'Education *about* human rights' includes providing knowledge and understanding of human rights norms and principles, the values that underpin these and the mechanisms for their protection. As educational research *about* human rights, my study explored the existing knowledge and understanding of students, teachers, head teacher and parents by examining their perceptions about human rights and HRE. My study showed concern for participants' human rights in a humanistic way that developed their knowledge and understanding. In this sense, as well as promoting human rights, my study forms a 'case study' 'about' human rights education. The nature of this study was to focus on a deep analysis of the particular pedagogies in a secondary school, in a particular place and time. Stake (1995) contends that a case study is concerned with "the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances" (p. xi). Yin (2009) identifies the characteristics of research question(s) relevant to examinations or investigations through case study method. He points out that '"how" and "why" questions are likely to favour the use of case studies" (p. 10). My research question: 'How

can pedagogies of human rights education be developed in secondary schools in Bangladesh?' is an example of this focus.

The qualitative case study involved the opinions (views, ideas, and experiences) of teachers, students, the head teacher and parents to answer two specific research questions: (1) How do teachers, students, the head teacher and parents perceive human rights education in a case study school; and (2) How do teachers implement human rights education in current teaching and learning practices? The secondary school was selected because they had begun to focus on human rights education and the teachers and head teacher were willing to be involved. Data were collected from two classroom teachers and the head teacher using semi-structured interviews, and from two groups of students (Grade 7 & 9) and parents through focus group discussions.

Research 'through' and 'for' human rights

'Education *through* human rights' includes learning and teaching in ways that respect the rights of both educators and learners. 'Education *for* human rights' involves empowering people to enjoy and exercise their rights, and to respect and uphold the rights of others. My study focused on developing 'educational research *through* human rights' so that the researcher and participants acted and learnt in a democratic way that respected all stakeholders' rights. Through the study, I also collaborated with the teachers to empower participants in the development of school community.

For the successful implementation of human rights education, UNESCO (2011) emphasises the need "to link research and policy in a way that enables not only the identification of common problems and challenges, but also the design of practical and effective solutions" (p. 15). My intention was to develop and change practices of human rights pedagogies in the selected school in Bangladesh and to disseminate the findings in order to inform HRE more broadly across Bangladesh and beyond.

I developed an action research component as part of this case study to involve participants in developing new approaches to human rights pedagogy through answering two specific research questions: (3) How can the school develop new approaches to human rights education and (4) What is the influence on student learning of the development of new approaches to human rights education?

According to Bradbury and Reason (2003), "the core concern for action researchers is to develop practical as well as conceptual contributions by doing research *with,* rather than *on* people" (p.156). In this part of my case study, I conducted research *with* teachers and students rather than *on* teachers and students; thus promoting a collaborative, reciprocal and respectful relationship, as we worked together to develop new approaches to HRE. Action research is appropriate in this context as "it provides an opportunity for educators to reflect on their own practices" (Creswell, 2012, p. 577) and to engage in cycles of planning, and reflection on planning and practice. Moreover, action research is relevant to the socially critical perspective informing my study as it focuses on an action dimension that is so important in human rights education. Bargal (2008) points out that action research is "rooted in the democratic philosophy of promoting individual welfare in a humanistic way" (p. 18).

In the Bangladeshi context, action research has been shown to have a positive impact on teachers' professional development (Salahuddin & Khatun, 2013). Teachers' responded to the opportunities to plan, implement and reflect on their learning in the manner that action research operates. I used a participatory action research component to develop new approaches to teaching and learning *about*, *through* and *for* human rights. As the researcher, I have played an important role as a participant in guiding and reflecting on the action research process with the teachers and students.

1.5 Motivation for conducting this study

My personal interest and motivation to conduct this study has been influenced by three goals that Bazeley (2013) defines as personal, practical and intellectual. She argues that personal goals usually motivate the researcher in a particular study and specific research may come from personal experiences. As a citizen of Bangladesh who grew up in a small rural village in a family of farmers, I personally witnessed and was a victim of human rights violations in the schools and community. I have also seen severe child rights violations in schools and a lack of effective teaching in HRE when I supervised under-graduate students' practice-teaching in primary and secondary schools in Dhaka city, as part of my professional role as a university teacher.

As a child and adolescent, I had no understanding of human rights. In my undergraduate and graduate studies at Dhaka University in the Institute of Education and Research (IER), I did not have opportunities to study HR and HRE. But during my Masters of Education degree at Dhaka University, in 2005, I studied two units named 'Education in Global Perspective' and 'Social Science Education in Global Perspective'. These studies provided me with an opportunity to learn about 'Human rights and children's rights', the 'Universal Declaration of Human rights', and 'Convention on the Rights of the Child' and motivated me to learn more about human rights and HRE. In 2012, I studied my MA in Global and International Citizenship Education at the University of York, United Kingdom. The 'Education and Social Justice' module focused on the importance of HRE in enabling social justice. This further fuelled my passion to conduct further research in this field and convinced me of the need for comprehensive research on building opportunities for young people to understand human rights. It is my hope that through education, society can reduce human rights abuses and discrimination and our children will be able to contribute to the creation of a human rights culture in school and society. Therefore, pedagogical innovation in HRE in secondary schools is needed as an investment for the future.

This has motivated me to conduct my study of current teaching and learning practices in HRE and to develop new pedagogy in this field in Bangladesh in a secondary school, in order to build teachers' professional learning and capacity in HRE.

As Eleanor Roosevelt who was the first Chairperson of the UN Human Rights Commission in 1946 which drafted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNDHR) said in 1958:

> Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home - so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighbourhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm, or office where he works. Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerted citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world.

My study started in one school, and included leaders, teachers, students and families, in considering how children's human rights can be matters considered in the classrooms and the schools.

1.6 Scope and limitations

I conducted my research in a government secondary school in Bangladesh over a period of three months. In addition, follow up interviews were conducted with two teachers and the head teacher to review the progress of action research in one year from the implementation. I triangulated and deepened my analysis using multiple sources of data (see Chapter 3 for details). Although substantial progress was made in the development and implementation of HRE in the school, I acknowledge that the findings are limited to a specific context. However, critical insights relating to the process and outcomes can be adopted and examined in different contexts, particularly in developing countries, to generate further knowledge and understanding of HRE in schools.

1.7 Thesis outline and structure

This thesis is outlined and organised into ten chapters. A brief summary of each chapter is provided here.

Chapter 1 Introduction: provides a brief introduction to the concept and scope of HRE and the rationale, aims and approaches in the study.

Chapter 2 Literature review: discusses literature related to HRE. The first section explores the context of the study including the background of current education policy and curriculum related to HRE in Bangladesh; the current situation of HR in Bangladesh; and relevant research in Bangladesh. The second section discusses the conceptual and theoretical background of human rights education including the definition of HRE. The third section explores literature related to how a pedagogy of human rights education can be developed through the HRE framework- education *about, through* and *for* human rights.

Chapter 3 Research methodology: discusses the methodological approaches, research questions, theoretical perspectives and methodological framework. This chapter explains

why a qualitative case study approach was chosen with an action research component, and how the school and participants were selected for this study. Data collection and analysis procedures are explained. I explore how I established rigour and trustworthiness throughout the process of conducting this research, especially in the process of data analysis and reporting on the findings. In the final section, I discuss the ethical considerations that informed this study and the methodological challenges.

Chapter 4 Practices in education *about, through* and *for* HR before the action research: explores how HR and HRE were perceived by the participants in the first phase of the study. I analyse and discuss data captured from the observations, interviews with the two classroom teachers, head teacher, and focus group discussion with two groups of students and parents. The first section, *education about human rights* discusses the current perceptions of the head teacher, classroom teachers, students, and parents. In the second section focused on *education through human rights*, I explore the current teaching and learning approaches to HRE based on the opinion of participants and classroom observations. In the final section focused on *education for human rights*, I explore how current approaches to HRE in the school address students' voice and participation.

Chapter 5 Planning and implementing HRE through action research: explores how action research was used in this study as a component of the case study and an instrument for collecting data. I explain the process of planning and implementing HRE through the development of collaborative and participatory action research. Finally, I conclude with some recommendations for the development of collaborative action research.

Chapter 6 Development of education *about* human rights: reports findings on how HRE was developed in the school through the implementation of education *about* human rights. I analyse and discuss data captured from reflective sessions with teachers and students, classroom observations and field notes. It also includes post-action research interviews with two classroom teachers and the head teacher, and focus group discussions with students and their parents.

Chapter 7 Practice and development of education *through* human rights: discusses how HRE was developed through the implementation of education *through* human rights. I analyse and discuss data captured from reflective sessions with teachers and students, classroom observations and field notes. It also includes post-action research interviews

with two classroom teachers and the head teacher, and focus group discussion with students and their parents.

Chapter 8 Practice and development of education *for* human rights: explores how education *for* human rights evolved through action research aiming to increase HRE through collaboration between the teachers and students to build the development of the *student cabinet* in the school. I discuss how we worked with the students, and analyse and discuss data captured from reflective sessions with the teachers, the head teacher, members of the *student cabinet* and field notes. The chapter also includes discussion of post-action research interviews with the teachers and head teacher, and focus group discussions with members of cabinet.

Chapter 9 Implementation of HRE: progress in one year: explores evidence of progress in the implementation of HRE captured through follow up interviews and observations one year after completion of the action research in the case study school. I analyse and discuss data collected from interviews with the two classroom teachers and head teacher who were involved in the action research, using thematic analysis to examine transcripts of the interviews.

Chapter 10 Conclusion: provides a discussion of the key findings and overall conclusions of the study. The implications of the findings and recommendations for HRE policy, practice and teacher professional learning are discussed and possibilities suggested for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature review

2.1 Introduction and purpose

This literature review discusses a number of separate but intersecting fields from an expansive and rich international literature on human rights education (HRE). Merriam and Simpson (2000) argue that the literature review helps "to develop a conceptual framework or to explore a topical area for study" (p. 10). In this chapter, I explain relevant concepts in the study, and map relationships between these concepts (Rocco & Plakhotnik, 2009).

The review consists of three sections that cover broad areas of literature related to the study. The first section explores the context of the study including the background of education policy and curriculum related to HRE in Bangladesh; the current situation of human rights in Bangladesh; and the state of current relevant research in Bangladesh. The second section discusses the conceptual and theoretical background of human rights education including the definition of human rights education. The third and final section explains how a pedagogy of human rights education can be developed through the HRE framework-education *about*, *through* and *for* human rights (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2011).

2.2 Context of the study

2.2.1 Background of education policy and curriculum in Bangladesh

The literature shows that the historical background of Bangladesh and its constitution have played a significant role in shaping HRE education policy and curriculum. However, while the government of Bangladesh has expressed a commitment to HRE, it has not been implemented effectively across the nation in schools to date.

After becoming a nation independent from Pakistan in 1971, the constitution declaring Bangladesh to be a secular and democratic country was passed in 1972. The constitution includes significant attention to the rights of its citizens. In particular, articles 17 and 28 spell out the constitutional obligations regarding education and human rights. Briefly, it can be summarised that the constitution clearly reflects the state's strong commitment to providing equal opportunities and quality education for its citizens, regardless of race,

culture, gender or religion, and to create trained and motivated citizens who can meet the needs of the society. Freedom of choice, rights and participation, democracy, respect for literacy and social needs, diversity and empowerment are the values of citizenship articulated in the Bangladeshi constitution (Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, 1999).

Considering global dimensions of education and local needs, the government of Bangladesh developed and enacted new education policy in 2010 and declared that, "The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh has been taken into consideration in the formulation of National Education Policy" (p. 8). The Ministry of Education (2010) stated that the UN Child Rights Convention (CRC) has been emphasized to ensure children's human rights through education, since Bangladesh is a member state and signatory to the CRC. They noted that, "The primary objectives of this policy are directed toward the cultivation of human values" (p. 8). Significant attention has been paid to the issues of human rights education in new education policy. For example, some major objectives include:

- to inspire students with the spirit of our war of liberation and develop patriotism, nationalism and qualities of good citizens (i.e., sense of justice, non-communalism, dutifulness, awareness of human rights, cultivation of free thinking and discipline, love for honest living, the tolerance of corporate life, friendliness and perseverance);
- to remove socio-economic discrimination irrespective of race, religion and creed and to eradicate gender disparity; to develop non-communalism, friendliness, global fraternity, fellow-feeling and respect for human rights;
- to show tolerance for different ideologies for the development of a democratic culture and to help develop a life-oriented, realistic and positive outlook; and
- to ensure skills of high standard at different areas and levels of education so that learners can successfully compete in the global context.

(Ministry of Education, 2010, pp. 1-2)

Pedagogical aspects, such as developing a creative and joyful environment for teaching and learning, ensuring students' participation in the educational process, fostering creative thinking, and ensuring equal opportunity, are also explored in the policy. In 2015, the Bangladesh Government announced a new focus on practicing and developing students' democratic values, for example, students' voice, participation and engagement in school activities through the development of *student cabinet* in secondary schools (see section 2.4.3 for details). However, while this active participation was suggested as an important pedagogical approach in the curriculum, and as an incentive for schools to develop a stronger focus on student involvement in this area of learning, there is evidence that it has been challenging for teachers, and required teacher professional learning (Tithi, Begum, Islam & Faisal, 2016). The strong policy focus on HRE and new emphases on developing students' involvement in this learning is a further justification for my study.

In 2012, the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) initiated a review of the curriculums of India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Singapore, Australia, United Kingdom and Canada to develop understanding of the global dimensions of curriculum content, teaching and learning approaches and their applicability in the Bangladeshi context. The secondary school curriculum has placed special importance on "the issue of human rights aiming to eradicate all forms of discrimination" (NCTB, 2012, p. 3) and on "the issue of democratic values aiming to create competent citizens" (p. 7) who will show interest in democracy and become active democratic citizens. A cross-curricular approach has been documented for human rights education, although subjects such as 'Bangladesh and Global Studies,' and 'Civics and Citizenship' have been the main focus. A variety of classroom activities, such as discussion, group-work, story-telling, writing, drawing, debate, role-playing, question-answer, and demonstrations were suggested. Instructions were given for teachers to adopt these activities in the classroom based on different subjects and lessons. Other educational materials such as textbooks and teacher's guides were also been developed for students and teachers.

Since the Bangladeshi education system is centralised, the same education policy and curriculum is expected to be implemented across Bangladesh. Suggested teaching and learning strategies are provided for teachers of different levels and subjects. However, complete pedagogical guidelines for human rights education have not yet been elaborated in the curriculum. The exploration in my study of how a secondary school implements

human rights education in the enacted curriculum and how it could be further developed will add to the literature in this field. Considering the context of Bangladesh and its national curriculum, current teaching and learning strategies suggested in the curriculum were considered as fundamental in developing the pedagogy of human rights education in my study, but since the literature showed that this was in the early stages of development and implementation, it was important to also explore wider literature in this field.

2.2.2 Human rights in Bangladesh and the role of education

In spite of the constitutional obligations and reflection of HR in national education policy and in curriculum, it is a matter of regret that human rights including children's human rights are still violated in Bangladesh, in families, schools and the community (Atiqul Haque, Janson, Moniruzzaman, Rahman, Mashreky & Eriksson, 2017; Atiqul Haque et al., 2019; Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum, 2013; Banks, 2007; Chowdhury & Islam, 2013; Chowdhury, Islam, & Mia, 2014; Hasanat & Fahim, 2014; Human Rights Watch, 2017; Mohajan, 2014; Mohiuddin, Khatun & Al-Kamal, 2012; Odhikar 2014). Human rights are even violated by the law enforcement agency of Bangladesh, since Momtaz (2013) contends that:

> The law enforcing agencies, which are considered the key component of a democratic society all over the world, are primarily responsible for the preservation of peace and order, protection of life and property of the citizens and prevention and detection of crime. But during the last few years, human rights violations by the law enforcing agencies in Bangladesh have increased alarmingly. (p. 101)

Ahmed (2014) argues that "the people of Bangladesh continually suffer from a myriad of human rights violations" (p. 308) and violence against women and children is systemic. She points out that women and underage girls are victims of acid throwing, domestic violence, rape and teasing, and many children are working in the formal and informal economy instead of going to school. Mohajan (2014) claims that, "about 13% of the children of Bangladesh are involved in child labour and are deprived of education and other child rights, even sometimes involving crimes of carrying arms, drugs and other illegal materials" (p. 207). Other forms of children's human rights violations include child trafficking, child marriage, child prostitution, lack of inclusivity, and corporal punishment

(Bangladesh Shishu Odhikar Forum, 2013). Hasanat and Fahim (2014) argue that "corporal punishment has been widely treated as a traditional form of disciplinary action on the children at many schools in Bangladesh" (p. 21), even though the government of Bangladesh banned all forms of corporal punishment in schools in 2011. Atiqul Haque, Janson, Moniruzzaman, Rahman, Mashreky and Eriksson (2017) note that "Child maltreatment (CM) is a public health problem and is recognized as a huge barrier for child development" (p. 876). They contend that:

> Different kinds of abuse are obviously common in Bangladesh, and the schools do not follow the law from 2011 prohibiting corporal punishment at school. The society has to take further steps to live up to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was ratified already in 1990, to protect the Bangladeshi children from CM. (p. 876)

Several research studies have been conducted on 'eve teasing', a significant issue of human rights violation in Bangladesh (Hoque, 2013; Islam & Amin, 2016; Khan, 2015; Wafa & Mostofa, 2013). Hoque (2013) presents a disturbing scenario of eve-teasing in Bangladesh, noting that:

> Eve teasing stands for a kind of sexual harassment of a young woman. At present it has become a big problem in Bangladesh. Most of the girls can not walk on the streets without being teased by an opposite sex. Many girls committ suicide as a result of eve teasing. Many female students stopped their studies and even going outdoors. (p. 1)

Hoque (2013) listed some reasons that he suggests encourage eve-teasing, including natural attraction to each other, lack of religious education, absence of family education, absence of law, exploration of technology, and lack of social cohesion. He suggests focusing on religious education, particularly imposing "Islamic Education in each and every stage of education life to abolish eve teasing" (2013, p. 7). In addition, he suggests avoiding 'co-education' arguing that "we have to avoid co-education to keep secure our children from these kinds of hazards and eve teasing" (2013, p. 8) since co-education encourages boys and girls to be closer than is acceptable. Another recent study, by Islam and Amin (2016) provides some useful insights, finding that "almost every young girl is a

victim of teasing, especially by the local young teaser" (2016, p. 3), and that the major consequences of eve teasing are suicide, blocking education for girls, child marriage, mental illness, family trouble, killing and oppression. This study also explored the role of education in preventing eve-teasing, with Islam and Amin (2016) arguing:

> As the eve teasing problem is starting from schools, colleges or universities, we need to address this problem in the education institutes. We have to make sure they are free from eve teasers. At the same time, if we can eradicate this crisis, we will get our young generation back in their business. They will think positively and will be interested to do positive works for the society. (p. 5)

However, although Islam and Amin (2016) argue for the eradication of eve teasing, they do not provide ideas for how this might be achieved. Khan's (2015) study provides different social and legal perspectives on the issue of eve teasing rather than the specific role of schools or education. Wafa and Mostofa (2013) discuss the causes and effects of eve teasing and recommend some remedies, including public humiliation and detention of perpetrators, as well as compensation for victims. However, none of these studies address the role of schooling or education to remove or minimize eve teasing in society.

Overall, it can be argued that people in Bangladesh, including young children, are experiencing human rights' violations, and while this is a significant societal problem it is evident that education is not functioning effectively to prepare young people with the desired values of human rights. However, the Government of Bangladesh is committed to improving children's human rights through education, by paying attention to the CRC (Ministry of Education, 2010). It is a positive initiative that many of these human rights issues are explored in the secondary school curriculum and textbooks (NCTB, 2012), but this also needs to be implemented in practice. My study aims to develop new approaches and pedagogy to enact HRE.

2.2.3 Recent research on HRE in Bangladesh

Substantial research on HRE, particularly in pedagogy, has not been conducted in Bangladesh, so there is a gap in the literature. In the following section I discuss what research has been undertaken.

Mujeri (2010) conducted a study entitled 'The Rights-Based Approach to Education in Bangladesh' focused on examining "Bangladesh's record in implementing the right to education in terms of three dimensions of policy-making, e.g. the process of formulation, the contents, and monitoring of implementation" (p. 139). Findings suggest that human rights-based approaches for example, principles of participation, equality, non-discrimination, universality, and indivisibility are not well reflected in the education system in Bangladesh. Findings also suggest that "the current approach to education provides emphasis on achieving the outcomes, with little concern about the process, which is an integral component of the right to education" (p. 198). Mujeri (2010) notes that:

> At present, the concerns of human rights do not guide educational strategies and programmes in the country. At the macro-level, meeting the challenge requires measures aiming at mainstreaming human rights and integrating human rights issues in educational processes. Unless the human rights principles and obligations are reflected in educational strategies and policies, the present approach to education, guided by human capital formation, would emphasize economically relevant knowledge, marketable skills and market related competence at the expense of human rights values. Such a reductionist approach, which highlights only the economic value of schooling and its rate of return, puts the priority on just one of the purposes of education and shall not provide sound basis for human rights-based education in the country. (p. 196)

Overall, Mujeri (2010) argues that "Human rights education is in its infancy in Bangladesh" (p. 197) and strongly recommends a promoting human rights culture with links to social change. He suggests developing students' knowledge, skills and values of human rights and promoting HRE in schools. However, this study did not explore how HRE pedagogy could be developed in schools following the United Nations' (2011) benchmark framework of HRE-education *about, through* and *for* human rights. So, a gap remained to be addressed which is a focus of my study.

A textbook analysis study conducted by Islam and Tithi (2014) found that aspects of human rights were not well addressed in the secondary school curriculum and textbooks, although some contemporary issues of human rights are incorporated. They found that aspects explored were mostly knowledge dominant, rather than values and skills focused (Islam &

Tithi, 2014). These emphases do not provide students with opportunities to develop their views on issues and capacity to take-action on HR. Similarly, Islam (2015) conducted a study of democratic citizenship education in the Bangladeshi secondary school curriculum focusing on how opportunities for practicing values of human rights and democracy were provided. He found that aspects of human rights values (i.e. rights and responsibilities of citizens, diversity, and participation) were unevenly explored in the curriculum and that opportunities for active participation by the students were very limited in schools. A recent World Vision, Bangladesh funded study conducted by Tithi et al. (2016), reported that school curriculum and textbooks have not given sufficient space to examining children's rights and child protection, even though students showed a strong desire to know about their rights and this was generally supported by parents. However, based on the analysis of different stakeholders' opinions, Tithi et al. (2016) provided some significant recommendations related to pedagogy of human rights education in schools, for example: ensuring a safe environment for students in school; increasing knowledge among teachers, parents and school managing committee members around the issues of children's human rights; involving family, social workers and schools working together; promoting teacher training; organizing co-curricular activities in school around the issues of child rights; and forming child protection team in school. The recommendations from their study were significant to my study in developing new pedagogies for human rights education, since my study engages teachers, students, and parents through the action research to explore their views and participation in developing new approaches.

It can be concluded that the review of the literature revealed gaps in human rights research and limited discussion of the pedagogy for human rights education in Bangladesh; indicating a critical need for further research in this area. My study addresses gaps identified in the literature regarding the need to develop new pedagogy for HRE. Most importantly, my study also engages students in learning that values student voice and participation in line with the central goals of a more holistic approach to human rights education.

It is important to note that my research not only considered the gaps in the literature, but also the needs and significance of developing students' knowledge, skills and values of human rights and promoting HRE in schools that Mujeri (2010) recommends for HRE in Bangladesh. I believed that the development of HRE in schools could create a culture of

HR practices which could help to minimise issues of human rights violation in the society and help to bring social change. However, as a researcher and educator I assumed that it would not be easy to develop HRE and a culture of HR practices in a selected secondary school in Bangladesh, since this had not been established in the past in Bangladesh.

2.3 The development of the concept and implementation of HRE

2.3.1 The definition of HRE

In order to frame my study of human rights education in a secondary school in Bangladesh, it was important to examine the definition and conceptualisation of 'human rights education' in the literature and relevant policies.

The Office of the United Nations High Commission of Human Rights (UNHCHR) states that:

> Human rights education promotes values, beliefs and attitudes that encourage all individuals to uphold their own rights and those of others. It develops an understanding of everyone's common responsibility to make human rights a reality in each community.
>
> Human rights education constitutes an essential contribution to the long-term prevention of human rights abuses and represents an important investment in the endeavour to achieve a just society in which all human rights of all persons are valued and respected.

A further recognized definition is derived from the *United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training* (2011) adopted by the United Nations Human Rights Council (2011). Article 2(1) declares that:

> Human rights education and training comprises all educational, training, information, awareness-raising and learning activities aimed at promoting universal respect for and observance of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and thus contributing to, inter alia, the prevention of human rights violations and abuses by providing persons with knowledge, skills and understanding and developing their attitudes and

> behaviours, to empower them to contribute to the building and promotion of a universal culture of human rights. (p. 4)

The concept of human rights education originates from Article 26(2) of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948), which states that "education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms" (UN General Assembly, 1948, p. 6). As a subsequent human rights instrument, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) also made a significant contribution to the emerging field of human rights education, as an obligation was made for governments of signatory countries to make the principles and provisions of the Convention widely known by appropriate and active means to adults and children (Article 42). It spells out a number of rights that emphasize education, educational opportunity, quality of education and contents of education in articles 28 and 29.

The United Nations, as well as other bodies and people including the Office of the United Nations High Commission of Human Rights (UNHCHR), the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC), the United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), have worked towards the creation of a favourable international culture for the promotion of human rights education. Different aspects of human rights education are defined, documented and promoted by these organizations. Other International organizations including Amnesty International, Youth for Human Rights, Human Rights Watch, World Vision, the Council of Europe, the Asian Centre for Human Rights, and the Asian Human Rights Commission are dedicated to the promotion and protection of human rights and human rights education. The Council of Europe (2010) defines human rights education as:

> …education, training, awareness raising, information, practices and activities which aim, by equipping learners with knowledge, skills and understanding and developing their attitudes and behavior, to empower learners to contribute to the building and defense of a universal culture of human rights in society, with a view to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. (p. 7)

As an outcome of the World Conference on Human Rights in 1993, the Vienna Declaration, (UN General Assembly, 1993) reaffirmed that:

> States are duty-bound, as stipulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and in other international human rights instruments, to ensure that education is aimed at strengthening the respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms. (p. 8)

The World Conference on Human Rights emphasizes the importance of incorporating the subject of human rights education programmes and calls upon States to do so. Education should promote understanding, tolerance, peace and friendly relations between the nations and all racial or religious groups and encourage the development of United Nations activities in pursuance of these objectives. Therefore, education on human rights and the dissemination of proper information, both theoretical and practical, play an important role in the promotion and respect of human rights with regard to all individuals without distinction of any kind such as race, sex, language or religion, and this should be integrated in the education policies at the national as well as international levels. The World Conference on Human Rights notes that resource constraints and institutional inadequacies may impede the immediate realization of these objectives.

Bajaj (2017) concludes that "…the 1993 UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna was a watershed moment for HRE" (p. 3). Section D is dedicated to HRE and states that, "The World Conference on Human Rights considers human rights education, training and public information essential for the promotion and achievement of stable and harmonious relations among communities and for fostering mutual understanding, tolerance and peace" (Article 78, p. 18). In addition, it stated that "Human rights education should include peace, democracy, development and social justice, as set forth in international and regional human rights instruments, in order to achieve common understanding and awareness with a view to strengthening universal commitment to human rights" (Article, 80, p. 18). The Vienna Declaration also strongly recommended state parties and the UN to take a more active role in HRE. As an outcome of the recommendations, the United Nations immediately called for the UN Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004) (United Nations Human Rights Council, 1996) and initiated a Human Rights Education program named the *Plan of action for the first phase (2005-*

2007) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education (United Nations, 2006). Though initially it was 2005 to 2007, the duration ended in 2009 (United Nations, 2012). This program provided further guidelines for HRE implementation. As suggested by the United Nations (2006) report:

> Human rights education can be defined as education, training and information aiming at building a universal culture of human rights through the sharing of knowledge, imparting of skills and moulding of attitudes directed to:
> (a) The strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms;
> (b) The full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity;
> (c) The promotion of understanding, tolerance, gender equality and friendship among all nations, indigenous peoples and racial, national, ethnic, religious and linguistic groups;
> (d) The enabling of all persons to participate effectively in a free and democratic society governed by the rule of law;
> (e) The building and maintenance of peace;
> (f) The promotion of people-centred sustainable development and social justice. (p. 12)

This program focused on three particular components: knowledge and skills; values, attitudes and behavior; and action (United Nations, 2006).

Many scholars in this field discuss the definition of HRE, for example, Jerome (2018) argues that "human rights education (HRE) seeks to provide young people with an optimistic sense that we can work towards a more peaceful and socially just world, and that everyone can do something to contribute to securing improvement" (p. 46). Bajaj (2017) defines "human rights education (HRE) as a field that utilizes teaching and learning processes to educate *about* basic rights and *for* the broadening of respect for the dignity and freedom of all people(s)" (p. 1). Tibbitts (2017a) argues that "HRE is a deeply practical expression of the high-minded ideals of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) - a deliberate attempt to foster a worldwide human rights culture" (p. 69). According to Zajda and Ozdowski (2017), HRE "refers to the transfer and acquisition of knowledge concerning human rights and the necessary skills of how to apply them" (p. 5).

They also add that human rights education is “about adoption of universal values and behaviours” (p. 5).

Based on the review of different policy documents and academic literature, it can be concluded that the ultimate goal of HRE is to provide opportunities for understanding and practising human rights norms and values to achieve peoples’ own rights and defend human rights violations (working for others rights), in order to build a universal culture of human rights.

2.3.2 The fundamental sources of HRE

There are many recognised instruments adopted by the United Nations for human rights and human rights education that are relevant to my study. These include The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) (UN General Assembly, 1948), The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) (UN General Assembly, 1966), The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) (UN General Assembly, 1989),The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979) (UN General Assembly, 1979) The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) (UN General Assembly, 2006) and The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007) (UN General Assembly, 2007). Jennings (2006) argues that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948) can be considered the basic source of content for human rights education and “The Convention on the Rights of the Child is particularly appropriate for those working with children and in many cases may hold the greatest interest for children themselves” (p. 290). Nastasi and Naser (2014) point out that “the purpose of the United Nations’ Convention on the Rights of the Child was to extend human rights to all children (birth to 18 years), through a legally binding international instrument” (p. 37).

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948) proclaimed education to be a fundamental right in Article 26:

> 1. Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

> 2. Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.
> 3. Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.
> (UN General Assembly, 1948, p. 6)

Similarly, the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC, 1989) spells out a number of rights that emphasize the educational opportunity and the quality of education to which children have a right. In particular, articles 28 and 29 stipulate different aspects of children's human rights education focused on the contents and modern teaching and learning methods. Article 29 outlines the goals of education and specifically, the article states the following:
The education of the child shall be directed to:

> (a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential; (b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations; (c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own; (d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin; (e) The development of respect for the natural environment. (UN General Assembly, 1989, p. 9)

Besides these education-focused rights, other rights include freedom of expression; freedom of thought, conscience and religion; freedom of association; protecting the child from all forms of physical and mental violence; protection of privacy; recognizing the right of the child to rest and leisure, play and recreational activities and to participate in cultural life (UN General Assembly, 1989).

These aspects explored in the UDHR and CRC are important for my study, as these two declarations are recommended by the UNHCHR (2004), who argue that "the core content of human rights education in schools is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child" (p. 19). It can be noted that these two policies are part of the secondary school curriculum in Bangladesh. In addition, the National Children Policy (NCP) (2011) and Children Act (CA) (2013) have been formulated to harmonize the government's actions and strategies to protect children from all forms of violence and abuse. My study investigates how these declarations are perceived by teachers, parents and students and enacted as fundamental instruments of human rights.

2.4 Theory and pedagogy of HRE

2.4.1 Education *about, through* and *for* human rights

In 2011, the international community formally recognised the importance of HRE and developed a benchmark for HRE framework through the adaptation of The UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training (Osler, 2015). Amnesty International (2012) strongly acknowledges that:

> The UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training is a landmark instrument which supports initiatives of human rights education and training at all levels and encourages a higher level of commitment among member states for systematic and comprehensive programmes on human rights education, within all educational sectors – formal, informal and non-formal. (p. iv)

Many approaches to human rights education were adopted by the United Nations in the *Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training* (2011). Article 1 states that "Everyone has the right to know, seek and receive information about all human rights and fundamental freedoms and should have access to human rights education and training" (p. 4). Article 2(2) states that the pedagogy of human rights education should encompass:

(a) Education *about* human rights, which includes providing knowledge and understanding of human rights norms and principles, the values that underpin them and the mechanisms for their protection;

(b) Education *through* human rights, which includes learning and teaching in a way that respects the rights of both educators and learners;

(c) Education *for* human rights, which includes empowering persons to enjoy and exercise their rights and to respect and uphold the rights of others.

(United Nations Human Rights Council, 2011, p. 4)

According to the *Declaration,* it can be argued that *how* human rights education is taught has equal significance with *what* is taught, and therefore effective teaching and learning processes are integral to the successful implementation of human rights education. The strong themes embodied in the *Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training* (2011) can be traced through the literature, namely that the pedagogy of human rights education should be 'about, through and for' human rights.

Based on the analysis of the literature it can be argued that most theorists agree that there are different conceptual models of human rights education (for example, Evans, 2006; Jennings, 2006; Mihr & Schmitz, 2007; Tibbitts, 2002). Tibbitts (2002) presents three models of HRE in different sectors of education, namely, "the Values and Awareness Model, the Accountability Model and the Transformational Model" (p. 159). Tibbitts (2002) describes the 'values and awareness model' as 'education about' human rights. She notes that, "the main focus of human rights education is to transmit basic knowledge of human rights issues and to foster its integration into public values. Public education awareness campaigns and school-based curriculum typically fall within this model" (Tibbitts, 2002, p. 163). According to this model, HRE includes the history of human rights, basic information about human rights instruments and mechanism of protections, as well as universal concerns of human rights issues. Common target audiences for this model are schools and general public. Therefore, this model is relevant to my study in demonstrating the need to understand the scope of knowledge and content for HRE in the schools. Similar to Tibbitts (2002), Mihr and Schmitz (2007) also argue that human rights education can be conceived through three levels and characterise the first as a cognitive model, second as an emotional awareness model and third as an action model. As in the values and awareness model described by Tibbitts (2002), the cognitive model provides basic knowledge and information about universal human rights standards through the major international documents such as the UDHR (1948), UNCRC (1989).

Pike and Selby (1988) developed a framework for HRE entitled "learning *about*, learning *for*, learning *in* (or *through*)" (p. 49) human rights. They argue that 'learning *about'* human rights is "primarily a knowledge-oriented process concerned with the assimilation and interpretation of facts, concepts, data and evidence" (p. 49). For example, they suggest that in 'learning *about*' human rights, students can learn about the fundamental international documents of human rights, such as UNDHR (1948); the principal concepts of human rights. Another similar framework with a specific focus on HRE developed by the Amnesty International for Human Rights Friendly School, focuses on three propositions, namely: "education about human rights, education through human rights and education for human rights" (Amnesty International, 2012, p. 2). Education *about* is defined as "knowledge and understanding of human rights norms, principles, instruments, and the values that underpin them" (Amnesty International, 2012, p. 2).

Overall, there is range of literature referring to education *about* human rights related to developing knowledge and understanding. This is the content focused component of HRE. My study examines the extent to which the human rights education opportunities in the case study school meet the definitions of this model as described by Tibbitts (2002), Mihr and Schmitz (2007); Pike and Selby (1988) and Amnesty International (2012). It was clear that I needed to explore questions with stakeholders in my study including: How do you define human rights and child rights? What are the rights of the children acknowledged by the Convention on the Rights of the Child? According to the constitution of Bangladesh, how do you explain human rights?

According to Tibbitts's (2002) accountability model, "learners are already expected to be directly or indirectly associated with the guarantee of human rights" (p. 165), but the audiences for this model are professionals, such as lawyers, human rights' advocates, journalists, not students in schools. According to her third transformative model "human rights education programming is geared towards empowering the individual to both recognize human rights abuses and to commit to their prevention" (p. 166) and the target audiences are "vulnerable populations, victims of abuse and trauma, post-conflict societies" (p. 166). This is an area where schools can potentially achieve some progress through empowering young people who are abused or have experience trauma, to reach out and seek support.

Mihr and Schmitz's (2007) emotional awareness model has connection to education *through* human rights, since it is dedicated to creating "a consciousness for human rights and its violations" (p. 978). They argue that the direct and indirect experience of injustice and other abuses can serve as a link between cognitive knowledge and emotional reaction. However, the individuals would not need to have experienced a human rights violation (as compared with Tibbitts' (2002) definition); rather they would just need to learn about someone who had experienced a human rights violation, which then inspires them to learn more and to take-action to stop human rights violation to others. This idea is relevant to my study, since I could include learning approaches in the classrooms that connects students' experiences and issues of human rights abuse to build their motivation and awareness to prevent human rights violation.

Jennings (2006) developed "standards for human rights education" (p. 292) for classroom teachers that emphasise students developing appropriate attitudes and thoughts through discussions on human rights issues and participation in different planned activities to build 'education through' human rights. Jennings (2006) argues that human rights instruments (i.e. UDHR, CRC) should be interpreted given students' social and historical contexts. 'Education through human rights' can also be traced through the third component of Pike and Selby's (1988) framework for HRE where they conceptualise 'learning *in* (or *through*)' in the following way:

> The knowledge and skills elements remain, but in addition, learning is reinforced through the very nature of the classroom environment: the quality of interpersonal relationships and the methods of teaching and learning exhibit an intrinsic respect for the rights (whilst, of course, reaffirming the duties) of students and of the teacher. (p. 50)

According to Amnesty International (2012), education *through* human rights is defined as "learning through inclusive, participatory and democratic methods that respects the rights of both educators and learners" (p. 2). Jennings (2006), Mihr and Schmitz (2007), Pike and Selby (1988) and Amnesty International's (2012) views all informed my views on how I could develop existing teaching and learning practices and work with teachers in the development of new teaching and learning approaches through the action research.

According to Evans (2006), the aim of a transformative model of human rights education is to reach beyond knowledge, to change the lives of students 'for' the achievement of human rights. Similarly, Osler and Starkey (2010) argue that the principles of human rights education encourage commitment to social justice and solidarity with those whose rights are denied, the development of critical thinking skills, and the skills to effect change ('education for' human rights). Pike and Selby (1988) argue that:

> "…learning *for* human rights will require not only the acquisition of relevant knowledge, but also the development and practice of the skills necessary for the defence and promotion of human rights. These would undoubtedly include effective communication skills, skills of co-operation, negotiation and decision-making and, probably, non-violent action and campaigning skills. (p. 49)

Amnesty International's views on education *for* human rights see it as, "teaching and learning that allows the practice of human rights in daily life and empowers persons to enjoy and exercise their rights and to respect and uphold the rights of others" (Amnesty International, 2012, p. 2).

These ideas are relevant to my case study, since my aim was to engage students in new approaches to human rights education where their ideas and experiences would be valued and discussed. My review of the literature convinced me that developing pedagogical approaches with a focus "about, through and for' human rights education would provide a useful analytical frame for my research, as a way of exploring the existing human rights education in a secondary school in Bangladesh and in developing new approaches.

2.4.2 Implications of the CRC for pedagogical practices

Osler and Starkey (2005) argue that the principles of democratic participation depend on structures, organization and management of schools, adding that the Convention on the Rights of Child (CRC) (1989) has wide-ranging implications for pedagogical practices. Based on the CRC, Osler and Starkey (2005) suggest a number of principles which should be applied to the process of teaching and learning human rights and the practice of democracy in the classroom. They identified the importance of the first principle as *dignity and security* (CRC preamble, 19, 23, 28.2, 29), which emphasises the relationship between

teachers and students in the classroom and the need to avoid abuse of power on the part of the teacher. The second principle is *participation* (CRC 12, 13, 14, 15, 31). This includes opportunities for students to exercise their rights and responsibilities in decision making processes which affect them at classroom level. The third is *identity and inclusivity* (CRC preamble, 2, 7, 8, 16, 23, 28, 29, 31), which requires participants to value diversity in the classroom in terms of cultural, emotional or physical deficiencies or differences. The fourth principle *freedom* (CRC 12, 13, 14, 15), focuses on student's freedom of expression that should be valued in teaching and learning practices. The fifth principle is *access to information* (CRC 17), that stresses the availability and access to sources of information. Osler and Starkey (2005) also comment on the importance of *privacy* (CRC 16), arguing that teachers should be careful to protect children's reputations when discussing individuals and sharing information. They also add that teachers should consider the context when asking students questions related to personal information and privacy. These principles are very significant in the Bangladeshi context, as the Government is committed to implementing the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child through its education (Ministry of Education, 2010) and the UNCRC has been explored in the curriculum and textbooks (NCTB, 2012).

2.4.3 Youth participation and youth voice

Youth participation and youth voice are seen to be central in promoting human rights education in schools (Council of Europe, 2010; Osler & Starkey, 2005; Osler & Starkey, 2010). The UNCRC states that "state parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child" (UN General Assembly, 1989, p. 4). Osler and Starkey (2010) argue that "the degree of exercising rights by children and young people in the wider society significantly depends on "the ways they experience schooling and human rights and democracy in schools" (p. 101). Roh (2004) states that practices of democratic rights in schools can be successful when "students have opportunities to learn through direct participation in decision-making on matters related to their own concerns and interests as well as through classroom lessons" (p. 174). UNESCO (2006) emphasises promoting human rights education through a holistic perspective where HRE should "constitute the basis for the democratization of education systems in the context of national education reforms with a

view to integrating the learning and practice of HR" (p. 8). Gollob, Krapf, Olafsdottir and Weidinger (2010) argue that:

> To become a full active member of society, citizens need to be given the opportunity to work together in the interests of common good; respect all voices, even dissenting ones; participate in the formal political process; and cultivate the habits and values of democracy and human rights in their everyday lives and activities. (p. 10)

As part of my study, I was interested in investigating the extent to which young people in the case study school did have opportunities to express their voice and views, both through the student cabinet and in other ways. Osler and Starkey (2010) argue that "pupil voice refers to children's expressions of their opinions in school, and these may be made directly, or through a representative body, such as a student council" (p. 105). Similarly, UNICEF (2007) argues for practicing human rights and democratic values through "student government" (p. 80) and explains that:

> Children's governments work to improve many different aspects of school and community life, such as education, health, protection, water and AIDS awareness. Activities include tutoring, initiating dialogue with teachers, holding awareness-raising campaigns, improving the school's physical environment and practicing good hygiene. (p. 81)

UNICEF (2007) comments that student representative bodies in schools can be a powerful tool with potential to promote students' participation, improve the quality of education, school and community life. Learning about rights and responsibilities, achieving problem-solving skills, developing sense of gender equality, having opportunity for building sense of team spirit are also suggested learning opportunities through this tool. Holdsworth and Jones (2006) also argue that youth participation and youth voice can be developed in schools through the activities of *student action teams;* "groups of students who identify and work…on a real issue of community interest" (p. 8). They identify four inter-related factors "for engaging students with learning in schools, and for developing strong and competent human beings" (p. 8)**:**

- Students develop control (feeling in control of one's learning, and a sense of competence);
- Bonding (relationships, working in a team and/or with others, sense of connectedness with school and community);
- Meaning (learning experiences are seen to be authentic, real, worthwhile, develop a feeling of self-worth, of value within community and of making real contribution to others); and
- Higher order thinking and learning (activities that challenge students to think, explore, question, problem-solve, discuss). (p. 8)

Holdsworth and Jones (2006) add that through a *student action team*, students can work beyond the classroom to be involved in real decision making and action around the issues valued by students and broader community. Further, Holdsworth (2013) argues that student representative bodies are most effective when students are engaged in authentic and significant issues of concern to the school and wider community, in researching issues, reporting findings, and taking-action to make changes. He adds that "they do this as part of their school studies, recognising it as a learning approach as well as a leadership approach" (Holdsworth, 2013, p. 27). He comments that:

> The approach also enables schools to broaden the definition of who is involved, away from those traditionally chosen to be representatives, to target and include students who may be passionate about and involved with an issue, but not necessarily traditional leaders. (Holdsworth, 2013, p. 27)

In Bangladesh, *student cabinets* have recently been developed in secondary schools in Bangladesh (Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education [DSHE], 2015) as part of HRE. The Government is aiming to improve students' voice and participation in school activities, increase the practice of democratic values among students, and increase connections between schools, students and community (DSHE, 2015). However, while there are some similarities with Holdsworth's (2013) student action teams, the Bangladesh policy is not so focused on student problem solving and involvement in issues. Overall, the objectives of developing *student cabinet* in schools are focused on:

- practicing and developing values of democracy among students
- developing values of tolerance and respect for others
- increasing students' engagement with teachers' activities
- involving students to improve drop-out rates in the school
- increasing parental connection with schools
- involving students for the improvement of school environment
- ensuring students' participation in sports, cultural programs and co-curricular activities

  (DSHE, 2015)

According to the student cabinet manual (DSHE, 2015), schools are obliged to hold elections for eight members through the direct voting of students in the school. It is also recommended in the manual that schools should hold an election every January of an academic year, and that the student cabinet should be focused on areas including the school environment; health; sports, culture and co-curricular activities; water resources; tree planting and gardening; different days and program celebration, reception and entertainment; (DSHE, 2015**).**

There is a consensus in the literature that ensuring student's voice and participation in the classroom and in the school is essential for promoting HRE. In addition, voice, participation and leadership in decision-making process in school is an obvious requirement for empowering students to improve their own as well as others lives in the school community. However, student representative bodies like student cabinets could have potential negative outcomes (UNICEF, 2007) if the students do not understand their roles and responsibilities. In order to achieve success in developing student representative bodies, providing appropriate training is critical (DSHE, 2015; Holdsworth & Jones, 2006; Osler & Starkey, 2010; UNICEF, 2007). In addition, UNICEF (2007) recommends that schools "take appropriate measures to ensure they are protected from manipulation, violence, abuse or exploitation" (p. 81).

2.4.4 Community participation and community empowerment in HRE

Along with other actors within society, families and local communities have significant roles in promoting and providing human rights education (Amnesty International, 2017c;

United Nations Human Rights Council, 2011), since "states cannot fulfil their obligations with regard to rights-based education without active support and engagement of many other actors" (UNICEF, 2007, p. 87). UNICEF (2007) adds that parents can contribute in promoting human rights education in school by getting involved in the school and supporting its work through meetings with teachers, committees and governing bodies. The idea of community involvement in promoting human rights education in school is more broadly explored by United Nations in its report *Teaching Human Rights Practical activities for primary and secondary schools* (UNHCHR, 2004). It states that:

> One of the ultimate goals of human rights education is the creation of a genuine human rights culture. To do so, students must learn to evaluate real-life experience in human rights terms, starting with their own behaviour and the immediate community in which they live. They need to make an honest assessment of how the reality they experience every day conforms to human rights principles and then to take active responsibility for improving their community. (p. 96)

Other educators and theorists also argue in favour of community involvement in promoting human rights education in school (Holdsworth, 2013). Osler and Starkey (2005) argue that a sustainable democratic culture in the school requires dialogue that "enables the development of shared values and mutual respect between teachers, students and others members of the school community" (p. 153). While they argue that there are challenges to create this culture, for example authoritarian patterns in schools, they suggest that it is important to review power relations and work together to develop new cultures. In the Bangladeshi context it is evident that parents and other community members such as school managing committee (SMC) members are often willing to be involved in school activities, although they perceive challenges (Tithi et al., 2016). Kabir and Akter (2014) argue that while community members and parents can significantly contribute to school improvement though parental involvement in schooling, it is relatively a new concept in Bangladesh. They recommend building strong partnerships between schools and parents, but they identify some challenges such as a lack of awareness and a lack of effective strategies. In my study, I explore the existing status of community involvement, particularly parents' involvement in the school by asking how parents contribute to the existing climate of HRE in the school.

2.4.5 HRE and school leadership

School leadership, particularly the role and commitment of head teachers for successful implementation of educational programs, is well established in the literature (Day, Harris, Hadfield, Tolley & Beresford, 2000; Department of Education and Science, UK, 2002; Fullan, 2007; James, Connolly, Dunning & Elliott, 2006; Leonard & Leonard, 1999; Manasse, 1984; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2006; Osler & Starkey, 2010). Osler and Starkey (2010) argue that school leadership has implications in promoting human rights education in schools and in developing whole school approaches to HRE. According to the Department of Education and Science, UK (2002), "the role of the school Principal is of central importance in the establishment and operation of a Student Council" (p. 10). The principal can promote a school culture in favour of student's activities and their recognition. They can lead initiatives together with teachers and students, can assist in the development of activities, and discuss the role and functions of student councils (Department of Education and Science, UK, 2002). Osler and Starkey (2010) argue that "in order for young people to claim their rights to express a view on matters which may affect them at school, teachers and school principals need to provide a space or opportunity for them to do so" (p. 105).

Leonard and Leonard (1999) argue that the school leaders, particularly principals, vice-principals and head teachers play significant roles "in implementing new programs or teaching practices" (p. 238) and they are seen as important source of motivation. However, they also report that the school leaders are not always the strongest advocates for innovation. Similarly, Fullan (2007) argues that school leadership is a complex process, which has no certainty of always giving positive results. However, Covell, Howe, and McNeil (2010) provide strong evidence of the importance of school leaders in promoting successful HRE, suggesting that commitment, competence, and confidence on the part of head teachers were significant influential factors for success.

It is evident in the Bangladeshi context that school leaders have important roles in the improvement of school environment and school outcomes (Salahuddin, 2012). However, Salahuddin (2012) contends that the education sector in Bangladesh is experiencing challenges due to school leadership where "there is much more concern about the quantitative issues, such as raising student enrolment, rather than quality improvement in

terms of pedagogical development" (p. 23). It was therefore important for a focus on role of school leadership in developing HRE to be a part of in my study.

2.4.6 Teachers' professional learning and being a professional learning community

Bajaj (2011a) argues that "teachers, obviously, play a fundamental role in HRE efforts" (p. 209). Osler and Starkey (1996, 2010) argue that teacher education and professional learning can be a means to developing teachers' knowledge, attitudes and skills related to HRE, so they can build teaching and learning in this field in schools. Other scholars argue that teachers' professional learning is not static, but should be understood as a continuous process. Crosswell and Beutel (2013) for example, point out that "the teaching profession has long recognised that ongoing learning needs to occur throughout a teacher's career" (p. 153). Hill (2007) argues that 'collaboration and sharing' are important in teachers' lifelong professional learning, that enables them to work harmoniously in a team. They suggest that regular practice of being involved collaboratively in building innovation among teachers, developing a supporting learning environment, and above all ensuring that school leaders' pay continuous attention to leading professional learning, all have the potential to sustain change and improvement in education. The sustainability of innovation and change in schools requires continuous professional learning which can be developed through the implementation of teachers' Professional Learning Communities (PLC). This is well established in the literature (Cowans, 2005; DuFour, 2004; Dufour & Dufour, 2010; DuFour & Eaker, 2009; DuFour & Mattos, 2013; Hord, 1997; 2009; Stoll et al., 2006).

Hord (2009) argues that a PLC is an ongoing learning platform where passionate and committed teachers "come together in groups in order to interact in meaningful activities to learn deeply with colleagues about an identified topic, to develop shared meaning, and identify shared purposes related to the topic" (p. 41). She points out that PLCs involve the development of "shared beliefs, values and visions of what schools should be" (p. 41) and that for change and improvement in schools to occur, other factors such as supportive leadership, time and resources, collective learning based on students' needs and action on feedback must be in place. Cowans (2005) claims that PLCs offer "a fresh and invigorating approach to improving school performance through collaborative effort, ongoing professional learning and increased teacher involvement in the running of the school" (p.

4). He adds that when teachers belong to a PLC in schools they "seek to improve student achievement by focusing less on how they teach and more on how students learn-a somewhat specious distinction, along the lines of: teachers don't teach subjects, they teach students" (Cowans, 2005, p. 3).

Teachers' professional learning and being part of a PLC are important and relevant in my study since the factors involved are pertinent to the implementation of HRE. The review of literature related to PLCs demonstrated to me the importance of, and challenges in forming a PLC, and alerted me to be aware of the limitations that could arise in my study since the participants in the action research only included the head teacher and two classroom teachers, rather than the whole teaching staff. Nevertheless, it was important for me to capture and analyse the aspects of a PLC that could be developed as part of the study.

2.4.7 Contextualisation of HRE

According to UNESCO (2011), "in order to be effective, human rights education must be context specific: programs must draw on national experiences and existing social, economic and cultural conditions" (p. 52). Similarly, MacNaughton and Koutsioumpas (2017) argue that HRE should be implemented "on a continuous and reflective basis in the specific social context" (p. 25). Vanobbergen (2012) stresses the importance of socio-historical context to realise realities and Bajaj (2011a) recommends mediating "existing community realities and societal structures" (p. 207). Bajaj (2011a) also suggests that contextualised teacher education can be very important in promoting HRE. Osler (2015) suggests that HRE theory and practice should take account of "the historically and socially specific contexts in which learners experience schooling and justice/injustice in their own lives" (p. 265). More particularly for education *about, through* and *for* human rights, Jerome (2018) argues that practices of this framework "may change as HRE assumes rather different forms in different contexts" (p. 48).

I have already discussed that Bangladesh has a particular context for HRE and both the evidence of widespread human rights abuses continuing and lack of widespread implementation of HRE in schools, in spite of policy support. The literature emphasises that effective HRE requires addressing contemporary real-life issues and concerns about human rights in classrooms and across the school. This was an important finding that

needed to be applied to my action research in the context of my case study school. It was important for me to learn about the local urban community where the school is located and the local community context regarding HR as well.

It is important to point out that I did not only consider the context for developing HRE in the selected school in Bangladesh through action research, but also, I thought about why the HRE framework 'education *about, through* and *for* HR' (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2011) was more relevant in the specific context than other possible frameworks. Tibbitts (2008) argues that HRE is likely to take on different priorities depending on the national context in which it is being developed; for example, in post-conflict areas HRE might focus on the importance of the role of law, in poor democracies it might be expected to focus on sustainable development, whilst in wealthy democracies it might understandably focus more on questions of discrimination and equality. In my study situated in Bangladesh, it is clear that the democratic government is committed to HRE and has included this emphasis in the curriculum and in textbooks, but there is still a great deal of work to do in schools to develop and embed this focus more fully. There is still evidence of discrimination against women, particularly through practices such as eve teasing and a lack of equality based on gender, socio-economic disadvantage and lack of access to education facilities continues. There is also a need for stronger connections between HRE and the social, economic and ecological dimensions of sustainable development; an area that requires further research in Bangladesh, but was beyond the scope of my study.

2.5 Conclusion

In this review I have discussed literature pertinent to examining how education *about, through* and *for* can and should be developed in schools in Bangladesh. The review shows that elements of the HRE framework are interdependent and complementary. Without having a sound understanding *about* human rights, it is impossible to ensure human rights practices can be developed in the classroom and in the school community (education *through* and *for* human rights). Similarly, only having understanding *about* human rights is meaningless if the values of human rights are not practiced in the classroom and in the school. Since the UNDHRET provides a very useful holistic approach to HRE, I have

adopted the framework of education *about, through* and *for* human rights as a conceptual framework for my study that is well grounded in the literature.

The review of scholarly literature and critical perspectives on HRE established a strong framework for factors that needed to be considered in the development of my case study of a secondary school in Bangladesh.

Chapter 3: Research methodology

3.1 Introduction

This study aimed to investigate how pedagogies *about, through* and *for* human rights education *could* be developed in a secondary school in Bangladesh. In this chapter, I discuss the methodological approaches I adopted in order to answer the research questions posed. A human-rights based methodological approach was developed through a qualitative case study in a secondary school, encompassing the tools of action research. In the first phase of this study, I developed understanding of current attitudes and practices involving human rights education (HRE) in the school by interviewing students, teachers, the head teacher and parents identify their perceptions and views in HRE and current practices. In the second phase, I led the development of new approaches to HRE through collaborative planning and participatory action research with two volunteer teachers. In the final stage of the study, I reviewed the impact of the action research one year after the commencement of the research through interviews with the head teacher and two classroom teachers who participated in the study.

In the first section of this chapter, I discuss the research questions, theoretical perspectives and methodological framework for the research. I discuss why I connected this study to the socially critical paradigm and how I developed a human rights-based methodological framework for the investigation. This section also explains why a qualitative case study approach was chosen with an action research component and how the school and participants were selected to conduct this study.

In the second section, I explain the data collection procedures at different stages of the study. I provide a rationale for the methods of data collection. In the third section, I explain the approaches to data analysis and the reporting on findings. I also discuss how I established rigour and trustworthiness throughout the process of conducting this research, especially in the process of data analysis and reporting on the findings. In the final section, I discuss the ethical considerations that informed this study and the methodological challenges and limitations.

Research questions

The main research question explored in this study is**:**

> How can pedagogies for human rights education (HRE) be developed in a secondary school in Bangladesh?

In order to respond to this framing question, a number of sub-questions were posed:

1. How do teachers, students, the head teacher and parents perceive human rights education in a case study school?
2. How do teachers implement human rights education in teaching and learning practices?
3. How can the school develop new approaches to human rights education?
4. What is the influence on student learning of the development of new approaches to human rights education?
5. What are the challenges and issues in implementing human rights education in schools?

3.2 Theoretical perspectives

Hatch (2002) argues that "an exposition of methodological theory places the proposed study in a research paradigm" (p. 38). He also points out that "exploring and describing your methodological theory invariably assists in making explicit the implicit perspectives and values you hold that may affect choice of research topic and question asked of the topic" (p. 38). My research, with its initial focus on recording existing teaching and learning practices in the case study school and then on developing new approaches to human rights education, was situated within the socially critical paradigm that accepts all knowledge is value laden; and that a socially critical perspective is committed to values of social justice and social change (Macdonald, Kirk, Metzler, Nilges, Schempp & Wright, 2002). Macdonald et al. (2002) argue that:

> Typically, socially critical researchers ask questions about other people's assumptions and purposes as well as their own. Some underlying premises of socially critical research include (a) some groups in society are powerful while others are powerless, (b) powerful groups have a vested interest in maintaining power, (c) the purpose of

> inquiry is to challenge the status quo and impart social change, and (d) social reconstruction is brought about by first changing individual and group consciousness. (p. 140)

My study first captured, and then analysed and discussed the assumptions and ideas of teachers, students, the head teacher, and parents with regard to human rights education in Bangladesh. Then through collaborative action research, we challenged the status quo by planning and implementing new teaching and learning approaches to build teachers' capacities and further establish students' voice and agency in the classroom and school. This led to considerable development of the HRE approaches and pedagogies that are discussed in this study

The socially critical paradigm has a strong connection to the Brazilian educationalist Freire's (1970) theory of *critical pedagogy.* Whilst the concept of human rights is rarely referred to explicitly by Freire (1970), his view of the need for dialogue between teachers and students and his emphasis on education as a means to achieving dignity is in keeping with the philosophy of human rights (Osler & Starkey, 2010). Print et al. (2008) argue that human rights education, with its emphasis on transformation, overcoming discrimination, empowerment of the individual and active participation, has been strongly influenced by Freire (1970), especially evident in the concept of 'education through' human rights, where teachers and students are encouraged to treat one another with equality, respect and dignity. It is also evident in the concept of 'education for' human rights, which empowers individuals (students and teachers) to recognise human rights abuses and to commit to their prevention.

Since I adopted a socially critical perspective and was committed to developing social justice and social change as an important element of HRE, I used the lenses of critical pedagogy to examine power relations between teachers and students and to establish new classroom -practices and social relationships. Critical pedagogy challenges existing power relations between teachers and students because it argues for democratic practices as a *method* of teaching, rather than just as a goal of education (Tsolidis, 2001). Freire's (1970) work identifies how learners can rediscover power within themselves to act upon situations as subjects rather than as objects to be acted upon, which indicates that both students and teachers have agency within the classroom (Nazzari et al., 2005). Monchinski (2008)

argues that "critical pedagogy's chief concern is the humanization of teachers and students" (p. 122). He also notes that "critical pedagogy requires thought and deed, reflection and action" (p. 1), is context specific, "even in one location at one time, and various critical pedagogies are possible" (p. 2). In the Bangladeshi context, my study examined how existing power relations were perceived by teachers and students with regard to human rights, and how new approaches could be developed to overcome the challenges.

Monchinski (2008) argues that "critical pedagogy is a praxis" (p. 1), with praxis constituting "action and reflection" (Freire, 1985, p. 155). Monchinski (2008) also points out that:

> Praxis involves theorizing practice and practicing theory. Praxis is thinking about what and why you're going to do before you do it and then reflecting on what you did, how you did it, and how it turned out. Critical pedagogy involves an ever-evolving working relationship between practice and theory. It is a relationship that is always in progress, involving a constant give-and-take, a back-and-forth dialectical informing of practice by theory and theory by practice. (p. 1)

This was particularly important for my research, which explored theories of HRE in practice in a very specific context to develop new theories based on practice. Planning, acting, and reflecting were all an integral part of the action research in my study and led to the creation of new insights into HRE.

3.3 Methodological framework

My research utilised a human rights-based methodological framework that centred the study in educational research *about* human rights, research *through* human rights, and research *for* human rights. The aim of my research, the methodology and the outcomes, were all concerned with the principles of human rights, so I ensured that the values of human rights were embedded in every aspect of my study. My study was centred on a rights-based approach that is methodologically valid for the nature of the research.

3.3.1 Research 'about' human rights: case study approaches

Education *about* human rights includes producing knowledge and understanding of human rights norms and principles, the values that underpin these and the mechanisms for their

protection. As educational research *about* human rights, my study explored the existing knowledge and understanding of the students, teachers, head-teacher and parents by first examining their perceptions about human rights and human rights education. My study showed concern *for* participants' human rights in a humanistic way that developed their knowledge and understanding to empower them to have better insights into HR. In this sense, my study formed a qualitative "case study" about human rights education as well as promoting human rights.

I chose a qualitative case study approach as "a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (Creswell, 2009, p. 4). Patton (2002) argues that qualitative study is a naturalistic inquiry that involves "studying real-world situations as they unfold naturally" (p. 40). I chose this approach since it provided me with an opportunity to have direct contact with the people, situation and phenomenon under study. I was able to use my own personal experiences and critical insights as an important part of the inquiry to understand the phenomenon (Patton, 2002).

More specifically, I chose to develop a case study because the nature of this research was to focus on a deep analysis of a particular secondary school, in a particular place at a particular time. Stake (1995) contends that a case study is concerned with "the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances" (p. xi). Thomas (2011) argues that this kind of research "concentrates on one thing, looking at it in detail, not seeking to generalise from it" (p. 3) and that in doing case study research, a researcher becomes interested in that thing in itself, as a whole. According to Yin (2009), case study methodology involves the collection of exploratory, descriptive and explanatory qualitative data, arguing that:

> The case study method allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events such as individual life cycles, small group behaviour, organizational and managerial process, neighbourhood change, and school performance. (Yin, 2009, p. 4)

Yin (2009) also identifies the characteristics of research questions relevant to examinations or investigations through case study method. He points out that '"how" and "why" questions are likely to favour the use of case studies" (p. 10). My research question,

exploring how pedagogies for human rights education (HRE) can be developed in secondary schools in Bangladesh, is an example of this focus.

3.3.2 Research 'through' and 'for' human rights: Action research approaches

Education 'through' human rights includes learning and teaching in a way that respects the rights of both educators and learners. My study focused on educational research through human rights so that the researcher and participants acted and learnt in a democratic way that respected the rights of both researchers and participants. The approaches ensured that values of human rights including having voice, being able to participate, freedom, and privacy of both participants and researcher were implemented. Ethical considerations (see Section 3.9) were also considered as an important aspect of research 'through' human rights, such as the right to withdraw from participation at any time. Education for human rights involves empowering people to enjoy and exercise their rights and to respect and uphold the rights of others. Through these approaches, the study aimed to empower participants and engage them in the development of the school community. As Devis-Devis (2006) argues:

> Critical researchers need to adapt and develop methodological ways to overcome the marginalization of those persons that are objects of study. Therefore, persons or social actors need to participate in the inquiry process to become partners in the knowledge production and utilization in order to eliminate imbalances in the research power relationships. (p. 7)

He also argues that collaborative and action research can achieve these aims. In the following sections, I discuss why and how I used action research in this study.

For the successful implementation of human rights education, UNESCO (2011) emphasises the need "to link research and policy in a way that enables not only the identification of common problems and challenges, but also the design of practical and effective solutions" (p. 15). My intention through my research was to develop and change practices in the selected school in Bangladesh, so that the dissemination of the findings could inform HRE more broadly across Bangladesh and beyond. I used an action research component as part of this study to involve participants in developing new approaches to

human rights pedagogy through answering two specific research questions: (1) How can the school develop new approaches to human rights education; and (2) What is the influence on student learning of the development of new approaches to human rights education? Firstly, I used action research to involve participants in planning, developing and reflecting on new approaches of teaching and learning practices. Secondly, I utilised action research to involve student participants in developing and reflecting on new approaches to HRE to empower them as leaders in the school community.

According to Bradbury and Reason (2003), "the core concern for action researchers is to develop practical as well as conceptual contributions by doing research *with*, rather than *on* people" (p. 156). I therefore conducted research *with* teachers and students, rather than *on* teachers and students. This promoted a collaborative, reciprocal and respectful relationship as we together conducted the action research to develop new approaches to HRE.

Action research is appropriate in this context as "it provides an opportunity for educators to reflect on their own practices" (Creswell, 2012, p. 577) and to engage in cycles of planning, and reflection on planning and practice. Guy Wamba (2010) argues that "action research goes beyond the notion that theory can inform practice, to the recognition that theory can and should be generated through practice" (p. 171). Moreover, action research is relevant to the socially critical perspective informing my study as it focuses on an action dimension that is important in human rights education. Bargal (2008) points out that action research is "rooted in the democratic philosophy of promoting individual welfare in a humanistic way" (p. 18).

The action research was participatory and collaborative. Perrett (2003) argues that 'most participatory action research' (p. 1) explicitly focuses on studies that aim to create improvements and change. Cahill (2007) adds that participatory action research "is a collaborative approach in which those typically 'studied' are involved as decision makers and co-researchers in some or all stages of the research" (p. 268). Boog (2003) explained participatory democracy and action research in the following way:

> Participatory democracy is not only seen as a goal inherent to emancipation or empowerment, but must also be experienced in the practice of action research: in the

> relationship between researcher and researched subjects. Thus, learning by reflection and self-research in small 'direct democratic' groups where the participants are regarded as equals, though nevertheless recognized as different—unique—human beings, became one of the core activities in action research. (p. 428)

In the Bangladeshi context, researchers argue that action research has had a very positive impact on teachers' professional development (Alam, 2016; Harun & Amin, 2013; Salahuddin & Khatun, 2013). This added weight to my decision to use a participatory action research component, since my aim was to develop pedagogy *about*, *through* and *for* human rights.

3.3.2.1 Process of action research

I played an important role as a researcher and participant in guiding and reflecting on the action research process with the teachers and students. I adapted the following cyclical model of action research (Mertler, 2006) and moved through the stages from 1-4 at different times with the participants.

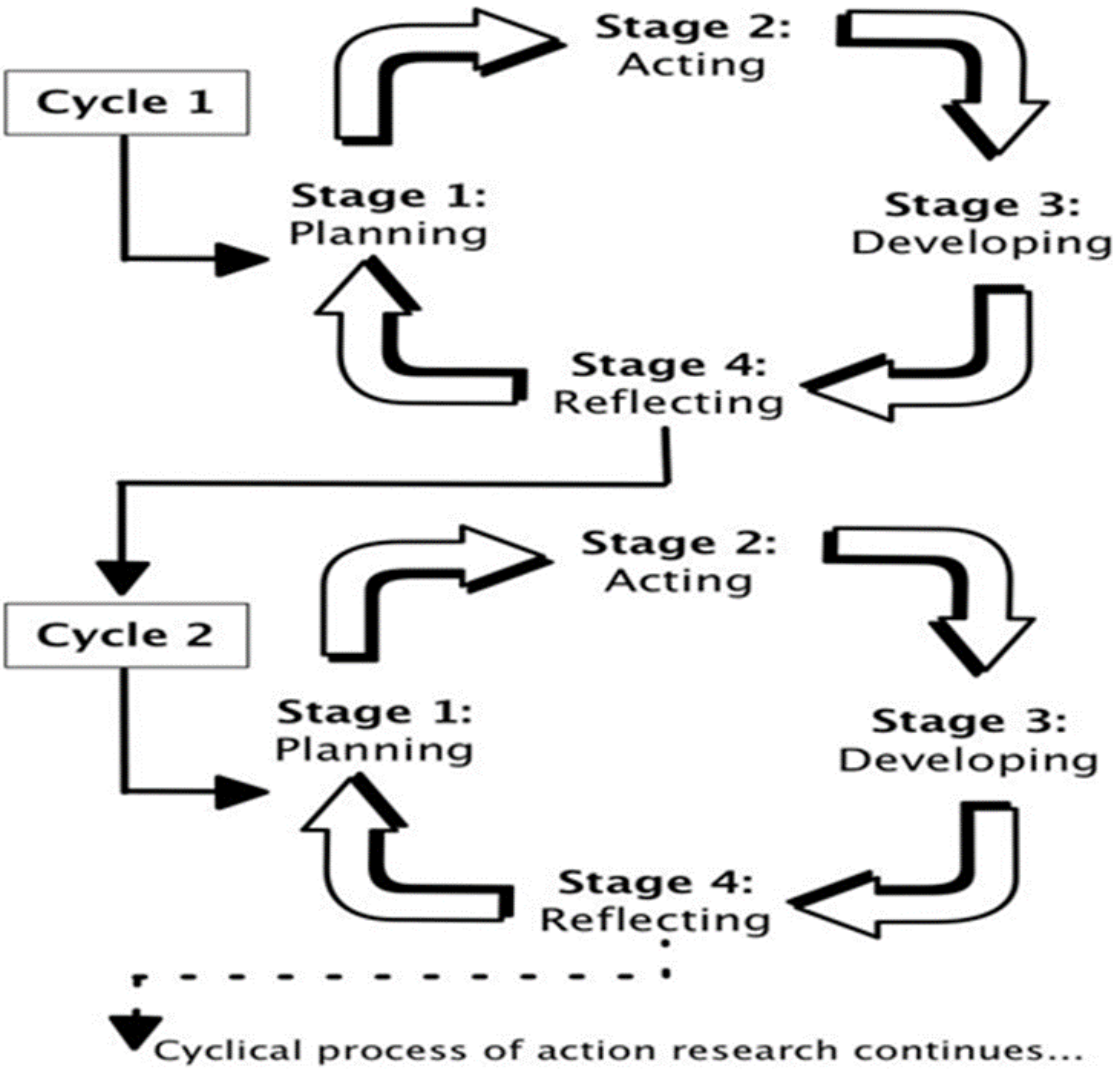

Figure 1: The process of action research (Mertler, 2006, p. 24)

Table 1 (below) shows the different stages of action research and their components provided by Mertler (2006, 2012). All of these stages and elements are explored in detail in Chapter 5 where I explain the process of planning and implementing HRE through action research in the case study school.

Stage	Name of the Stage	Elements of the stage
1	Planning	Identifying and limiting the topic Reviewing related literature Developing a research plan
2	Acting	Collecting data Analysing data
3	Developing	Developing an action plan
4	Reflecting	Sharing and communicating results Reflecting on the process

Table 1: Action research process (Mertler, 2006, p. 24)

3.4 Selection of the school and participants and their involvement in the study

Patton (2002) argues that "qualitative inquiry typically focuses in depth on relatively small samples, even single cases (*N*=1), selected *purposefully*" (p. 230). He also points out that there are no specific rules for qualitative sample size; eventually it depends on the nature and purpose of the study to establish what can be done with the available time and resources. In addition, Patton (2002) notes that there are purposeful strategies for qualitative sample selection rather than methodological rules. In contrast with the procedure of sampling, Thomas (2011) argues that case study research does not require sampling, "it's a choice, a selection" (p. 62) that is vital for a study.

I selected Green Bird Government Secondary School (pseudonym) for several reasons. Firstly, it is a government secondary school situated at the centre of Dhaka and the school authorities were interested in this study. Secondly, the two teachers - Beauty and Shumi (pseudonyms) – who were prepared to volunteer for the study, were involved in implementing curriculum related to HRE. Thirdly, it is a co-educational school that provided the opportunity to explore both boys' and girls' opinions about human rights education. Finally, as a government secondary school, Green Bird was obligated to implement Education Department policies and new initiatives such as the student cabinet which was an important part of my study.

The head teacher, Reba (pseudonym), was willing to participate, so was selected as a participant. The two classroom teachers invited to participate had taught the subject *Bangladesh and Global Studies* (BGS) which integrates elements of human rights education, history, sociology, geography, civics and economics and is taught in grades 6 to 10, so they had some understanding of the need for HRE. The subject is compulsory for students in grades 6 to 8 at the secondary level. BGS is also compulsory for students in the science group at grade 9-10, although it is an optional subject for the students of business studies group at the same grade. After receiving confirmation from the head teacher and two classroom teachers of their participation in this study, the student-participants were selected purposively. One group of students was selected from Beauty's class (grade 9) and another group of six students from Shumi's class (grade 7).

For the selection of student-participants, firstly, the aims and procedures in conducting the research were clearly explained to the students and they were invited to participate voluntarily. Those who were interested in participating were identified. Eleven students from grade 9 and nine students from grade 7 showed interest. As classroom teacher Beauty, Shumi and I agreed to form group with six students, it was not possible to recruit all the students who wanted to participate voluntarily. Beauty and Shumi helped to form groups from the interested students. They explained to the students that who showed interest but were not included in this research, they would get further opportunities in future. As the intention of this study was capturing the views of boys and girls, gender-balance was maintained to form the group. Both classroom teachers were cooperative in helping to explain the study to the students so they understood that they would be involved in focus group discussions to capture their views on their existing perceptions on teaching and learning about human rights education and later their reflections on the new approaches to teaching and learning HRE in the classrooms and in the school.

After selecting the student-participants, their respective parents were invited to be participants. This was because the literature review showed that community involvement in promoting HRE in schools is a significant factor in developing HRE. Both groups of parents (six in each group) were involved in focus group discussions to explore their understandings and opinions regarding the promotion of HRE in the school, their involvement in the school community and further suggestions for HRE in the school.

Both classroom teachers, Beauty and Shumi, and their two groups of students participated in developing new approaches to HRE through teaching and learning practices. Twenty lessons focused on HRE were conducted (10 lessons for each grade), following the cycles of action research. Teachers were involved in planning, acting, developing and reflecting on the process; students were involved in participating, and providing reflections on the lessons and other activities. Although the parents were not directly involved in the process of action research, their opinions and views on HRE collected during the first phase of the study informed the planning of the action research.

In addition, the student members of student cabinet, were selected for the action research to increase HRE through collaboration between teachers and students and to build the development of the *student cabinet* in the school. The study examined how this form of education *for* human rights evolved during the process. Although the total number of cabinet members was eight, two were absent due to examinations, therefore six members participated in planning, acting, developing and reflecting on the activities of the student cabinet. Other participants in this part of the action research were the two classroom teachers and the head teacher.

3.5 Researcher's role

Glesne and Peshkin (1992) argues that it is worthwhile for a researcher to define his or her roles, how she or he is situationally determined depending on the research context, and the identity of the researcher. As a Bangladeshi teacher educator at Dhaka University, I knew that this study could inform future practices in HRE and teacher professional learning in Bangladesh and beyond. Therefore, bringing my own personal understanding of the local context, the sensitivity of human rights issues and the tensions that can arise when young people explore these topics in schools, has been important in this research. My personal experiences, academic expertise as a teacher educator, passion about becoming a leader and contributor to HRE, and my own personal commitment to HRE, motivated me to engage in this collaborative participatory action research and case study.

Throughout this study, I played different roles. I was the researcher who conducted interviews, and a co-researcher, facilitator, participant, and observer in the process. It was often my reflective observations and facilitation role that provided the stimulus for the next

steps in the action research cycle, although the teachers were willing collaborators. We were all involved in planning, acting, implementing and reflecting on the processes of developing new pedagogies for human rights education in the school. I was the facilitator for HRE when I organised workshops for the teacher's professional development based on the conceptual framework for the HRE practices. (see Chapter 5).

Being a teacher educator with more than eight years' experience of teaching, conducting workshops and seminars in national and international contexts, I was able to bring my knowledge and experiences into the workshops for teachers' professional learning. I was not aiming for my study to impose any universal theory or pedagogy for human rights education into the Bangladeshi secondary school. Rather, I aimed to collaborate with the teachers and use action research to form new theories and pedagogies that could then be developed in other contexts.

The workshops I developed focused on how existing pedagogical approaches could achieve HRE, and what new approaches to human rights education could be developed and why (see chapter 5 for details). I engaged with the teachers in professional learning that encompassed our planning and reflection in the action research cycles. This included a focus on the three thematic areas: education about human rights (concept and ideas); education through human rights (teaching and learning practices) and education for human rights (empowerment of teachers and students). Discussions and suggestions from teachers were included in planning and implementing new approaches.

I was also a co-facilitator with the two classroom teachers in the student cabinet member training. In this stage, I was also involved as a participant and observer. In the final follow-up stage, I conducted three semi-structured interviews with the head teacher and two classroom teachers to review and understand the progress of action research in the case study school, one year after the commencement of action research.

It is important to mention that while I was a researcher, I also played a role as an active learner throughout the process as "it is important having this sense of self from the beginning" (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 36). I felt that I was a curious student who wanted to learn from and with research participants. This approach helped me to collect in-depth data through the process of data collection and participation, as I was passionate about learning what was happening and why it was happening at every stage of the research.

3.6 Data collection process

Data were collected at several stages using varied methods for different participants based on the planning of data collection and the nature of the study. Every stage included detailed planning and procedures. From the very beginning of the study to the end, I kept in mind five research skills recommended by Yin (2009) in conducting case study research:

- Ask good questions
- Be a good listener
- Be adaptive and flexible
- Have understanding of the phenomenon being studied, and,
- Be unbiased by preconceived ideas. (p. 76)

I found these recommendations were very helpful in the preparation for collecting data as well as during the process of data collection. An example of being flexible was that the meeting time with the head teacher was fixed in consultation with her, but I changed the schedules several times when she was engaged in different administrative activities**.**

I used different methods to collect data at the different stages in this study. Overall, I stayed three months in the school conducting this research. In addition, I went back to the school one year later to review the progress of action research. It is important to note that during the review of the progress of action research; data were collected using semi-structured interviews with two classroom teachers and the head teacher. I did not follow up with students because the students who participated in this study had public examinations in the following year and their parents and teachers did not support their inclusion in the follow up to avoiding interruption to their study.

3.6.1 An overview of the data collection process

3.6.1.1 Data collection Phase 1: Base line data from the case study school

Perceptions of teachers, students, the head teacher and parents about human rights and human rights education	
Participants	**Data collection methods/tools**
Two classroom teachers of HRE	Semi-structured interviews
	Initial classroom observations (two classes for each teacher)
The head teacher	Semi-structured interview
Two groups of grade 7 and grade 9 students, (6 in each group) being taught HRE by the two classroom teachers	Focus group discussions
Two groups of parents (6 in each group) of grade 7 and grade 9 students	Focus group discussions
	Field notes

Table 2: Phase 1. Baseline data from the case study school

3.6.1.2 Data collection Phase 2: Implementation of HRE through action research in the case study school

Planning, acting, implementing and reflecting the process in developing new pedagogies of HRE through teaching-learning and the student cabinet	
Participants	• Researcher • Two classroom teachers • Two groups of grade 7 and grade 9 students
Activities	Planning, acting, implementing and reflecting on the new teaching and learning approaches of HRE in the classroom
Data collection methods	• Observations • Discussions with teachers and students • Field notes • Focus group discussions with students for final reflections • Interviews with teachers for final reflection

Implementation of HRE through the Student cabinet (Student representative body)	
Participants	• Researcher • Two classroom teachers • The head teacher • Members (6) of student cabinet
Activities	Planning, acting, implementing and reflecting on the new approaches of HRE through the student cabinet
Data collection methods	• Observations • Discussions with teachers and student-cabinet members • Field notes • Focus group discussions with the members of student cabinet for final reflections • Interviews with the teachers for final reflection • Interview with the head teacher for final reflection

Table 3: Phase 2. Implementation of HRE through action research in the school

3.6.1.3 Data collection Phase 3: Implementation of HRE: progress in one year

Understanding the progress of HRE in the case study school one year	
Participants	• Two classroom teachers • The head teacher
Data collection methods	Semi-structured interviews
	Field notes

Table 4: Phase 3. Implementation of HRE progress in one year

3.6.2 Data collection methods

3.6.2.1 Semi- structured interviews

Interviewing was an important method for me to collect data from the participants. Yin (2009) argues that interviews are important sources in case study research. I used semi-

structured *one-on-one interviews* connected to the research focus with open ended and flexible ordering of questions. Creswell (2012) explains the characteristics and strengths of interviews. He points out that:

> A popular approach in educational research, the 'one-on-one interview' is a data collection process in which the researcher asks questions to and records answers from only one participant in the study at a time. In a qualitative project, you may use several one-on-one interviews. One-on-one interviews are ideal for interviewing participants who are not hesitant to speak, who are articulate, and who can share ideas comfortably. (Creswell, 2012, p. 218)

Burns (1999) proposes three types of interviews namely, un-structured, semi-structured and structured. Zohrabi (2013) contends that the most preferred type is the semi-structured interview guide approach. He further explained that:

> This type of interview is flexible and allows the interviewee to provide more information than the other ones. This form of interview is neither too rigid nor too open. It is a moderate form in which a great amount of data can be elicited from the interviewee. (p. 256)

I used the semi-structured interviewing method to collect data from the head-teacher and two classroom teachers to understand their current perceptions about human rights education. I developed an *interview schedule* containing a list of issues as well as questions that I wanted to include (Thomas, 2011). Consisting of several key questions, the semi-structured interview-schedule helped to define the areas I wanted to explore. However, I also allowed the interviewees to diverge in order to pursue an idea or respond in more detail and I asked probing questions (Gill, Stewart, Treasure, & Chadwick, 2008). In developing the interview-schedule, I included different kinds of questions focused on experience, knowledge and attitudes suggested by Patton (2002). I also tried to begin an interview by asking questions that were generally easier for respondents to answer (Patton, 2002). A summary of the interview-schedule used for classroom teachers before the action research is provided here:

1. How do you define human rights and child rights?

2. Do you think human rights for children is important?
3. What understanding do you have about the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and Convention on the Rights of the Child and their application in Bangladesh?
4. Do you think that HRE should be contextualised and how?
5. How do you currently promote or include HRE in your classroom?
6. What opportunities do you have to encourage students' participation in the teaching and learning process?
7. Would you like to include more discussion of human rights and child rights in the classroom? If yes or no, why?
8. Do you currently teach children about their rights in the family and in the school? If yes, how and why? If not, why not?
9. Are there any examples of local human rights violations you are aware of?
10. How could you explore this in the classroom?
11. What do you know about the new initiative by the Ministry of Education to introduce student cabinets in schools?
12. What challenges do you face in implementing human rights education?
13. What would you like to develop in your school to promote HRE effectively?

Semi-structured interviews were also used to examine the understanding of the head-teacher and classroom teachers during the action research. For example, I asked the head teacher and classroom teachers their views on the participatory approaches to human rights education that we developed; how they perceived these new approaches to human rights education as part of their professional learning and development; how the participatory collaborative action research strengthened their knowledge, skills and attitudes and sense of empowerment as a teacher and a researcher; and how their knowledge and confidence about HRE was growing. Together we explored the challenges they faced in implementing the new approaches to HRE.

As with other data collection methods, interviewing has some limitations. There are possibilities for both the researcher and respondent to be biased or provide misleading responses (Yin, 2009). Before conducting the interviews, I explained the aims of my research and the role of the participants to create shared commitment to the research and to seek open sharing of views. However, I found evidence of discrepancies between what

the participants said and what I observed. For example, Beauty, Shumi and the head teacher Reba said in their interviews that corporal punishment for the students was not in practised in Green Bird School, since it was banned by the government. However, during my regular visits I witnessed instances of corporal punishment. Considering the limitations of different data collection methods and analysis including the interviews, I used different strategies to establish the rigor and trustworthiness of this qualitative case study research, as I explain in section 3.8.

3.6.2.2 Focus group discussions

Focus groups involve a small number of people in informal group discussions about a specific topic or issue. The researcher plays the role of moderator to raise issues to be discussed deliberatively. Patton (2002) argues that "the focus group interview is first and foremost, an interview. It is not a problem-solving session. It is not a decision-making group. It is not primarily a discussion, though direct interactions among participants often occur" (p. 385-386). Creswell (2012) notes that "focus groups can be used to collect shared understanding from several individuals as well as to get views from specific people" (p. 18). It is one of the important methods for data collection in a case study (Yin, 2009). Patton (2002) contends that this a very effective data collection method where we can gather valuable information from a group of people in a short period of time. Considering these valuable characteristics and my research questions, I used this method "to get high-quality data in a social context where people can consider their own views in the context of the views of others" (Patton, 2002, p. 386). During the focus group discussions, I played the role of facilitator as well as moderator and I used focus materials such as photographs and video clips (see Chapter 4) (Thomas, 2011).

In focus groups, I asked students to express their perceptions, understandings and experiences of HRE. Students were also asked to give reflections on the level of their active participation in the teaching and learning process as well as in the school community. When the group met after a series of lessons on HR, they were asked how participation helped them to develop their knowledge, skills and attitudes about HR; and how they perceived the new approaches as a process of empowerment compared with their previous opportunities for student engagement and youth voice. Finally, they were asked to explain if there were any drawbacks in the new approaches. The focus group discussions were also used to gain data from the two groups of parents. I asked them first how they were involved

and participated in the school community and how they would like to be involved. Parents were also asked whether they had any ideas about how HRE was developed in the school.

Like other data collection methods, focus groups have some limitations, for example, restrictions on how many questions can be discussed, the possibility of negative reactions to responses, and issues of confidentiality (Patton, 2002). However, considering the strengths of this method and being careful about its limitations, I used focus groups to generate data from the selected students and parents in the case study school.

3.6.2.3 Observation

Observation is another important method I used in my study to collect data. Creswell (2012) argues that educators involved in qualitative research often consider the process of collecting data through observation in a specific school setting. Yin (2009) points out that a case study takes place in the natural setting of the 'case' and it creates opportunities for direct observation. Patton (2002) agrees that the researcher can learn things that people may not be willing to talk about in other forms of data collection methods, through observing the participants in their own contexts.

Considering 'observation' as a key way of data collection, Thomas (2011) defines two different kind of observations. First, 'structured observation' is generally used and pre-planned by the researcher for watching particular kinds of behaviour or actions of participants. The second kind is defined as 'unstructured observation', also known as 'participant observation', which is "associated with researchers becoming participants in the situations that they are researching" (p. 165). Mertler (2009) defines participant observation as "observing as a researcher but also participating in the group or setting as an equal, active member of that group or setting" (p. 80). I used participant observation to collect data during the implementation of action research as I wanted to participate in the process as well as understand what was going there (Thomas, 2011). Therefore, I played a role as an insider as well as an outsider (Patton, 2002).

I also played a role as an insider in this study as I am Bangladeshi and an educator who played a collaborative role with the teachers (Chavez, 2008; Dwyer & Buckle, 2009; Kerstetter, 2012; Sixsmith, Boneham, & Goldring, 2003). This helped me to easily understand the context and nature of research area and the participants (Kerstetter, 2012)

which was helpful in building rapport with the participants for conducting this collaborative research and improving HRE in school. Dwyer and Buckle (2009) argue that "insider role status frequently allows researchers more rapid and more complete acceptance by their participants. Therefore, participants are typically more open with researchers so that there may be a greater depth to the data gathered" (p. 58). A very similar argument is made by Chavez (2008).

However, I did not only think about the strengths of insider positionality, I was also well informed about its challenges or limitations (Chavez, 2008; Dwyer & Buckle, 2009; Greene, 2014; Kerstetter, 2012; Ross, 2017; Unluer, 2012). I was careful and committed that I would not disclose any confidential issues and information about the school community which were beyond my research area (Greene, 2014). For example, when I became familiar and able to build rapport with the head teacher and classroom teachers, sometimes they shared different issues with me beyond the boundary of my research which I kept private. Moreover, I was very careful about my engagement in the school and my observations (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009; Greene, 2014) to honour my professional responsibilities as a researcher (Unluer, 2012).

Being a participant observer as well as a researcher, I was able to learn first-hand how the participants corresponded with their words, behaviour and actions. This allowed me to develop a deeper understanding through my interactions with them (Mertler, 2009). Being a university teacher of Social Science Education, I had some preconceived ideas about the subject of my observation; however, I was very careful about bringing preconceived opinions to my research (Glesne, 2016). I have visited many secondary schools in Dhaka city as a part of my profession, so I know that it is challenging to ensure students' active participation in the classroom due to the large numbers of students. I made Beauty and Shumi aware of my understanding of the challenges they faced and told them that we would have open reflective discussions about what we had planned for the lessons. I also made sure that I observed every lesson from the beginning to the end.

Initially I observed 4 lessons in the subject 'Bangladesh and Global Studies' (two lessons for each teacher) to get some understanding about their existing teaching practices before the action research. The duration of every lesson and observation was 40-50 minutes. During the phase of action research, I observed twenty lessons, paying attention to how

teachers utilized their knowledge and skills developed during the HRE workshop and in our co-planning (see Chapter 5). I looked at the extent to which they were able to create changes in the classroom in terms of developing a safe environment and mutual respect. I observed how they ensured students' active participation in the teaching-learning process and how students reacted to teachers' initiatives and planned strategies. We discussed gender and whole class inclusion, so this was another area I observed. I also watched how the teachers negotiated different challenges that arose. I then engaged with them in reflection and discussion of lessons which then informed planning for further classes. A central focus of my data gathering during observation was on the changes in terms of both students' and teachers' active participation and empowerment, as well as the effectiveness of new approaches.

3.6.2.4 Field notes

As a further data collection tool, I collected descriptive field notes (Creswell, 2012) that included brief notes during data collection using key words and phrases that triggered my memory. I then expanded my notes the same day after data collection (Guest, & Namey, 2005; Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen). In line with the ideas of Mack et al. (2005), I wrote a descriptive narrative describing what happened and what I learned. I created separate, clearly labelled sections in my notes from different sources including for example, interviews, observations, and planning discussions.

I recorded my classroom observations of Shumi and Beauty in the form of field notes (Mertler, 2012, p. 122). As I observed the teachers' lessons and recorded what I saw, I began to focus on things related to my research questions so that over time patterns began to emerge from my collected data (Mertler, 2012). Patton (2002) argues that "field notes contain the descriptive information that will permit you to return to an observation later during analysis and, eventually, permit the reader of the study's findings to understand the activity observed through your report" (p. 303). He also contends that depth and detail are significant characteristics of observational data that require sufficient description so "the reader can understand what occurred and how it occurred" (p. 23). Giving considerable attention to these characteristics, I was also careful about collecting factual and accurate data in my field notes. I also noted down my own feelings, reactions to the experiences, and reflections about the personal meaning and importance of what I observed (Patton, 2002).

When I recorded field notes, I divided each page of my notebook into two columns and used the left column to record my actual observations and the right column for my initial interpretations (Mertler, 2012). These field notes were utilised as a relevant source of data to explore and explain aspects of my case study that might not have been captured through other data collection methods.

3.7 Data analysis

Patton (2002) argues that in a qualitative study, the distinction between data collection and analysis is not as clear as in quantitative research. He adds that, "in the course of fieldwork, ideas about directions for analysis will occur. Patterns take shape. Possible themes spring to mind" (p. 436). However, he points out that the duration and procedures of data analysis vary depending on the purpose of study and audience. As my study involved a case study with an action research component, the initial data analysis began when I collected base-line data to understand the case. As I undertook action research with the teachers and students, I shared the process of analysis to ensure that they agreed with my interpretations (Patton, 2002). However, after completing the fieldwork, my own analysis and interpretation occurred in several stages. First, I used the approach of thematic analysis of qualitative data through the categorisation by *codes* (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006; Glesne, 2016). This analytic technique was used to build an explanation about the particular case (Yin, 2009). I developed a table of sources to organize my data by type (Creswell, 2012). After categorising all the data (i.e. interviews, focus group discussion), all recorded interviews and focus groups were transcribed verbatim. I then translated all transcriptions from Bengali to English and sent these to an expert of both Bengali and English language to check the accuracy of my translation. After receiving feedback from the translator, I finalised my transcriptions.

I utilised an inductive approach of qualitative data analysis (Graneheim, Lindgren & Lundman, 2017; Mertler, 2009; Patton, 2002). Graneheim, Lindgren and Lundman (2017) argue that when following an inductive approach, "the researcher moves from the data to a theoretical understanding – from the concrete and specific to the abstract and general" (p. 30). Organisation of this type of analysis involves the reduction of the massive amounts of narrative data in the form of transcripts of interviews, focus group discussions and field

notes (Mertler, 2009). This was accomplished through the development of a system of identifying and organising data into important patterns and themes in order to construct a framework for reporting key findings (Johnson, 2008). This system of categorisation is "often referred to as a 'coding scheme', which is used to group data that provide similar types of information" (Pearson & Brown, 2002, cited in Mertler, 2009). Similarly, Coffey and Atkinson (1996) argue that "many analyses of qualitative data begin with the identification of key themes and patterns. This, in turn, often depends on the process of coding data. The segmenting and coding of data are often taken-for-granted parts of the qualitative research process" (p. 26). To explain the meaning and process of coding, they also go on to say:

> The term *coding* encompasses a variety of approaches to and ways of organizing qualitative data. As parts of an analytical process, however, attaching codes to data and generating concepts have important functions in enabling us rigorously to review what our data are saying. In practice, coding can be thought of as a range of approaches that aid the organization, retrieval, and interpretation of data. (p. 27)

At the beginning of coding process, I read each transcript and noted any interesting and significant ideas. Then, looking for pattern and themes, I noticed categories of narrative information that began to appear (Mertler, 2009). I made note of each category and coded my narrative data accordingly. *Coding* is also a process of reduction of irrelevant narratives or data, so I tried to ensure that coding did not lose more than was gained (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). Developing quality qualitative data analysis as well as coding processes is time consuming. I followed the approach of "reading, reading and reading again" (Mertler, 2009, p. 141) to review all narrative data. After completing the coding and categorisation of data, I began to develop themes and made connections between the data and my original research questions. As a technique, I asked myself "how does the information in this category help me understand my research topic and answer my research questions?" (Mertler, 2009, p. 141). Each theme represented the purpose of the research and helped me to answer the research questions. In the final stage, findings were reported based on my data analysis, and interpretations connected to my conceptual and theoretical frameworks using relevant literature.

Report writing of qualitative analysis is a challenging task, as the researcher needs to decide what should be included in the report and what should not be included (Patton, 2002). Patton (2002) argues that description and quotation is the base of qualitative report writing and, therefore, sufficient direct quotes and description should be included in the report to allow the reader to understand the perspectives and thoughts of people. As qualitative analysis is grounded in 'thick description', I provided sufficient description around the themes that emerged from the analysis and I made my argument (Patton, 2002).

3.8 Rigour and trustworthiness

Rolfe (2006) argues that "the search for a generic framework for assessing the quality of qualitative research should be abandoned in favour of individual judgements of individual studies" (p. 309). Graneheim and Lundman (2004) argue that research findings should be trustworthy and a research study must be evaluated in relation to the procedures used by the researcher to generate findings. In this study, I maintained several procedures to establish rigor and trustworthiness. From the beginning of data collection to reporting writings, I behaved as if someone was looking over my shoulder to ensure I was reliable in collecting data and analysing (Yin, 2014). When I collected and analysed data, I used the strategy of being a 'detective' that Johnson (1997) defines as "a metaphor characterizing the qualitative researcher as he or she searches for evidence about causes and effects. The researcher develops an understanding of the data through careful consideration of potential causes and effects" (p. 283), for example, when I reported in my findings that the head teacher was not supportive at the beginning of the collaboration, I clearly explained why she was not supportive (see Chapter 5).

'Prolonged engagement' is a significant part of developing trustworthiness and to increase the probability of credible findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I spent a sufficient time collecting my data to become an accepted member of the school community and understand the context of the school and its culture. I developed good relations and built trust with the participants. I also used the technique of 'persistent observation' recommended by Lincoln and Guba (1985) "to identify those characteristics and elements in the situation that are most relevant to the problem or issue being pursued and focusing on them in detail" (p. 304). I found a few student-participants as well as one teacher-participant who were very thoughtful and critical in their thinking and opinion. During the

period of my action research and data collection, I always tried to capture their understanding and opinions in addition to other voices. When someone was absent during the process of planning and implementing action research, I tried to re-schedule the activities and waited for his/her return as I had sufficient time.

Silverman (2011, p. 365; 2005, p. 229-230) recommends "the criterion of using *low-inference descriptors*" to ensure the reliability of data collection, analysis and reporting findings. 'Low-inference descriptors' have been also recognised as effective strategies for increasing the reliability of qualitative research (Johnson, 1997; Kim, Sefcik & Bradway, 2017; Kirk & Miller, 1986; Richards & Schmidt, 2002; Smith, 1982; Zohrabi, 2013). Johnson (1997) describes 'low-inference descriptors' as "the use of description phrased very close to the participants' account and researchers' field notes. Verbatim (i.e., direct quotations) are a commonly used type of low inference descriptors" (p. 283). To ensure this kind of reliability, I conducted face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions; used a digital audio recorder with the written permission of all participants to capture all interactions; carefully transcribed the recordings and presented substantial data extracts in the research findings (Cope, 2014; Johnson, 1997; Silverman, 2005, 2011; Zohrabi, 2013). When I report findings in my own words rather using long extracts based on the analysis of data, I carefully tried to report exact views, opinion and activities of participants to provide real views of data. In addition, I always tried to keep myself unbiased by my preconceived ideas during collecting data through observations (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003; Yin, 2009).

'Triangulation' is another established mode of "improving the probability that findings and interpretations will be found credible" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 305). Oliver-Hoyo and Allen (2006) argue that "triangulation involves the careful reviewing of data collected through different methods, in order to achieve a more accurate and valid estimate of qualitative results for a particular construct" (p. 42). To triangulate the reliability of data I used more than two data sources (interviews, focus group discussions, and observations) for data analysis aiming to answer same research question; for example, when I reported findings about student's voice in the classroom, I considered the opinion of students, teachers and my observations recorded in the field notes. In addition, data were collected at different times in the year that also increased the reliability of data (Johnson, 1997; Korstjens, & Moser; 2018).

My study draws on international literature in the field including the expertise of Osler and Starkey (2003, 2005, 2010), Tibbitts (2002, 2005), and Freire (1970) to inform my work. The quality of the case study and the action research was ensured through the depth of each step in the case study and the cycles of action research planning, implementation and reflection. Utilization of the conceptual framework of human rights education (education *about, through* and *for* human rights) as a methodological framework established this study as a rights-based democratic study. This also deepened the validity and reliability of this study.

3.9 Ethical considerations

According to Creswell (2012), in gathering data for qualitative research, the researcher seeks an in-depth description of a phenomenon and therefore participants may be asked to discuss private details of their experiences over a period of time which requires sufficient trust with regard to ethical issues. However, ethical issues are not the same in all contexts (Honan, Hamid, Alhamdan, Phommalangsy & Lingard, 2013). Honan et al. (2013) argue that although confidentiality and privacy are two serious issues that the group of eight universities of Australia emphasis in ethical practice, it is a common practice in Bangladesh to ask someone's name and other information. They also contend that a researcher might become a stranger in his/her local context of Bangladesh if he/she maintains all formal procedures, for example gaining consent from participants. However, in spite of these contextual ethical differences, my study followed all ethical procedures expected for a doctoral study at Monash University. Ethically, the risks involved in this research were limited. Participants were assured that pseudonyms would be used to obscure their identity and their organisation once the research had been completed. For the teachers, involvement in the action research involved additional time, but they volunteered to be involved, so the study did not pose any risk. In fact, the teachers regarded the study as a significant opportunity for professional learning.

As the case study was situated in a government secondary school in Bangladesh, I obtained written permission from the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE), Ministry of Education, Bangladesh. Then written permission was gained from the school authority. The case study involved interviewing adolescent students, classroom teachers,

the head teacher and parents. Therefore, it was essential to gain informed consent from all participants separately. In addition, student participants signed their own consent forms and their parents had separate forms. Explanatory statements were provided to the school authority, teachers, students and parents so they understood the aims of this research and the procedures of collecting data. The participants were invited to volunteer to be involved in the research after the focus and nature of involvement had been explained to them. They were also informed of their right to withdraw from the research at any time. There were no incentives offered in exchange for their participation, and there was no prior relationship between the participants and the researcher which might have impacted on the data collection process.

Since my research involves children's active participation, throughout the process I paid particular attention to both ethical issues related to participation in the research and benefits to the children from the research process in a specific context. Scholarly literature related to ethical issues of child research and child rights research show these kind of views (Bell, 2008; Ferdousi, 2015). Bell (2008) argues that "the UNCRC intends to ensure that children have participatory involvement in all matters affecting their lives, including research" (p.10). Bell (2008) goes on to say:

> Among its many objectives, child research informs policy and practice in ways that are intended to improve the lives of children, such as those who want a 'world fit for children', and increasingly child research has endorsed participatory ways of ensuring children's views inform research outcomes. (p.7)

Similarly, Ferdousi (2015) argues that the researcher should consider both the ethical procedures for protecting children's rights, and benefits from the research process and outcomes. For example, she argues that "the general purpose of research that involves children is to obtain and produce scientific information about them" (p.8) for the greater benefits and well-being of children. Therefore, I was very careful about "confidentiality, since the disclosure of information can put the children and their rights at risk" (Ferdousi 2015.p.9). I asked both children and their parents for permission to disclose any information but guaranteed that pseudonyms would be used and discussed all topics we explored with the teachers to avoid discomfort and ensure that safety of child participants

after the research (Ferdousi, 2015). Both classroom teachers and the head teacher did not show any disagreement.

3.10 Methodological challenges and limitations of the study

I experienced some challenges in the process of data collection for this study. The first challenge was associated with the approval from the school authority (head teacher) to conduct this study. Though I had prior permission from the Ministry of Education, the head teacher was very busy during the period of my fieldwork and she had no prior experiences regarding this kind of study in her school. Though she agreed to participate, she was unaware of the significance of her delayed approval of this research. This delay created an obstacle since it delayed the timeline for data collection. I personally went to the school for an appointment with the head teacher and was finally able to meet with her after three days waiting.

The second challenge was associated with selecting participants. One of the participant teachers was well known to me as she graduated from the same institution where I taught. She was very willing to participate and encouraged another teacher to become involved. However, this teacher was not able to participate due to her changing role as a subject-teacher, so she was not teaching human rights education. However, I was able to finally access two teachers who gave their written consent for this study. The third challenge was related to the lack of consistency of class schedules and places for planning. During the action research, I needed to meet with teacher-participants for reflection on lessons and planning for new lessons. I had a schedule based on their availability and suitability, but most of the time they did not follow the schedules, due to other activities. While, I was very flexible and available to them for meeting, discussing and planning, in the initial stages it was difficult.

The study had some other limitations including the fact that it was short term. Due to time restrictions and the nature of the study, only three groups of students, two classroom teachers, the head teacher and two group of parents volunteered for this study and therefore what was captured could not be representative of other teachers, students and parents in the school. In addition, since the implementation of HRE and the development of the student cabinet involved new initiatives, it was not possible to fully develop a pedagogy

for HRE in line with international literature in this field. These limitations are fully discussed in the data analysis chapters.

I was also aware that this case study research has its own limitations as it is a single case and I cannot generalise from findings (Easton, 2010; Flyvbjerg, 2006; Hamilton, Corbett-Whittier, & Fowler, 2012: Yin, 1989; 2009). Easton (2010) argues that "the knowledge claims of case study research are often attacked on the grounds of lack of generalisability" (p. 126). It is my hope however, that the detailed discussion and findings from this case provide valuable and rich insights into the challenges and possibilities for developing HRE in Bangladesh and other developing countries.

3.11 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have provided details about the methodological approaches and procedures used in this study. I have discussed the theoretical perspectives and methodological framework. I have also explained the tools/methods used to collect data and how I analysed data. In addition, a discussion of the techniques to establish rigour and trustworthiness of this study has been provided. I have acknowledged my position as a researcher and discussed the ethical procedures used in this empirical study. Finally, I have addressed the methodological challenges and limitations of this study.

Chapter 4: Practices in education *about, through* and *for* human rights before the action research

4.1 Introduction

This chapter reports on the first phase of the study, which explored how human rights and human rights education were perceived by the participants prior to the commencement of the action research. I analyse and discuss data captured from the interviews with the two classroom teachers, classroom observations, interviews with the head teacher, and from the focus group discussions with two groups of students and parents. I used thematic analysis to examine transcripts of the interviews and focus groups. This included transcripts of three individual interviews with two subject teachers and the head teacher, two focus group discussions with two groups of students (grade 7 & 9), two focus group discussions with two groups of parents and field notes

I present my thematic analysis under three broad concepts: *education about human rights, education through human rights* and *education for human rights* that are discussed in the literature review chapter. Additionally, I developed new themes from my analysis of interviews and focus group discussion with different participants and field notes

The first section, *education about human rights* discusses the current perceptions of the head teacher, classroom teachers, students, and parents about a comprehensive range of issues pertinent to my study. These include their views on human rights as well as child rights, human rights education, contemporary issues of human rights in Bangladesh and in the school, education policy and human rights education in Bangladesh, fundamental documents of human rights and human rights education, the context of human rights and human rights education in Bangladesh. I also explore significant challenges perceived by participants in terms of understanding of human rights and HRE.

In the second section focused on *education through human rights*, I explore the teaching and learning approaches to human rights education based on the opinion of participants and my observations. In particular, I explore the extent to which HRE was being implemented through students' active participation and engagement at the time of my

study, prior to the action research in the case study school. I also draw on data that explains how human rights issues were addressed through the discussions and involvement of teachers and students in the classroom and in the school. Relationships between teachers and students, opportunities for the students to go beyond the classroom, democratic practices in the classroom and in the school, and existing challenges to the participatory approach of human rights education are also discussed through analysis of participants' views.

In the final section focused on *education for human rights*, I explore how current approaches to HRE in the school address students' voice and participation for their empowerment. I discuss what existing practices were in place for students to exercise their rights and to respect and uphold the rights of others before the action research. I also draw on data that explains how students' voices were valued for the development of the school community.

4.2 Education *about* human rights

According to the *United Nations' Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training* (UNDHRET) (2011), e*ducation about human rights* includes "providing knowledge and understanding of human rights norms and principles, the values that underpin them and the mechanisms for their protection" (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2011, p. 4). Tibbitts (2002) describes her 'values and awareness model' *as education about human rights* and she notes that, "the main focus of human rights education is to transmit basic knowledge of human rights issues and to foster its integration into public values (Tibbitts, 2002, p. 163). Similar to Tibbitts (2002), Mihr and Schmitz (2007) also argue that human rights education can be conceived through what they term a cognitive model. As in the values and awareness model described by Tibbitts (2002), the cognitive model provides basic knowledge and information about universal human rights standards through the major international documents such as the UDHR (1948), UNCRC (1989). The latest Bangladesh education policy also emphasises HRE (Ministry of Education, 2010), paying attention to the UDHR and CRC. My study examined the extent to which the human rights education opportunities in the case study school meet the definitions provided by UNDHRET (2011) and the first model as described by Tibbitts (2002), and Mihr and Schmitz (2007). These aspects of HRE are discussed in the following section.

4.2.1 Understanding human rights and HRE

As discussed in the literature review, different theorists, researchers and policy makers argue that human rights education includes basic understanding of human rights and human right issues. In this regard the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), and the Conventions on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (1989) have been considered fundamental instruments and framing sources for human rights education at the school level. The national education policy of Bangladesh (2010) also emphasises HRE by giving importance to these two international documents (see Chapter 2 for details). In this section, I trace the fact that in spite of having very positive attitudes to HRE in the school, participants involved in this study were only able to show very limited knowledge and understanding of the concepts of human rights, child rights and HRE.

The head teacher Reba argued that she was very concerned about human rights and her school was promoting HRE, as teachers were conducting lessons on HR. She said that she was well informed about the importance of HRE in the Bangladeshi context, but was not able to explain any ideas about HR documents such as the UNDHR or CRC. She said, "I am not concerned about these documents as I am not conducting classes". Similar results were found from the classroom teachers. Beauty and Shumi had some understanding of human rights, but they were not acquainted with the fundamental human rights documents such as the UNDHR, CRC. Struthers (2015) argues that it is really difficult for teachers to promote education *about* human rights "in a deeper and contextually relevant manner" (p. 64) without having foundational knowledge about the fundamental instruments for human rights, especially the CRC at the school level. I found that teachers' main concerns were addressing the issues of human rights contained in the textbooks, rather than broader issues of human rights in the current local and global context. I present here extracts from interviews with the classroom teachers that explored their understanding:

> **Researcher:** Are you aware of HRE being a focus in the national education policy?
> **Beauty:** The issues of human rights are included in the curriculum and textbooks based on the new education policy 2010, but I did not read the education policy and normally teachers do not study it.

Shumi: I have not read our national education policy, so I am not sure what is included.

Researcher: How do you define human rights and child rights?

Beauty: A human right is the right to avail yourself of all opportunities from the state. Child rights gives opportunities for the children to grow up with happiness.

Shumi: Human rights to me is the right to lead a happy life. Child rights means the child has the right to get love, and respecting their opinion.

Researcher: People often have trouble stating what HR's there are, but can you list any?

Beauty: Safe environment for living, rights to education, express of opinion, freedom of movement.

Shumi: Education, health, security of life, freedom of movement, freedom of speech.

Researcher: Do you know if these rights are part of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child?

Beauty: No, I never read these two declarations. I just read the topics included in the textbook. But I strongly believe that teachers should study these two declarations to enrich themselves, to build up their confidence and help them to deliver more effective lessons on HR in the classroom.

Shumi: No, I only emphasize the topics in the textbooks and curriculum.

Researcher: Could you name some human rights included in our constitution?

Beauty: Though human rights are in the constitution of Bangladesh, I have not read it. Generally, people do not read the Constitution. Same for teachers. Speaking, movement, education, assembly might be some human rights included in the constitution of Bangladesh.

Shumi: According to our constitution, all fundamental rights are reported. I never had the opportunity to discuss HR in the classroom based on the Constitution, except in the textbook.

This interview data shows that both teachers' approaches to HRE were determined by content in the textbooks. They were not familiar with formal HR documents and had a very limited conceptualisation of HR and HRE. The interviews also showed their lack of understanding about how they could go beyond the textbook in teaching HRE. It became clear to me that one of the first tasks I would need to do in my collaboration with the

teachers was to build their knowledge of HR and HRE, before we could commence the action research.

In my focus group discussions with the students I found that they showed a great deal of interest in human rights, but they said there was a lack of focus on HRE in their school. Both groups of students demonstrated that they knew and were concerned about the fundamental human rights to having food, clothes, shelter, health, and education. When I asked them to name other rights, one grade 7 student said “cultural rights”. Another student from the same grade said, “Rights for living in this world”. A grade 9 student thought that, “expression of opinion is our human right” and another said, “we have the right to vote”. While these students were not able to frame the rights accurately, there were others who were not able to contribute further ideas at all and no students in the groups had knowledge of HR documents. However, several students did comment that human rights topics as well as child rights were taught in previous classes and included in the textbooks, although they could not remember any content or examples of what they learned, mainly because they “just read information from text books”.

Osler and Starkey (2005) argue that the CRC have wide-ranging implications for the process of teaching and learning about human rights and the practice of democracy in the classroom. However, being unfamiliar with the CRC, neither teachers had considered the pedagogical implications of children’s rights or their obligations to plan effective teaching and learning about, for and through HR. Beauty and Shumi did not even have a basic understanding of CRC, but were very willing to deepen their understanding, given the opportunity. They clearly needed further professional learning in order to build their knowledge and practice.

It can be concluded that although the classroom teachers had some understanding of the concept of human rights, they were promoting HRE without having sound knowledge and understanding on the fundamental policies recommended by the national education policy (Ministry of Education, 2010) and the National Curriculum of Bangladesh (NCTB, 2012).

4.2.2 Concern for human rights issues and violations in the school and society

It is evident that human rights, including children's rights, are still frequently violated in Bangladesh, including in families, schools and the community (Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum, 2013; Chowdhury & Islam, 2013 Hasanat & Fahim, 2014; Islam & Amin, 2016; Khan, 2015; Mohajan, 2014). Significant issues include violence against women and children, child trafficking, child marriage, corporal punishment, eve-teasing and other forms of sexual harassment of women. In this section, I discuss findings from participants and their concerns about human right violations in society and in the school. The students said that many of these serious HR issues were never discussed in the classrooms. I found that most students and parents wanted see a stronger emphasis on HRE in school activities, but that the teachers felt constrained by the curriculum and textbook limitations.

The head teacher argued that she was mostly concerned about 'juvenile delinquency' as a significant and alarming problem in the school because of rising issues with students committing violent acts. She contended that "juvenile delinquency has increased in our society". Reba described the situation as very dangerous and cited an example where, "recently, I collected a big *chapatti* (knife) from one group of students in my school who wanted to be heroes". She claimed that "technology is the main reason behind this because they know too many negative and violent things through technology use in their daily lives". Other significant reasons for increased juvenile delinquency she identified by were "weaker family bonding", "lack of parental care, and frustration created from excessive academic loads such as completing homework and preparing for examinations". Reba's views were supported by the students, teachers and parents. However, she did not show concern about other human rights violations in line with HR documents. When I asked, "are you concerned about any other issues?" she replied, "I am not well prepared for this question so I cannot point out human rights violations. Generally, I am concerned about those issues which are observed by me in our daily life".

Reba's lack of understanding of HR and HRE was clearly the reason for her limited answer, but in addition, she was not really sure whether HR was discussed in classrooms or not. However, she suggested that "teachers should handle these issues ethically and should motivate students in the right way". Parents were also seriously concerned about juvenile delinquency and commented that this issue should be addressed in the school. One respondent in the grade 7 parents' group contended that:

> We know that one school student in Dhaka city was murdered recently by his school friends. This is alarming for us. Children are also engaging themselves in the violations of others' rights. One morning when I entered the school, I found a boy being attacked by another boy. Teachers should address these kinds of issues, so that all students will be aware of their rights as well as the rights of others.

When I asked the classroom teachers about human rights violations in society and the school, it was clear that they also had limited knowledge about HR. However, Beauty was concerned about the violation of children's educational rights and the school environment. She said that "children do not have good facilities in the school environment and I am concerned that this should be improved". Shumi was also about "violence against children in society" but had no other views to offer on the subject of HR.

However, in the student focus groups at Green Bird School many of the students were able to express opinions on human rights issues. Several students said they disapproved of child marriage, violence against women and children at home and in other places, child labor, child trafficking, and eve-teasing. They said that they knew about these issues from textbooks, media and real-life experiences.

Students knew that eve-teasing involves unwanted sexual remarks or advances by a male to a female in a public place, and that it can lead to girls being personally distressed and dropping-out of school. Students agreed that "they should discuss this issue at school" to "make students more aware". Other students said there were examples at Green Bird School of "eve-teasing" committed by boys in different grades. A female student said the eve-teasers were generally seniors who "block the way when we are in the corridors and make very rude sexual comments about us". This opinion is consistent with Hoque's (2013) study in Bangladesh that found that often "girls cannot walk on the streets without being teased by an opposite sex" (p. 1). Similarly, Islam and Amin (2016) argue that "almost every young girl is a victim of teasing, especially by the local young teasers" (p.3) and they claim that eve-teasing is a big problem in schools.

In the focus groups, parents said that lack of family education about the negative impact of this behavior on girls was the reason this was continuing. But Hoque (2013) argues that absence of legal processes tackling the problem in a sustained way, and lack of education

in schools contributed to the lack of action. Parents in focus groups also agreed that lack of school education was of concern. One student said that "the company of other boys in groups who behave like this is the problem". Several male and female students recommended separate education for boys and girls to minimise eve-teasing, an idea that was also discussed in Hoque's (2013) study. One student suggested that, "Boys and girls could be separated in a different building". It was interesting that she had no idea about the limited funding available in the school to adopt such a suggestion, and the fact that this would not address the wider problem of girls' HR. Another student proposed that "our school can arrange two shifts: morning and day for boys and girls". This was an unrealistic suggestion, given the obligations for schools in Bangladesh to offer full school days. However, the consensus was that the issue should be discussed in the classrooms and action taken to eradicate eve-teasing from the school and society. Even though articles of the CRC (1989) do provide obligations for the state to ensure children's safety and provision of a healthy environment (e.g. article 3: best interest of children; article 36: protection against exploitation), children at Green Bird School were responsible for violations of their own rights and the rights of others.

Other concerns identified by the students as HR abuses were actually more connected to health and wellbeing issues such as 'children smoking at school'. This provided evidence of their limited understanding of more serious HR abuses. One grade 9 student said, "A lot of students in our school smoke and it is a violation of human rights for others including them. I am really concerned about this as we can be sick from second hand smoke". Research by Khan, Karim, Alam, Ali, and Masud (2018) that involved a survey of secondary school male students in a district in Bangladesh found that over 26% were smokers currently, but 55% had smoked" (p. 34). Kamal, Rahman, Uddin and Islam (2010) found that children who smoke are mostly influenced by their peers. Kataoka, Nozu, Kubo, Sato, and Watanabe (2010) added that "it is an important task in schools to prevent risky behaviours among adolescents such as smoking, and drinking" (p. 6). They argued that, "special programs should be undertaken in schools and the media to prevent smoking among students" (p. 107).

Struthers (2015) sees it as essential for teachers to discuss, "the potential role of learners in the promotion and protection of human rights" (p. 64) in classroom teaching and learning and wider school programs, to promote education *about* human rights. It was clear

that before the action research, the students had limited views *about* human rights, particularly on a global scale. When I asked them more about the issues pointed out by them, one student said, “we don’t think about our awareness and responsibilities regarding these issues as we never discuss them in the classroom or any place”. However, they did express interest in having more discussions in class to increase their awareness. One student said, “these are really important matters for our life and society”. The focus group discussions confirmed Struthers’s (2015) argument that learners should have more opportunity for HRE in the Bangladeshi context.

Overall, the findings from interviews in this first phase of my study confirmed the claims made by other researchers (Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum, 2013; Chowdhury & Islam, 2013; Hasanat & Fahim, 2014; Mohajan, 2014) that human rights violations continue in Bangladesh society and required addressing in schools. Clearly, the nature of existing human rights education in the school did not meet the criteria Tibbitts (2002) recommends in her ‘values and awareness model’. While she argues that, “the main focus of human rights education is to transmit basic knowledge of human rights issues and to foster its integration into public values (Tibbitts, 2002, p. 163) the school was not creating these opportunities effectively through existing HRE. However, all participants involved in this phase of the study agreed that knowledge of human rights issues was important and human rights violations in the society and school should be tackled benefit society and children.

Parents were concerned about issues they observed in their society, school and amongst their children and paid attention to concerns about social values and students’ awareness and sense of responsibility. One parent noted that:

> Addressing contemporary issues of human rights in the school and in the classroom is very significant because this is the best time (especially till grade 10) for the children to develop their fundamental values through education and schooling. If the students can achieve good values, they can apply it in their daily and real life. They will be able to know what is right and wrong and this might keep them safe from bad activities like eve-teasing. They can shape their lives positively from their school life. Finally, our society will benefit.

I was interested in understanding what suggestions the participants would make about further developing HRE. The parents suggested having an hour every week or two for the teachers and students, to discuss contemporary human rights issues, with a focus on the rights and duties of students. They also argued for textbook modification on a regular basis. The classroom teachers expected some instructions in the curriculum indicating how teachers could include contemporary issues of human rights in the classroom. They also expected an effective role from school leadership in developing a human rights culture in the school. The head teacher suggested that the government needed to reduce curriculum loads for the students and teachers in some areas so they could provide increased opportunity for developing values and ethics. Her suggestion was well received by the classroom teachers.

4.2.3 The importance of understanding the Bangladesh context in HRE

As previously discussed, the importance of HRE is globally recognised (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2011) and the government of Bangladesh has paid significant attention to HRE through the National Education Policy (Ministry of Education, 2010). I tried to understand how the participants involved in this study perceived the importance of HRE at the school level in the Bangladesh context. All participants argued that in the present context of Bangladesh, promoting HRE further in the school was urgently required. Reba said that "if students can know their rights, this will benefit them and our society". Both classroom teachers agreed. Beauty explained that:

> HRE is very important because in Bangladesh, people do not know their rights, including the children. They need to be aware of their rights and the rights of others. If we can promote HRE in the school, our nation will benefit.

Similarly, Shumi pointed out that:

> If students do not know their rights, they will not be able to achieve their rights. It is possible through education. But they should also know about their duties to others including their family and country as well.

When I asked Reba, Beauty and Shumi about approaches to promoting HRE content, they argued in favour of the cross-curricular approach in the current education system. Beauty said "we should start from the root of our education policy. Different content and activities of HRE should be compulsory. Otherwise, implementing HRE in the school is not possible".

According to UNESCO (2011), "in order to be effective, human rights education must be context specific: programs must draw on national experiences and existing social, economic and cultural conditions" (p. 52). Many scholars, for example Bajaj (2011a), MacNaughton and Koutsioumpas (2017), Osler (2015) and Vanobbergen (2012) recommend a consideration of context in promoting HRE. Beauty and Shumi stressed the importance of developing HRE which reflects the socio-economic context of Bangladesh. Beauty said:

> HRE should be contextualized. We can't do it like Europe or America. Our country is not fully developed. In Europe and America, the state is taking many responsibilities for a child. We are still a developing country and many of our children are not getting their rights. Discrimination between rich and poor is really high and therefore children from rich families are getting too much, whereas children from poor families are struggling for their basic rights such as food, clothes, and even good shelter and places to live. In this situation, HRE should be implemented focusing on the real situation of Bangladesh.
>
> Based on our local context, HRE is not well developed in Bangladesh. Our textbooks and curriculum are quite limited. Our HR commission and HRE should be more developed based on our local context and in the light of global values and concerns.

Shumi also pointed that students needed to know about the constitution, human rights and child rights policies of Bangladesh.

4.2.4 Teacher perceptions of challenges in becoming experts *about* human rights

Both teachers said that their educational background did not provide the development of their expertise about human rights content, so their students were deprived due to their lack of understanding of HRE. They said they needed professional learning emphasising HRE. Beauty argued that:

> We are not expert in sociology or Bangladesh and Global Studies (BGS) but we are trying to include human rights content. I graduated in Bengali literature and Shumi in English literature. I am taking BGS this year, but I'm not sure what I'll be teaching next year. Maybe next year, I have to teach agricultural studies. How can I develop my expertise? Students are also deprived for this reason. It is important to promote subject-based training for us. A teacher should be given the opportunity to continue a subject for a few years to develop his or her expertise.

The teachers also claimed that they were overloaded and did not get enough time to prepare their lessons properly. Students also perceived that their teachers did have not sufficient knowledge about the topics of human rights and that their teachers therefore generally avoided discussion on issues in the classroom. My observations confirmed the claim made by the teachers and students, since the lessons were taught through reading the text books. This further justified the focus in my study for teachers to have professional learning about HRE through the planning cycle of the action research.

4.3 Education *through* human rights

The UNDHRET (2011) defines the second element of HRE as education *through* human rights: "learning and teaching in a way that respects the rights of both educators and learners" (p. 4). Jennings (2006) developed "standards for human rights education" (p. 292) for classroom teachers that emphasises students developing appropriate manners, behaviour and understanding through discussions on human rights issues and participation in different planned activities. He also argues that human rights instruments (UNDHR and CRC) should be interpreted given students' social and historical contexts. He said that teachers should provide "instructional activities that allow students to take positive action relative to their own human rights and their responsibilities to protect and promote the rights of others" (p. 293).

Osler and Starkey (2005) argue that the CRC has wide-ranging implications for pedagogical practices of HRE and must be enacted through teaching and learning activities in the classroom. But as discussed earlier, Beauty and Shumi had limited knowledge of pedagogical aspects, such as developing a creative and joyful environment for teaching and learning, including students' participation in the educational process, fostering creative thinking, and ensuring equal opportunities for boys and girls.

In the following section, my study examines the extent to which the teaching and learning approaches were being implemented in the case study school to meet the approaches suggested by the UNDHRET (2011), Jennings (2006) and other scholars and policy makers before the action research.

4.3.1 Understanding existing HRE teaching and learning approaches

In spite of the Bangladesh education policy (Ministry of Education, 2010) suggesting the use of a variety of classroom activities, such as discussion, group-work, story-telling, writing, drawing, debate, role-playing, question-answer, and demonstrations in the secondary school curriculum in Bangladesh (NCTB, 2012) it was evident in my early interviews and discussions with the teachers that they would benefit from further professional learning on how to implement these approaches.

To further explore and understand existing teaching and learning approaches, I showed a video clip with participatory teaching approaches to the two teachers and groups of students. The video clip developed by an English Language Teaching (ELT) University educator (Riad, 2015), shows teachers and students engaging actively in discussions.

Figure 2: YouTube Bangladeshi example of participatory teaching and learning

When I asked the classroom teachers about how their teaching and learning approaches compared with the YouTube example, both said that they did not use participatory approaches similar to what was depicted, though Beauty commented that she tried to encourage participation at times. Beauty's explanation of her approaches was that:

> At first, I give them a basic idea about the topic. For example, if the topic is 'what is a human right?' I give them a short lecture on it. Then I ask them what they know about it. I ask them to raise hand and give them opportunity to explain.

Beauty commented that she was interested in the role play depicted in the video clip and the ways that the lesson was broken up into segments where different students were involved in discussion and debate. She said that she would welcome opportunities to improve her teaching strategies. She was also keen to try new approaches such as using ICT, but the school had only one classroom equipped with multimedia facilities that was mostly used for ICT classes, so it was rarely available for use in other subjects such as human rights.

Shumi had very little experience in using participatory approaches in the classroom commenting that:

> Though participatory approaches such as brain-storming, group and peer discussion, debate, and role-play are listed in the curriculum, I cannot arrange these types of activities all the time due to the large number of students in the class. It is really difficult. Therefore, generally I cannot make my class more participatory. When I conduct a lesson, I just ask the students one or two questions to understand their perception about the topic. Then I try to make them understand by giving a lecture in front of them. Sometimes, I ask my students to write on the board and ask a few questions. Sometimes assignments are given as homework and debates are arranged once or twice in a year.

Shumi said that her own teacher education was mainly focused on learning content and not on working out how to engage student actively in the classroom. Shumi was less interested to applying participatory approaches in the classroom, as she was seriously concentrating on the completion of the syllabus in due time.

The students in Beauty's class commented that very few teachers used approaches like those shown in the clip, but said they would really like to learn through more debates and role plays. Similar comments were made by the students in Shumi's class. They said that 'reading textbooks' was the main approach used by their teacher, though she sometimes asked them to write on the board. When I asked them to explain the approaches used by Shumi, one student said that, "Miss tells someone to read the book and we all hear. Then Miss ask another one to read and after she asks a few questions she finishes the lesson". Another student added that "all students in the class do not get the opportunity to read within the allocated time for the lesson". They had no experience of going beyond reading approaches, such as group work, watching videos, or debates.

Both teachers did not develop any lesson plans for stating the learning intentions and outcomes of the activities in the classroom and said that this was not common practice in Bangladesh because teachers mainly followed the text book as their plan for the lesson. Overall, in spite of global and national policy concerns and commitments to participatory teaching and learning approaches, these classroom teachers were not providing these kinds

of opportunities for the students, so there was a huge gap between desired policies for HRE and practices in the case study school. They were constrained by their lack of professional learning related to engaging teaching and learning pedagogies, and also by large class sizes, and the pressure of being expected to cover the content in text books.

4.3.2 Understanding teacher-student relationships in the classroom

Osler and Starkey (2005) argue that the CRC (1989) has wide-ranging implications for pedagogical practices of HRE in the school and in the classroom. Based on the CRC, they suggest a number of principles which should be applied to the process of teaching and learning including *dignity and security* arguing that:

> The student's right to dignity implies a relationship between teacher and students to avoid abuse of power on the part of the teacher, including the avoidance of sarcasm. In this relationship, the teacher's own right to dignity should not be forgotten. Teachers need to establish, with their students, a classroom atmosphere in which name-calling and mockery are unacceptable. (p. 143)

I explored the extent to which Beauty and Shumi focused on students' dignity and security and how they developed their relationship with their students through their existing teaching and learning practices in the classroom. Beauty said that she valued her students' identity and ensured their wellbeing the classroom. Her students said that most of the teachers in the school were not friendly, although in comparison with others, Miss Beauty showed kindness at times. Shumi said she didn't think about matters such as the dignity and security of her students in the classroom, but she was concerned to create a safe environment stating that:

> As we are just implementing our textbook learning, I always think about what is in the textbook, rather than these issues like dignity and security of students in the classroom. But I do want a classroom environment without fear or threat, where my students can easily receive my lesson.

I noticed that in her teaching she was not focused on establishing relationships with students. However, I observed that Shumi's classroom was calm and she was known to the students as a "soft teacher".

However, overall, I found that existing teacher-student relationships did not have the positive dimensions that Osler and Starkey (2005) recommended, since teachers were mainly focused on delivering content through textbook based and teacher directed lessons, so the teachers were not creating an open environment in the classroom, where students could be challenged to raise issues that they were interested in discussing with their teachers.

Based on the opinions gathered from students, parents and my field notes, it was evident that the established learning culture in the school was that parents and students perceived teachers as very powerful and not focused on student's dignity. Students said that sometimes their teachers used very local and informal language in the classroom and they felt humiliated. They commented that sometimes teachers used the term 'tui' [local and informal meaning of 'you'] instead of 'tumi' [formal and sophisticated meaning of 'you'], which students found offensive. One grade 9 student said using 'tui' is not always bad. If my close friend says 'tui' I would be happy with this rather than 'tumi', but when our teacher uses 'tui' I feel really bad". Another student from the same grade explained that " I think it depends on the situation when it is ok or not. But I think Miss should avoid using 'tui' as she is a teacher. As teachers and students are not friends, 'tumi' is better to use".

However, both grade 7 and 9 students and their parents perceived this as having their human rights violated by their teachers. I observed Beauty conducting a lesson, and while I would not define her behavior as 'abuse', she did use sarcasm and mockery, which offended her students. For the improvement of teacher-student relationships, students hoped for love and respect from their teacher. As parents perceived teachers as more influential than them in the development of students' learning and behavior, they asked the teachers to be friendlier towards their children and to consider themselves as guardians, like parents. However, my observations showed that Beauty frequently used the local word 'tui' in the classroom and disrespected her students.

4.3.3 Lack of inclusion and equal opportunity in the classroom

The National Education Policy of Bangladesh clearly emphasises the development of a creative and joyful environment for teaching and learning in the classroom where students participate in their education and equal opportunity is provided for all students. Both

classroom teachers said that they had positive attitudes to this approach and claimed that they paid equal importance and attention to all the students when they engaged them in learning activities. However, students strongly disputed this. First, they argued that they have very little opportunity to participate in different activities in the classroom, and second, they said that the teachers didn't give their attention to all students. While they saw Beauty as one of the best teachers in the school, the students still said she often favoured a few students in the classroom. One student said that "the students whose parents are powerful are paid most attention by the teachers in the classroom". Another pointed out that "some teachers including Miss Beauty, only engage a few students regularly in their classes who are favourites and the rest of the students do nothing". Beauty understood the importance of providing equal opportunities for the students in the classrooms. But I observed that she did pay more attention to some students than others. I had similar findings in relation to Shumi's class that were evident in my observations and this conversation with the students:

> **Researcher:** How do you participate in classroom activities arranged by your teacher?
>
> **G7S6:** Miss gives this opportunity to the students who are very favourite to her.
>
> **G7S2:** Miss invites students to write something on the board who are favourite students to her.
>
> **Other participants of G7 (together**): We agree with the opinion of **G7**S2.
>
> **Researcher**: Why does this happen?
>
> **G7S2**: Miss think that the bad students who cannot give answers properly, are not important to ask or engage in the classroom activities.
>
> **G7S3**: Miss thinks that if she gives effort to good students they can develop more. So this is important. And bad students cannot develop quickly, so, they are paid less attention.
>
> **G7S6**: Miss might think that asking all students in the classroom is time consuming. Miss has not enough time.
>
> **G7S5**: Those who are attentive in the classroom, teachers are also attentive to them.
>
> [G7S1 stands for Grade 7 Student 1]

Overall, while it was clear that all students were not equally treated in the classroom by their teachers, it was evident that the classes were very large and there was not a history

and culture in the school of differentiating teaching and learning to meet varied students' needs. Neither Beauty nor Shumi had prior experience of focused professional learning on how to create a positive and inclusive classroom learning or even of what inclusion in the classroom can mean for the learning of all students.

4.3.4 Identifying challenges in building inclusive and participatory approaches

Both classroom teachers agreed that they experienced different challenges in implementing more inclusive, rights-based participatory approaches to human rights education. One of the challenges was that there was no real discussion of this amongst teachers in the school. The fact that only two teachers volunteered to participate in my study, in spite of the research being fully explained provides evidence of reluctance to become involved in HRE since it is was so unknown to the staff and most of them were reluctant to commit.

There were also obviously structural issues with many large classes with 60 or more students. The head teacher, classroom teachers and parents argued that the government of Bangladesh should take initiatives to reduce class sizes and improve teaching and learning facilities including the use of multimedia facilities to improve student engagement.

'Duration of class time' was another significant reason identified by teachers, students and parents as blocking the development of better teaching and learning, since most classes were 40-45 minutes and in some cases 35 minutes if the lesson was in the last period. Reba had to follow government instructions about school as well as class time. However, she did not agree that class-time was a serious barrier to implementing participatory approaches in the classroom. She said that teachers' attitudes and actions showed a lack of interest in implementing participatory approaches. She argued that if teachers were committed and dedicated to their profession, they could overcome these challenges, and could use participatory approaches within the current schedule. This reinforced for me the need to support the teachers in their preparation and planning during the next stage of my study, to model how participatory approaches could be developed in the classroom.

Although Beauty and Shumi had teacher education qualifications including Bachelor and Master of Education degrees, they clearly needed further professional learning that was more focus on pedagogies for HRE. Reba agreed that teachers in her school had no

opportunities to deepen their understanding of active and engaging learning in this field stressed the need for higher education authorities to arrange opportunities for professional learning. Even one grade 9 student said that, "teachers are just coming, reading textbooks and taking examinations. I think most of the teachers do not know what they need to do in the classroom to get us involved."

I observed and understood the challenges identified by the participants. In Chapters 6, 7 and 8, I explore the development of professional learning approaches implemented through the process of action research in developing new approaches to HRE in the school and the impact on teaching and learning.

4.4 Education *for* human rights

The UNDHRET (2011) defines the third element of education *for* human rights as, "empowering persons to enjoy and exercise their rights and to respect and uphold the rights of others" (p. 4). This approach is also explained as fostering awareness "by which human rights can be translated into social and political reality (UNESCO, 1978, p. 2). Gollob et al. (2010) explore this element as 'teaching *for* democracy and human rights' contending that:

> To become a full active member of society, citizens need to be given the opportunity to work together in the interests of common good; respect all voices, even dissenting ones; participate in the formal political process; and cultivate the habits and values of democracy and human rights in their everyday lives and activities. (p. 10)

Many policy makers and researchers argue that youth participation and youth voice are central in promoting human rights education and practices of democracy in schools (Council of Europe, 2010; Osler & Starkey, 2005, 2010). The UNCRC includes an obligation in its article 12(1) that "states parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child" (UN General Assembly, 1989, p. 4). Osler and Starkey (2010) argue that:

> The degree to which children and young people are able to exercise their rights in the wider society is likely to have a considerable impact on the ways they

> experience schooling, and on how they experience human rights and democracy in schools. (p. 101-102)

The latest education policy in Bangladesh has emphasised the CRC to ensure children's human rights through education and paying attention to the cultivation of human values, respecting human rights and development of democratic culture. In addition, in 2015, the Bangladesh Government announced a new focus on practicing values of human rights and democracy through the development of *student cabinet* in secondary schools. My study examined the extent to which students' voices and opinions were developed through their direct participation and representative bodies (student cabinets) as a way of empowerment in the process of schooling.

4.4.1 Lack of student voice *for* human rights

Osler and Starkey (2010) argue that "in order for young people to claim their rights to express a view on matters which may affect them at school, teachers and school principals need to provide a space or opportunity for them to do so" (p. 105). In my study, I first investigated the extent to which the students were given these opportunities. To make the concept of student voice and opinion clear, I showed the students a video clip (see image below) with a dialogue between a group of secondary school students and the Bangladesh State Minister for the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs(Rtv, 2016). I found that the students enjoyed seeing this interaction, and found that they had not experienced such opportunities for open and frank discussions about issues they are concerned about in their schooling and lives.

Figure 3: YouTube dialogue between secondary school students and the State Minister, Ministry of Women and Child Affairs, The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (2016)

Students had never experienced dialogue about these kinds of concerns with their teachers or the head teacher in the classroom or beyond the classroom. In the student focus group, they said there was little opportunity to develop opportunities *for* human rights in school. One grade 7 student related a situation he had witnessed:

> When I was a student of grade 6, madam wanted to punish one of my friends. My friend said please avoid a specific part of body as he was previously injured when he was beaten there. Madam did not pay attention to his word and hurt the injured part of his body and he was also bleeding from his nose. Then madam gave him some medicine and advised him not to tell his family, but she did apologize for the incident.

In the focus group discussion, the students were not surprised by this incident and it was common in my school years and they complained that many of them had experienced corporal punishment. Though I knew that the level and frequency of corporal punishment

had decreased, I also observed corporal punishment during my fieldwork in the school. The school not only ignored the voices and opinions of students on issues that affected their lives seriously, but also violated law and policies including the UNCRC, and the National Education policy of Bangladesh. For example, article 12(1) CRC (1989) says that:

> State Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child. (UN General Assembly, 1989, p. 6)

My study identified that there was no opportunity in the school for students to share their opinion related to matters that significantly affected them, since a culture of remaining silent about their own human rights violations as well as others in the school and in the society was evident. I asked them to share their opinion related to eve-teasing and smoking one student from grade 7 said, "normally we do not share what happens with our teachers as we could be punished by the seniors". Related to smoking, a grade 9 student said, "we do not tell our teachers who smokes, because if we complain against them, it is a question of security for us outside the school. They are not actually good boys who smoke".

However, when these matters were raised later during the action research and the students were assured of their anonymity, I found that the students were very keen to express their opinions and views with their teachers and said it would be "awesome" to have this opportunity. When I asked them to discuss in groups how and why they thought they should participate in dialogue, a summary of the students' opinions showed that they thought:

> **Grade 9 students:** We need to express our views and have teachers value our opinion about issues that are worrying us, particularly if we have been victims of abuse. This kind of opportunity will also increase our knowledge, experience and confidence that would be helpful for our current and future lives where we may need to give our opinion.
>
> **Grade 7 students**: There are many problems in the school. For example, many boys are involved in bad behavior in the school (breaking windows, doors, and

furniture). We should be able to share these problems with the school authorities, and our teachers. We would like to be involved in solving these problems. The school environment would be improved. It would be helpful to ensure our rights and others' rights in the school. Our confidence would be increased as well.

The focus group discussions with the students revealed their concern about a lack of human rights and voice. As a consequence, a culture of students hiding their issues and human rights violations was evident. However, they showed their strong desire to participate more actively to make a difference *through* participatory action.

4.4.2 Human Rights practices in the school and everyday life

It was apparent from the responses of the teachers, students, head teacher and parents that the school was only facilitating human rights practices in a limited way. One specific activity for fostering democratic values and HR practice in the school was electing a *student cabinet* through the direct participation of all students. However, the head teacher and two classroom teachers could not explain any ideas and activities they had implemented in line with guidelines from the Ministry of Education *Student Cabinet Manual*. The head teacher said the student cabinet was involved in activities such as "helping to minimize any problem raised during the tiffin period, in maintaining students' discipline". But the teachers and students said that the student cabinet had limited effect, as the following extracts from conversations demonstrate:

Researcher: Could you please explain your understanding of the role of the student cabinet?

Beauty: The student cabinet has been elected through voting by students like traditional elections.

Shumi: We elected the student cabinet with a joyful environment.

Researcher: Do you have any other idea?

Beauty: No.

Shumi: No.

Researcher: How do you evaluate this new initiative by the Ministry of Education in your school context?

Beauty: I cannot find any positive impact of the student cabinet and its activities in the school and in the lives of students. They are not advised by the school authority and teachers to be involved in school activities. I am not saying that they are not interested, it is just that they are not instructed or advised what to do.

Shumi: I cannot find any benefit except voting by students. Members of student cabinet are not involved in any activity in the school.

Beauty: To the best of my knowledge, they have not yet done anything recognisable in the school.

Osler and Starkey (2010) argue that "training and participation in decision making and the exercise of democratic control can provide powerful learning experiences" (p. 135) in the promotion and practices of democratic values and action. The National Education Policy of Bangladesh (Ministry of Education, 2010) and student cabinet manual reflect this view (DSHE, 2015). However, the teachers and head teacher did not show any evidence of implementing the manual although they strongly acknowledged its importance.

Perceptions of the students were very similar to their teachers. However, they were more frustrated as they could not see any evidence of activities by the student cabinet in the school, even though they were committed before the election to work for the development of school such as in improving the school environment. They had not experienced sharing opinions with members of the student cabinet. In fact, some student cabinet *members* had behaved badly. The head teacher said that "sometimes the members of cabinet consider themselves more powerful and misuse their power, for example sometimes they punish other students". My observations also supported the claim made by students and the head teacher against the members of student cabinet. For example, I saw that three cabinet members were disrupting their classmates even though they were supposed to minimize poor behaviour. UNICEF (2007) says that "when creating opportunities for children to participate, it is also necessary to take appropriate measures to ensure they are protected from manipulation, violence, abuse or exploitation" (p. 81). However, no measures were taken at Green Bird School to monitor or coordinate the activities of the cabinet.

One of the aims in the *Student Cabinet Manual* is focused on increasing parental involvement in schools to help cabinet members (DSHE, 2015,) but this was not initiated in the school. Moreover, parents did not understand how the student cabinet should

function. One parent said that "actually the student cabinet does not exist at the school level in Bangladesh. It generally exists at the college and university level". Other parents thought that cabinet members were class captains, but had no perception about the scope and possibilities for a well-developed student representative group.

So, it can be concluded that in spite of current education policy and government initiatives focused on HR practices the student cabinet was not functioning in a meaningful way in the school. This indicates huge gaps between policy and practice and a lack of strategies for the implementation of human rights policy at the school level.

4.4.3 Role of school leadership in promoting education *for* human rights

Osler and Starkey (2010) argue that school leadership has a strong role to play in promoting human rights education in schools. This is particularly important for whole school approaches, including for example, through student senates or student representative councils. According to the report of the Department of Education and Science, UK (2002) "the role of the school Principal is of central importance in the establishment and operation of a Student Council" (p. 10) since they can promote a school culture in favour of and recognising students' activities. The role of school leader is also recognised and reported in the *Student Cabinet Manual* developed by Ministry of Education and provided to school leaders in Bangladesh (DSHE, 2015). The manual explains how student representatives can be involved in different school activities and states that the head teacher can, for example, take initiatives together with other teachers, assist in the development of activities, and discuss the role and functions of student cabinet.

In my study I found that Reba did not play any significant role except arranging the election of members with the assistance of other teachers, but she said she did not read the manual. I found that she assigned a teacher to prepare initiatives for the next election of student cabinet. But when I asked about her involvement in the functions of student cabinet, she acknowledged challenges, arguing that "the student cabinet was elected in the last year and I was newly transferred in this school, so I did not to do much for cabinet". She agreed that "it would be really effective if the student cabinet could function better for the school community". However, I observed that she was very involved in other issues and activities, such as results of the public examination, and meeting with higher authorities. It was clear

that she had a demanding role. My study confirmed Salahuddin's (2011) contention that the education sector in Bangladesh is experiencing school leadership challenges where "there is much more concern about quantitative issues, such as raising student enrolment, rather than quality improvement in terms of pedagogical development" (p. 23). However, Reba was committed to building further initiatives for the implementation of human rights education through student cabinet.

4.4.4 Community involvement and empowerment

Educationists and theorists recognise the importance of community involvement in promoting HRE in school. Osler and Starkey (2005) argue that a sustainable democratic culture in the school requires dialogue that "enables the development of shared values and mutual respect between teachers, students and others members of the school community" (p. 153). As community members, parents have a significant role in promoting and developing a human rights culture in the school. UNICEF (2007) says that parents can contribute in promoting HRE by getting involved in the school and supporting its work through meetings with teachers and other bodies in the school. In the Bangladeshi context, Kabir and Akter (2014) argue that parents can significantly contribute to school improvement. However, it was apparent from responses in my study, that parents have very little opportunity to be involved in school activities where their opinion is sought and valued. They said that generally the school authority seeks involvement from parents whose children are the candidates for public examination such as the Junior School Certificate (JSC) and Secondary School Certificate (SSC). They contended that the aim of this invitation was just to discuss the results of the examination. One parent said that "in the last two years, we did not get any opportunity to talk to teachers". Another participant reported that "parents are just invited to discuss the examination and results and there is no opportunity to talk about other issues related to students' lives, society and school". Similar results were found when I asked the Reba about parents' involvement in the school, since she said that:

> We consider the opinion of parents. We arrange parents-day and discuss different issues about their children, such as attendance in the classroom, and results of examinations. We discuss how their children can pass in the up-coming public examinations.

It was clearer through the Beauty and Shumi's views that parents' opinions were not considered in promoting human rights education in the school. Beauty said that:

> We do not receive the opinion of parents to implement HRE in the school. We arrange parents' gatherings for results only. Our main concern is results. We discuss how students can do well in the examinations. No other issues related to our society, school and children's human rights are ever discussed in the meeting.

However, the parents I interviewed were very interested in being involved in school activities where their opinion could be valued by school authorities. They stressed the need for communication on a regular basis between themselves and the school. They argued that these kinds of opportunities would enable them to share their ideas and opinions related to the lives and development of their children, as well as issues in society and the school. One parent pointed out that:

> Students' behaviour is greatly influenced by their teachers rather than their parents. If we can be connected with the school we can work together for the development of our children, our school and our community. We can share different issues our families face and other things affecting our children that might be not generally known by the teachers and school authority. We can find out more about the continuous progress of our children in terms of their academic progress and wellbeing.

The importance of parents' involvement was generally supported by the teachers and head teacher, who said they would appreciate opportunities to consider parents' opinions about their school activities. However, despite having a positive approach, Reba said that "we cannot value all the opinions of parents due to limitations, such as the completion of curriculum in due time". It was therefore concluded that further development was required in this area.

4.4.5 Identifying challenges in promoting education *for* human rights

Osler and Starkey (2005) argue that one of the potential challenges in arranging dialogue between school and other members of school community is authoritarian patterns in schools, where parents and students have little opportunity to express their views and be engaged in matters including curriculum, teaching and learning. Through analysis of students and parents' views, discussions with teachers, Reba and my observations, in the first phase of focus groups and interviews in my study, it was confirmed that prior to the action research, the school did very little to promote education *for* human rights. In their research Kabir and Akter (2014), found that "the lack of awareness of both parents and schools and overloaded teaching staff are found as the major challenges of involving parents at secondary level" (p. 22). Overall, I found an absence of democratic culture in the school and a limited focus on the importance of human rights education in the classrooms and wider school programs.

4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I analysed the views of the head teacher, teachers, students and parents on three major approaches to human rights education: *education about human rights, education through human rights,* and *education for human rights*. I have argued that the school had not yet developed a recognized culture and program for HRE apart from providing opportunities for discussion of some human rights issues as they appear in school textbooks. The school leader was not playing a significant role in developing this culture due to limited understanding of HRE and a lack of any specific policy and strategies for HRE being implemented. Although the classroom teachers involved in the study had very positive attitudes towards the promotion of HRE in the school, they lacked understanding of human rights and HRE. All participants, including Reba, were concerned about significant issues of human rights violations, for example juvenile delinquency and eve-teasing in society and in the school, but they did not feel able to address these issues in the school or classrooms if they were not included in textbooks.

I also found that a rights-based approach was not present in the existing teaching and learning practices in classrooms. Teachers were only teaching HRE using very traditional teacher centred lecture and textbook-based methods. Student's participation and voice was not established in current teaching and learning practices in the classroom and outside the classroom. Therefore, a culture of remaining silent among the students about their own

rights as well as rights of other was strongly evident. Community involvement was only established for discussing the issue of public examination results rather than broader societal issues that reflect the lives of students and others in the school community. In spite of the government's recent initiatives in promoting practices of human rights values through the development of student cabinets, practising democracy inside the classroom and in the school was limited to voting for student cabinet representatives. Though the teachers and head teacher showed strong willingness to implement a student cabinet, they acknowledged that their limited understanding of how it could function and what roles the students could have, posed challenges for its active and effective implementation.

A comprehensive and holistic approach to human rights education requires all the components: education *about*, *through* and *for* human rights, as mandated by the UNDHRET (Struthers, 2015). Unfortunately, these initial findings indicated that the current practices in the school did not yet fulfil these requirements except, to some extent, in relation to education *about* human rights. This clearly indicated the need for teacher professional learning in Bangladesh on HRE with the integration of education *about* human rights, education *through* human rights and education *for* human rights.

Overall, I concluded that the first phase of my case study showed that in spite of having global and supportive national Bangladesh policies for HR and HRE, this had not yet resulted in a rights-based HRE approach in Green Bird Government Secondary School. This clearly reflects the findings of the study conducted by Mujeri (2010), who argued that, "Human rights education is in its infancy in Bangladesh" (p. 197). The effective implementation of HRE in schools like Green Bird clearly required opportunities for professional development for teachers and leaders, community involvement, and reflection on how to develop human right values in teaching and learning practices. Since the school education system in Bangladesh is highly centralised, the government needed to provide support to build strategies for the implementation of HRE.

Chapter 5: Planning and implementing HRE through action research

5.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the process of planning and implementing HRE in the case study school through the development of collaborative and participatory action research. First, I explore further details about the context of Green Bird Secondary School that was selected for this collaboration and the profile of the teachers involved in the action research. Second, I explain how the collaboration was developed and negotiated with the head teacher and teachers. This includes how the teachers' professional learning workshops were organised and how they contributed to the collaboration and successful planning and implementation of the action research. I also report on my learning and reflections as the researcher during the collaboration and challenges in implementing the action research. Finally, I conclude with some recommendations for the development of collaborative action research and implementing action research in the schools.

5.2 The context of the school

In order to understand the school context, the education structure in Bangladesh, particularly the secondary school education system, requires some explanation.

There are three major stages of general education namely primary, secondary and higher education. The duration of primary education is five years (grade 1 to 5) although there is a proposal for eight years primary education (grade 1 to 8) in the National Education Policy 2010 (Ministry of Education, 2010). Primary education is offered by government primary schools, private primary schools and NGO run primary schools. The duration of secondary education is eight years (grade 6 to 12) and is categorised by three sub-stages: junior secondary schools (grade 6-8), secondary schools (grade 6-10) and senior secondary schools (grade 11-12), also known as higher secondary schools or colleges. Based on their administration, management and finance, secondary schools are divided into two categories: government-secondary schools and non-government secondary schools (Kabir & Islam, 2019).

The government secondary school education system in Bangladesh is highly centralised and is directly operated by the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE), a body of the Ministry of Education (BANBEIS, 2016 as cited in Kabir & Islam, 2019). There are 15587 non-government and 599 government secondary schools in Bangladesh (BANBEIS, 2018).

The Green Bird School opened in 2013 and is a co-educational government secondary school; one of the newest in the centre of the capital city, Dhaka. At the time of the study, the school had 630 students and 24 teachers. It is housed in a four-storey building with 18 classrooms, an office, prayer room, three science labs, a computer lab, a library and an auditorium. The head teacher and assistant head teacher's rooms are located at the ground floor, along with a staff room and girls' common room. Although it is a secondary school the playground is very small, so the policy was that only boys were able to play outside during tiffin (break times). The girls had very limited space to play. The teachers describe the school community as a mixture of middle and lower middle-class families. As a government secondary school, Green Bird School has no individual vision or mission, since it follows the aims and objectives of national education policy, national curriculum and the orders of the Ministry.

The school does not have an extensive history of co-curricular activities and other achievements. However, according to the teachers and head teacher, the school promotes some co-curricular activities following the curriculum instructions from the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education (DSHE). For example, the school generally encourages students to participate in celebrating different national days such as Victory Day, Independence Day, International Mother Language Day, and Bengali New Year. All students are also encouraged to participate in annual sports and cultural programs where students recite poems, sing songs, participate in drawing along with different sports such as long jump and high jump. Besides these, co-curricular activities are not generally practiced in a regular basis as a part of curriculum and school activities.

5.3. The profile of teachers

Since the research was conducted in the school for three months, it was important to develop understanding of the academic background and professional knowledge of the

head teacher and two classroom teachers who were actively involved in the process of action research. The head teacher completed her Bachelor and Masters' Degrees in general History at the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh. She started her teaching career in 1987 and then completed her Bachelor of Education at a teacher's training college.

Beauty completed her Bachelor of Arts (Hons) and Master of Arts in Bengali literature at the National University of Bangladesh. She completed her Bachelor of Education in 2006. She started her teaching career in 2012 and completed her Master of Education in 2014-15 at the Institute of Education and Research (IER), University of Dhaka. She generally teaches the subjects Bengali, Bangladesh and Global Studies (BGS), Home economics and Information and Communication Technology (ICT). She has participated in varied professional development programs but has no professional learning in HRE.

Shumi completed her Bachelor of Arts (Hons) and Master of Arts in English literature at the National University of Bangladesh. She started her career as head teacher of a Government primary school in Bangladesh in 2008. After 6 months she left the job and became an assistant teacher at a government secondary school in Bangladesh. She completed her Bachelor of education in 2012. She had been working at Green Bird School since 2014. Shumi was involved in conducting lessons in different subjects including Bengali, Islamic Studies, Home economics and Social science. Shumi has no professional learning in HRE.

5.4 Developing collaboration in the action research

In this section, I discuss how I developed the collaboration at Green Bird School with Beauty and Shumi and how we planned and developed our common views, aims and interests as a team.

Tripp (2005) argues that "action research has been a participatory method since its inception, there are, however, many views and uses of the term participation" (p. 10). From a purely practical perspective, Tripp pointed out that "action research works best with co-operation and collaboration" (p. 10). According to Bleicher (2014), collaboration is an action research philosophy. Capobianco, Lincoln, Canuel-Browne and Trimarchi (2006) argue that collaborative action research for teacher development is an approach where

teacher-researchers and teacher-educators work together through accomplishing shared and similar goals for solving problems and creating changes in teaching and learning. Mertler (2013) notes that collaboration is one of the key components in the action research process, especially for teachers' professional development. As cooperation is important for this kind of research, my planning for this study commenced at the beginning of 2016, when I began to identify the school for my study. I knew the Green Bird School and the classroom teacher Beauty, who had been one of my university students. I contacted Beauty and asked her to help me regarding the selection of a secondary school and classroom teachers who would be keen to further develop HRE lessons in the classroom. I also explained the selection criteria (discussed in my methodology chapter). Beauty said she would be really grateful to be included me in the study and recommended the head teacher and Shumi.

Capobianco and Feldman (2006) argue that building strong collaboration and mutual engagement with the teachers and the school is essential and "a key ingredient" to bringing change in a school. The ultimate goal of my collaboration was to improve teachers' own practices and develop new approaches to HRE in the school. In addition, as the researcher and facilitator my aim was to understand and learn how action research could impact on practices in the context of HRE in Bangladesh

It is always a significant question for participatory and collaborative action researchers to track "how others are involved, and how they can best participate in the process" taking into account their interests, and other aspects such as time and place (Tripp, 2005, p. 10). The classroom teachers and I met together to develop a schedule to ensure our mutual engagement. We decided that our group meetings would occur weekly after school. Though I was positioned as an insider-outsider, a participant and observer as well as researcher, I played the role of facilitator during the group meeting. I confirmed that we would work collegially (Warrican, 2006). The teachers had very limited understanding and experiences of implementing action research, but I explained that I would organise a workshop for their professional learning (see section 5.6) before commencing the project.

5.5. Understanding existing HRE in the school and identifying problems

Capobianco and Feldman (2006) argue that "action research needs to be grounded in what is already known" (p. 499), so it was important that in phase one of this research, that I developed understanding of the existing nature and challenges of HRE in the school by examining the views and perceptions of teachers, the head teacher, students and parents. As I explained in Chapter 4, HRE was not well developed in the school. Therefore, the aim of the action research was to work with the teachers to develop new approaches and pedagogies for HRE.

5.6 Professional learning and planning workshops

I organised two workshops; the first focused on developing pedagogy for HRE and the second on the process of action research. In the following section, I explain how I conducted the workshops, and the teachers' responses.

5.6.1 Professional learning workshop on education *about, through* and *for* human rights

Since the initial phase of the project showed that teachers had very limited understanding of the pedagogy *about, through* and *for* human rights, a day long workshop was designed based on this conceptual framework of HRE practices I aimed to develop through this research. The framework drew on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the Convention of the Rights of the Child (1989), the UNESCO Strategy on Human Rights (2006), the United Nations World Program for Human Rights Education (First Phase, 2006), the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training (2011), and the United Nations World Program for Human Rights Education (Second Phase, 2012). I was not aiming for my study to impose any universal theory and pedagogy of human rights education in a Bangladeshi secondary school. Rather, I aimed to examine how action research could inform new theories and pedagogies that could then be developed in other contexts. According to UNESCO (2011), "in order to be effective, human rights education must be context specific: programs must draw on national experiences and existing social, economic and cultural conditions" (p. 52). A new curriculum was developed and being implemented in Bangladesh after 2012 emphasising varied participatory approaches to

teaching and learning including for example, debates, role plays, and group work as part of HRE pedagogy, so it was important to build on these strategies.

As a university teacher with more than eight years teaching experience, I was aware of the practical aspects required in planning the workshops. Since both classroom teachers were busy during their school days, it was impossible to organise a workshop for them within their regular schedule. I was happy with their commitment and motivation to learn as they proposed that I organise a daylong workshop on a weekend as an alternative. I organised and structured the timeframe based on Beauty and Shumi's opinions. We started at 9 am and concluded at 5 pm. I provided space for tea, prayer time and a lunch break. To build our connection and make the workshop more effective and enjoyable, we organised a special lunch (local biryani rice) together. Beauty's a 14-year-old son and Shumi's 11 and 7-year-old sons stayed with us during the workshop, playing in the field with one of the school staff looking after them.

The workshop had three two-hour sessions, with a final one hour for informal discussions about our research on HRE. At the beginning, I provided them documents including a copy of the Bangladesh constitution, the national education policy, subject curriculum, and hard copies of the UDHR and CRC. I also provided translated versions of some English HRE documents because most of the documents and resources are only available in English. Considering that teachers' ability to plan lessons and teach effectively in the classroom using varied approaches and resources is significantly influenced by their subject knowledge (McNamara, 1991), I provided as much support as possible to build their understanding of HRE. Since both teachers never read the UDHR and CRC which was essential, we discussed these two documents first. I also provided them with the National Children Policy (NCP), 2011 (Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, 2011).and Children Act (CA), 2013 (Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, 2010). Since the school had internet facilities, I used the Youth for Human Rights website during the workshop and showed them different HRE activities. I showed them different resources of HRE developed by Australian Human Rights Commission (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010). I used also the HRE tools of Youth for Human Rights which explains each article of UNDHR and examples of HRE lesson plans (Youth for Human Rights, 2012). This organisation also has posters for individual human rights which we discussed

in the workshops. Although the language of the posters was English, we talked about how the teachers could use Bengali language. These examples provided insights into the teachers could develop their own teaching resources for HRE lessons.

In discussing teaching and learning approaches, I included a focus on the national curriculum, since it includes many participatory learning approaches. We discussed how these approaches could inform the children's understanding of rights the teaching and learning practices. In particular, I focused on articles 28 and 29 that stipulate different aspects of children's human rights education focused on using modern teaching and learning methods. As a part of the workshop, I demonstrated an example of a short lesson on HRE using participatory problem-solving approaches while Beauty and Shumi played the students' role and together, we worked through sample lesson plans, to make the workshops hands-on. Since I knew that developing a sound understanding of the student cabinet was essential for further development of the cabinet in the school, I provided a printed version of the government student manual so we could discuss it together.

In a follow up session, a week later, we reflected on what we had explored and how it was helpful for them as teachers. They provided evidence of effective learning from the workshop and thoughtful explanations about the importance of their learning. I observed and compared their level of confidence before and after the workshop. Both Beauty and Shumi admitted that they were apprehensive before the workshops, because they had no prior ideas and experiences of HRE and action research." However, the situation changed after the workshops. Both classroom teachers highly appreciated the workshops and commented that they had increased understanding of planning human rights lessons and activities and implementing them in the classroom. Beauty said:

> Before this workshop, I was quite unsure what I was going to do, but you explained everything connected to education about, through and for HR and the concept is now clear to me. In addition, you provided materials for our learning and development and these are very helpful. I never read these documents before, and only read the textbook during lessons.

Though Reba did not attend the workshop, I shared the planning workshop, documents and materials with her. Literature on school leadership shows that the commitment of school leaders is important for successful professional learning (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Fullan, 2007; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2006; Midthassel & Ertesvag, 2008; Wan, 2005). When I met her in one of our regular meetings, she commented that:

> The workshop has provided very hands on training for our teachers. It is very significant and I like this approach. Generally, our teachers have sessions from different institutions where the facilitators have no idea about my school context. This is the first time our teachers received in-house training where they could discuss the real scenario of our school and ways of further improvement.

Overall, it was clear that the workshop had a significant influence on the development of the teachers' conceptual understanding about HRE and motivation for being involved in action research. We reflected on their learning and development through the workshop as we planned together for classroom lessons, during lesson delivery and in organising other activities. The workshop played a significant role in the success of this project. I provided as many opportunities as possible to include the participants' voice to deepen their professional learning. It is very clear that the head teacher and teachers were able to introduce many changes to HRE because of the action research, collaboration and workshops. This was evident during the implementation of new approaches, as discussed in the following chapters 6, 7 and 8.

5.6.2 Professional learning workshop on action research

Mertler (2013) argues that teachers "tend to be intimidated by the thought of conducting their own classroom research" (p. 41) and that they should receive formal training in action research by someone with knowledge and experience the process, so I organised a half-day workshop for the teachers on action research. At the beginning of the workshop, I developed my understanding of the teachers' existing knowledge and experiences in relation to research. Although in the previous workshop, Beauty and Shumi were very willing to express what they knew and understood, they were very passive at the beginning of this workshop. Beauty said that she knew about action research but had never

implemented it and Shumi said, “I had a course named ‘action research’ in my Bachelor of Education but I never used it and therefore I can’t say anything about it”.

In order to develop the teachers’ understanding of action research before going forward with the study, I shared my experiences of conducting action research and provided examples of action research conducted in Bangladesh in specific school settings (Alam, 2016; Salahuddin & Khatun, 2013). I explained the process and implementation, as well as expectations for their active involvement and engagement in the process (Mertler, 2013). Both classroom teachers seemed more comfortable with the process after attending the workshop and said it was essential for their involvement in the process.

5.7 Planning and implementing education *about, through* and *for* human rights through action research

In this section I explain how we planned and implemented the new approach to education *about, through* and *for* human rights through implementing the cyclical model of action research. Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) argue that there are many forms of action research with similar cyclical characteristics. Tripp (2005) points out that people can use a customised version depending on “particular uses and situations because there are many different ways of using the cycle, and one can perform each of the four activities of the cycle in many different ways” (p. 3). Tripp (2005) also says that:

> …different kinds of action inquiry tend to use different processes in each step, and have outcomes that are likely to be reported in different ways to different audiences. What kind of process one uses, and how one uses it, depend on aims and circumstances, and even with ‘the same’ aims and circumstances, people may have different skills, intentions, time-lines, levels of support, ways of collaborating, and so on, all of which will affect the processes and outcomes. (p. 3)

Similarly, Mertler (2013) argues in favour of the customization of action research processes aiming to allow “teachers to investigate their own practice and to discover what will and will not work for their students in their classrooms” (p. 38). Considering my aims and expected outcomes, context, participants and existing situation, I implemented new approaches to HRE following the cyclical nature of action research.

Since the aim of this research was developing pedagogy *about, through* and *for* human rights, our full planning focused on all three components of this framework. We worked together to develop a plan, and I asked both Beauty and Shumi to contribute their ideas based on their learning from the workshop. Both teachers participated actively in this process. Considering Reba's opinions and based on the consensus of the teachers and my input, the overall plan included three stages in planning and implementing HRE through: (1) classroom teaching and learning; (2) developing a wall magazine about HR as a co-curricular activity; and, (3) the development of the student cabinet as a whole school approach.

5.7.1 Planning and implementing HRE through classroom teaching and learning

In this section, I explore how I collaborated with the teachers in planning and implementing the human rights lessons in the classroom. More particularly, I explain how we planned together and implemented the lessons, how I collected and analysed data, and how I considered reflections from both classroom teachers, students and my own thoughts and ideas as the researcher.

5.7.1.1 Planning for human rights lessons

Our planning stage was in two parts. First, we began with overall planning of the scope and sequence for twenty lessons on HRE (10 lessons for each grade). Secondly, we planned the individual lessons drawing on the required curriculum and available textbooks. Although we incorporated relevant topics and innovative strategies for implementing HRE lessons, all decisions about the relevance of outcomes were made with the consensus of the teachers. For example, we included a topic on human rights in the school, which was not included in the curriculum or textbook, based on the importance of the issue as discussed in the literature review and based on the opinion of both teachers.

Our topics for the HRE lessons included: exploring the concept and history of human rights, understanding children's human rights, rights and wants, balancing human rights, actions and consequences, encouraging positive actions for human rights, rights and responsibilities, issues of human rights violations (child labour, violence against women,

child marriage, dowry, rights of older people), sharing and discussing experiences of human rights violation, and the situation of human rights in the school community.

Besides textbooks, key teaching reference resources were the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Convention on the Rights of the Child, Constitution of Bangladesh, the National Children Policy (NCP) (2011) and Children Act (CA) (2013). Peer-discussion, group-discussion, quizzes, role-playing, debate, problem-solving, storytelling, question-answer, and brain-storming were selected as teaching and learning strategies in the classroom to encourage the development of knowledge and skills. We also selected some important teaching aids and resources to motivate learner interest and engagement and as part of teaching and learning strategies such as quiz sheets, worksheets, posters, and the use of tools such as white boards and video clips.

Wu, Tu, Le, Wu and Reynolds (2012) argue that "careful planning helps the teacher to be clear about specific procedures towards students' learning outcomes" (p. 7). After planning the overall twenty lesson unit sequence, we engaged in planning the individual lessons. More specifically, we selected topics, teaching and learning strategies and resources and planned the role of the teachers and students. Although many individual lessons for both grades (9 and 7) were the same (e.g. the history of human rights, rights and responsibilities) we considered the curriculum and textbook for each selected grade to inform individual lesson plans. For example, we planned a lesson on 'child labour' as an issue of human rights violation for grade 9 and 'early marriage' for grade 7, as these topics were included in the curriculum and textbooks (Patwari et al., 2014; Patwari, Husain, Begum, Dewan, & Das, 2014). Both classroom teachers were actively involved in the planning process and said this was very helpful for them to share views and work together. I observed that at the beginning of our planning, the teachers seemed uncomfortable since they did not previously use formal lesson plans for their teaching. However, after planning and implementing one lesson, both teachers appeared more confident and comfortable in working together. They also shared their views about the planning process. For example, Beauty said that "during the first lesson planning, I was worried about how the plan might go. However, now I am feeling confident as you are with us, to help our planning".

Considering the need for careful and detailed planning for the teachers to achieve the learning outcomes for the students and the success of the action research procedures (Wu, Tu, Le, Wu & Reynolds, 2012), I ensured that the teachers were clear about my role in the collaboration, and in planning each individual lesson. We discussed how we would plan and implement lessons, as well as how I would collect data and how we would meet together to reflect on what was achieved and how we would proceed.

In the following chapter (section 6.7.2), I provide examples of lesson plans that show how the plan worked.

5.7.1.2 Implementing HR lessons and collecting data

In my role as a participant-observer during the implementation of lessons, I was present in all the lessons conducted by the teachers. However, in most of the lessons we implemented together, the teachers led the class, while I observed and assisted. In the planning, we considered "who did what, when, where, how and why" (Tripp, 2005, p. 9). From the beginning, I recorded field notes. I focused particularly on how teachers implemented the lesson in relation to the lesson plan, what worked, and what did not work. Students' responses to the topics and teaching and learning approaches were also observed and recorded. Both teachers were nervous during the implementation of their first individual lesson, since they had no prior experiences of this process. However, I noticed a dramatic change in them from the second lesson onwards that continued till to end of the project. For example, the first individual lesson for both grades was about the history of human rights. Beauty and Shumi planned to engage students in the classroom through group- and pair-discussion but both of them were confused about how they could start the lesson. During the reflection session, they explained that they were nervous for two reasons: first, they were not used to implementing participatory approaches using lesson plans; and, second, they had never experienced someone observing their lessons. But as they became more comfortable with me being in the classroom and as they saw the benefits of lesson plans in structuring their methods and approaches, they became more and more positive.

5.7.1.3 Reflections on lessons and developing subsequent lesson plans

Having "multiple sets of eyes and ears to examine and process ideas that are being shared" (Mertler, 2013, p. 41) is always beneficial for collecting, analysing and interpreting data

to identify an alternative solution for a specific problem. I ensured that we gathered both teachers' and students' reflections on the implemented lessons. Mertler (2006) argues that reflection is "the act of critically exploring what you are doing, why you decided to do it and what its effects have been" (p. 10). Wu, Tu, Le, Wu and Reynolds (2012) similarly argue that, "teachers need to frequently reflect on their practices so that they can find the strengths and weaknesses of their practices in order to improve their teaching" (p. 6). I organised immediate reflection sessions with teachers and students. Each reflection sessions took about 10-15 minutes. We sat together for instant reflections and to discuss further improvement. We also had short reflection sessions with the students during the tiffin period. Through the reflections, we tried to understand what worked and how, what didn't work and why. As teachers implemented new approaches to HRE, I also focused on how teachers and students benefitted. In one lesson, for example, I found that Shumi engaged only a few students in the classroom activities. She asked questions to selected students who sat at the front area of the classroom, while other students remained inactive in the classroom. I recorded this in my field notes and discussed it in our reflection and planning meeting. Shumi completely agreed with my reflection and incorporated this issue in her next lesson for further improvement. According to my field notes it was evident that Shumi brought changes in students' engagement and participation. She began to ask more open questions to all the students and instructed them to think and discuss in groups. Then she asked a group representative from each group to give answers.

I found that this kind of reflection was very important and effective in developing new approaches including implementing lessons using group-discussions, pair-discussions and problem-solving approaches. The reflections made the whole process more rigorous and produced authentic evidence. Both teachers argued that the reflection stage was very important for their participation in the action research and led to quality changes in teaching for both of them. They had never experienced this kind of reflection through action research before in their teaching career. Shumi said that "this process is really helpful for me as I am learning a lot and improving myself through this process". Beauty pointed out that "it is a fantastic experience for me to evaluate my own lessons and both my students and I highly benefitted".

We had a final reflection session after completing the whole series of lessons focused on both the process of action research as well as the new approaches- education *about, through* and *for* human rights. Data analysis related to the classroom teaching and learning and teachers' reflection is reported in Chapters 6, 7 and 8.

5.7.2 Planning and implementing HRE through the wall magazine

As part of HRE, we planned to involve students in co-curricular activities. We agreed on an approach to engage them in developing a wall magazine addressing and representing their learning and thoughts on HR issues. This would enable the students to show their learning focus on HR to other students in the school. Through the wall magazine students were encouraged to express their views and opinions using creative approaches such as short stories, rhymes and drawing. We highlighted the issues of human rights and students' active and creative involvement in human rights issues in the school and in society. We placed both magazines in a prominent place in the school where other students and teachers could see and read the contributions. Both class teachers lead and monitored the process of the students' cooperative learning tasks. This idea was highly supported by the head teacher and school community. Outcomes are discussed in Chapter 7.

5.7.3 Planning and implementing HRE through the student cabinet

I discussed in Chapter 4 that the student cabinet was not well developed in the school, yet the head teacher, classroom teachers, students and parents were supportive of further development of the student cabinet in the school community. As a part of education *for* human rights, members of the student cabinet were actively involved in the development process. The detailed planning for the student cabinet, their activities and outcomes are separately reported in chapter 8.

5.8 The head teacher's role on collaboration and implementation of action research

The head teachers' role for successful implementation of educational programs is well established in the literature (Fullan, 2007; James et al., 2006; Leonard & Leonard, 1999; Manasse, 1984; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2006; Osler & Starkey, 2010). It is also evident that school leaders' support is important for collaborative action research such as allocating the time, resources, encouraging collaboration, and recognising improvements (Mertler,

2013). Warrican (2006) argues that the success of collaborative action research can be limited if the school management does not support the initiatives. Based on my experiences in the school, I understand how important it is to have support from a school administrator, especially from the head teacher. My experience was mixed, since I struggled for support from the head teacher at the beginning of this collaboration, but received support for the rest of the study. Following are some examples of cooperation from the head teacher and how this influenced the process.

Though I explained the project to Reba she was at first unsure about the process and outcomes due to her lack of understanding and experience of action research. However, when she began to understand the nature of the project and the benefits for her school and students, she was very supportive. She did not participate in many discussions and planning sessions, but I kept in touch with her. She always allowed me to discuss issues related to the research, and she provided thoughtful suggestions. Her guidelines helped me to select lessons on HR for the grade 9 and 7 component of the teacher's professional learning workshops, teaching and learning strategies, and existing challenges in promoting HRE.

Reba was committed to monitoring our activities, and asked the students about the relevance of our lessons, topics, and effectiveness of teaching and learning approaches. Since she was very concerned about the completion of the curriculum, she discussed this with the students without the teachers and me present. As she received positive comments from the students, she continued to encourage us. When I asked her opinion on our work, Reba said:

> What you are doing with my two teachers is highly appreciated. Based on my observation, I am very confident that you are working for the betterment of my students, my teachers and above all for my school. I notice that day by day my students are becoming active. Truly, my school is benefitting.

She allocated time when her presence in the planning session was required. For example, when we planned regular meetings with members of the student cabinet, Reba was present in the meeting and provided her thoughts and suggestions. She was very aware of the development of the wall magazine by the students and actively involved in the formal

opening of the wall magazines and wrote down her feelings and comments on it. To recognize the activities of the two teachers, she encouraged other teachers to follow our activities. She frequently made positive comments on our activities which accelerated the dimensions of this project. For example, I found Beauty and Shumi to be more active, sincere and motivated after receiving support and positive comments from Reba.

Overall, it can be argued that school leader's positive and encouraging support was beneficial for this collaborative action research and in bringing positive changes and development of HRE in the school.

5.9 Importance of timing for the project

As a teacher educator, I understood the context of secondary schools in Bangladesh, so I was very careful about my time selection for this study. I knew that at the beginning of the year, the schools are not so busy and teachers are generally less pressured about the completion of syllabus. Students are in their new grades in the New Year and beginning with fresh enthusiasm. Considering these aspects, Beauty encouraged me to start the process of collaboration in the middle of December and implementation of the project from January to March. I found this time selection was really successful and impacted on the whole project and procedures. There would have been no certainty for the approval of this project from the school authority if I had chosen any time slot before or after January to March since the mid-term and final examinations are a big concern for the school. Both teachers and the head teacher provided positive comments on my time selection.

However, I faced some challenges within the selected time frame. The students were concentrating on their annual sports and cultural programs held in the middle of February which kept them busy with practice and rehearsal. Teachers were also involved with the process. Therefore, managing the class schedule and ensuring students' participation in the classroom activities became challenging sometimes. One day I was discussing with a group of student-participants their reflections on the lesson. In the middle of the discussion they were called for rehearsal. Instantly, I noticed that they lost attention, so I postponed the discussion. Overall, the interruptions were minor, and consistent with the time pressures most schools face with busy programs

5.10 The challenges of action research and strategies going forward

There were some other challenges I experienced discussed in this section as well as how I tried to minimize the challenges.

5.10.1 Time

Managing time is a common issue in action research (Mertler, 2013) because teachers are always busy with different responsibilities and both assigned and unassigned activities. For example, Beauty had four programmed lessons on Mondays, so we fixed a meeting during her breaks, but most of the time we could not meet since she was suddenly assigned to conduct a lesson for an absent teacher. This also happened to Shumi. In many cases, we scheduled our meetings after school hours, but many times we had delays due to other activities such as sudden meetings, with head teacher or assistant head teacher, dealing with students and parents' issues. Teachers had also family commitments and therefore they wanted to go home after school as soon as possible.

Since I was keen to ensure completion of my study and aware that 'time must be created, carved out, set aside" (Mertler, 2013, p. 41), I was always flexible for the teachers. I rescheduled meeting times where required, and if they suggested meeting on weekends and school holidays, I agreed. Both teachers agreed that managing time was one of the biggest challenges in this collaboration so they appreciated my strategies to move forward.

5.10.2 Traditional beliefs of teachers, students and parents

Traditional beliefs were one of the biggest challenges I experienced during the action research. For example, the teachers, students and parents were more concerned about examination results than developing students' knowledge, skills and attitudes. They argued that results were the main indicator of success and therefore they were always curious to see how collaboration would benefit students' results. In addition, they all asked for a guarantee from me that my study would not have a negative impact on results. I observed that both teachers were stressed about how their planning and implementation could affect students' result. However, as my planning was based on existing curriculum and it had strong connections with school syllabus, this challenge was reduced day by day. I was able

to convince them about the positive aspects of this collaboration and this was apparently visible after starting the project.

5.10.3 Curriculum

Thornton (2006) argues that in the Bangladesh context, teachers have very limited autonomy in the classroom and their teaching is highly controlled by the centralised curriculum and textbooks. This restriction created challenges for me in implementing new approaches to HRE, especially when I recommended some relevant topics and activities for HRE. However, I provided explanations in favour of inclusion of new topics and activities and classroom teachers and the school leaders agreed with me.

5.11 My role and learning from the collaboration

Since it is worthwhile to define the roles of a researcher (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992), in Chapter 3, I explained that as a researcher, I played different roles. I was a researcher, a co-researcher, facilitator, participant and observer. As a doctoral student, I also considered myself as an active learner throughout the process, as "it is important having this sense of self from the beginning" (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 36). In this section, I explore what I learned in my different roles through this collaboration.

First of all, I learned that being an outsider and a researcher, it was not easy to establish collaboration with the school because there has not been a strong tradition of practitioner research. However, I found that patience, commitment to positive change, willingness to understand local context and the practical situation, flexibility, adaptation and capability were very powerful in bringing success and developing collaboration. These factors were influential in working with the teachers and school community. Without these personal characteristics, it would have been impossible for me to overcome the challenges.

5.12 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have analysed the process of negotiating, planning and developing the participatory action research in a secondary school in Bangladesh. I explored how I established collaboration and implemented new approaches to HRE in the specific context.

I explained the different aspects of collaboration and how they influenced the success. I shared my learning as a researcher and reported on some significant barriers in negotiating and developing action research in the school.

Teachers were involved in workshops and professional learning. They were supported in their action research through collaboration with an external academic in their planning and implementation of both classroom and whole school approaches. The findings showed that even when teachers have no previous experience of action research, this form of professional learning can lead to meaningful change and improved student outcomes. As the following chapters explaining this case study of developing new approaches to HRE continue to demonstrate, practitioner research can achieve powerful learning.

Overall, I concluded that the collaborative action research provided a positive process to develop teachers' professional learning and development in spite of having some contextual and existing challenges in the school. An external outside researcher can lead and take responsibility and accountability for developing and establishing collaboration for participatory action research in a school. A positive environment and support for the facilitator as well as researcher who wishes to collaborate can be ensured by the school authorities including head teachers. Governments as well as education administrators can develop and support strategies for establishing a favourable culture of participatory and collaborative action research in schools as well as ensuring human rights-based action research in the school community.

Chapter 6: Development of education *about* human rights

6.1 Introduction

This chapter explores how HRE was developed in the school through the implementation of education *about* human rights. I analyse and discuss data captured from classroom observations, reflection sessions with teachers and students and field notes. It also includes post-action research interviews with the teachers and Reba, and focus group discussions with students and their parents.

As discussed in Chapter 2, education *about* human rights requires the development of knowledge and understanding about universal human rights policies, issues, norms and values, as well as integration of knowledge and understanding into public values aiming for the protection of human rights. It also requires a context-based interpretation of UNDHR (1948) and UNCRC (1989) as fundamental documents for HRE in the school to enable learners' understanding of human rights within their own social and cultural context. Considering these factors, this chapter provides a detailed explanation of the development of education *about* human rights in the Green Bird School practices through the analysis of multiple reflections from the action research conducted in this study.

6.2 Development of teachers' understanding about HR and HRE

Bajaj (2011a) argues that, "Teachers, obviously, play a fundamental role in HRE efforts" (p. 209). Osler and Starkey (1996, 2010) argue for teacher education as a means of developing teachers' knowledge, attitudes and skills related to HRE so they can build teaching and learning in this field in schools. However, as I demonstrated in Chapter 4, teachers in the Green Bird School had very limited understanding about human rights and HRE before implementing new approaches since they had no prior education and training in HRE. In Chapter 5, I explained that workshops organised for teachers' professional learning and development were seen as essential and significant by the teachers and the head teacher. My study identified that the workshops on education *about* human rights and the implementation of education *about* human rights significantly influenced teachers' professional learning and development in HR and HRE. Their opinions and my observations confirmed that the development of teachers' sound understanding was

subsequently a catalyst (Bajaj, 2011a) for the implementation of education *about* human rights as well as education *through* and *for* human rights (see Chapters 7 & 8). Data extracts are provided here as examples of the participants' views after the professional learning workshops:

> **Researcher:** Could you please tell me your understanding about HR and HRE?
>
> **Beauty:** Previously I knew HR as the rights a human being has. In the past, I thought that HRE means addressing the topics in the classroom following the textbooks only. Now I know more about HR and HRE. As a teacher of HRE, now I am more confident. Previously, I knew just a few HRs but during this research and conducting lessons on HR, I now know many human rights, specially children's human rights that I never thought about in the past.
>
> **Shumi:** Before I just followed the textbook and syllabus. In the last three months, I have learned many things about HR and HRE. I can give you a real example. I am known as a very soft-behaved teacher in the school and therefore sometimes students are not disciplined in my classroom. I was just thinking to be hard and give some physical punishment, like hitting students with a stick, but I could not. Now I understand that giving physical and psychological punishment such as hitting students, or verbal abuse is a violation of children's human rights and I should not do this. In this way, I learnt many human rights and children's human rights that are very important for me as a teacher.
>
> **Researcher:** How do you differentiate between HR and children's rights?
>
> **Beauty:** In brief, human rights are related to all human beings from their birth to death and child rights are specific for the children specially from their birth to 18. Child rights are very important for children to grow up properly.
>
> **Shumi:** After our birth to death we all have are human rights. All human rights are related to every individual human being. Child rights indicate mainly the rights of children specially from birth to 18.
>
> **Researcher:** Could you give examples of your new learning and thinking about children's human rights in the classroom and school since being involved in this study?
>
> **Beauty:** I know I should include a focus on dignity, privacy, freedom of speech, providing a safe environment, no discrimination, and no corporal punishment.

Shumi: privacy, opportunity to give opinions, identity, safe environment, equal opportunity, access to information

Researcher: Would you give an example of your understanding about HRE?

Beauty: I know about Eleanor Roosevelt and her ideas about HR we discussed in the workshop. Really, I love the ideas and now I understand and believe that people have HR at any place in the world, from family to state, state to globe. Previously, I thought that HR is about some rights of human being. Now I know that HR is not only a topic for discussion, it is vast concept. Family, neighbourhood, work place, school, factory… all places are matters for HR. As a teacher of HRE, now I am seriously thinking about my students' rights in the school and in the society. I am very aware of the need to teach them about their rights and their responsibilities to protect others rights. I am also aware of their rights in the classroom and school. This realisation and understanding are my best learning about HRE. I believe that it is very important for every teacher to understand HR and HRE.

Shumi: Now I do not only teach about human rights, I am careful about my students' right in the classroom and in the school. I learned that I have to give them opportunities to speak and be heard. This is their right.

Both classroom teachers said that the professional learning workshops on education *about* human rights had significant influence on their learning and development. Clearly, it was important for them to first develop their understanding of the concepts and scope of HR and HRE. They added that the opportunities to learn different approaches helped them to implement varied HR lessons and strategies.

In my follow up interviews a year after the first workshops, teachers showed their commitment and capacity to continue utilising their learning, as they were able to keep building their strategies because of their deeper understanding 'about' human rights. They commented that there was a tendency among teachers to complete professional learning, but fail to take the next step of implementing the new ideas in their teaching. But following their development and experiences, they recommended that both pre-service and in-service training for teachers should have an explicit focus on HRE. As the researcher, I was able to conclude that developing teachers' understanding about HR and HRE positively influenced their implementation of education *about* human rights as well as education *through* and *for* human rights. The findings confirmed the claim made by scholars

including Bajaj (2011a) and Osler and Starkey (1996, 2010) who argue for the importance of teachers' professional learning about HR and HRE and its significance for the development and implementation of HRE in the school, and especially in the classroom.

6.3 Importance of understanding fundamental HRE documents

As stated in Chapter 2, the UNDHR (1948) and the UNCRC (1989) are considered as fundamental to students' learning about HRE in schools (UNHCHR, 2004; Jennings, 2006; Nastasi & Naser, 2014). These two documents are included in the secondary school curriculum in Bangladesh. However, prior to this study, both classroom teachers had no idea about these two documents. The following extracts provide evidence of the teachers' improved knowledge about HR.

> **Researcher:** What is your understanding of the UNDHR (1948) and the UNCRC (1989)?
>
> **Beauty:** I had never read these documents before our professional learning workshops. Now I understand these documents and why they are fundamental for HRE in the school. The UNDHR (1948) not only lists human rights but also article 26 shows the clear role of education for the promotion of human rights. The CRC (1989) lists the rights of children and also explains the role of education to ensure children's rights, such as articles 28 and 29. Our curriculum also includes these two documents as HR instruments.
>
> **Shumi:** You provided these two documents including the summary of Bengali version translated by you so now they inform my planning for HRE.

Struthers (2015) argues that it is difficult for teachers to promote education *about* human rights "in a deeper and contextually relevant manner" (p. 64) without having foundational knowledge about the fundamental instruments for human rights. My research confirmed the claim made by Struthers since both classroom teachers recognised the value of their understanding about these documents and significance for promoting HRE in the school.

> **Beauty:** Now I know what I can do for my students and what I cannot do in terms of their rights. Truly speaking, a teacher who promotes HRE must know these two documents deeply. Without understanding, it is difficult for any teacher to promote

HRE confidently. In the Bangladeshi context, it is more important since these two documents are included in the curriculum and textbooks.

Shumi: I am now conducting HR lessons more confidently and can explain the background of different human rights and child rights. Teachers should know and understand both documents clearly. If a teacher has a very clear idea, she/he would be able to lead human rights lessons confidently. I am an example.

The UNHCHR's (2004) recommendation for these two instruments as fundamental sources for HRE is supported through the findings of my research. In particular, where HRE is not well developed, deeper understanding about these fundamental documents is undoubtedly significant for teachers.

6.4 Development of students' understanding and attitudes 'about' human rights

The baseline data (see Chapter 4) showed students had very limited understanding 'about' human rights, as well as their particular rights as children. One of the aims of implementing different approaches to HRE was to develop students' knowledge and understanding about human rights as well as children's rights. The data from the lesson observations and focus groups indicates that the lessons significantly influenced students' learning, since their knowledge and concerns about HR grew rapidly. After the lessons, they were able to explain why their understanding about HR was significant, as the following data extracts demonstrate:

Researcher: What have you learnt about human rights that you did not know before?

G9S1: I did not know before that 'recreation' is a human right (Four participants from grade 9 and all six participants from grade 7 agreed). I also did not know that 'expression of opinion' is a human right.

G9S2: Some human rights such as marriage and voting depend on age. I also learnt that legal rights can be human rights.

G9S6: I learned that people have rights to be citizens in nations, and we have a right to speak in our own language.

G7S1: I know that rights to education and rights to shelter are human rights. I also learnt that men and women, boys and girls, children and adult… all people

> have human rights, but there are many places in the world that people don't have basic human rights for lots of reasons.
>
> **G7S2:** I learnt about rights to practice religion and rights to security.
>
> **G7S3:** We discussed how people should have rights to food and shelter but millions of people don't have this.
>
> **G7S4:** Kids have rights to play and rights to movement
>
> **G7S5:** Children should be able to live in a safe environment
>
> **G7S6:** I learnt that boys and girls have equal rights, but this doesn't really happen in Bangladesh.

This study also showed that building students' knowledge and understanding about human rights encouraged them to understand their own rights and the rights of others. The teachers also confirmed the development of students' understanding and attitudes. For example, Beauty said that "the students were really interested in learning about their rights. I'm sure this will really help them to care about other peoples' rights". Shumi pointed out that she noticed the development of positive dimensions of her students' attitudes after them being well informed about different human rights.

Discussions with both groups of students also provided evidence of changed attitudes towards human rights that were completely absent during the group discussion before the implementation of education *about* human rights. Both groups were more thoughtful and confident about sharing their views. They showed more positive attitudes about the rights of others and increasing awareness about the plights of people in the world who did not have access to human rights. When I asked them how they felt about other peoples' human rights, one grade 9 student said that:

> In the past, I only thought about my rights. Now after having lessons where we learned about peoples' rights in other parts of the world, I know about things like child soldiers and child labour, so I believe I have to pay attention to others rights.

Another grade 9 student said, "I did not know that 'recreation' is a human right. During tiffin period, I used to play in the field for my recreation but never thought it as a human right and also a right for my other friends. I was always happy if I could play but

currently my feeling is not same. Truly speaking, I believe that everybody should have this opportunity, though our playground is very small.

After implementing several lessons focused on questions including: 'what are human rights', 'rights and responsibilities', 'issues of human rights (i.e. violence against women, child labour)', I observed an increase in positive dimensions of students' behaviour and attitudes in the classroom. The reason I identified was the development of their sound understanding about human rights issues and their responsibilities to protect human rights and protest against human rights violations.

6.5 The importance of understanding rights and responsibilities

Beauty, Shumi, Reba and both groups of parents in the study recommended that students should develop understanding of their 'rights and responsibilities' through teaching and learning practices. Beauty said:

> I believe that students should know their rights, but it is also important to know their responsibilities, so they will care for others rights. If they only know their rights, they will argue for their rights only. If students knows that they have some responsibilities to their parents and families, both of them will be happy.

Shumi agreed and commented that:

> Some students do not understand how difficult it is to achieve human rights when there is poverty in communities. You know that all families do not have the same ability to fulfil the rights of their children. If their children do not understand the reality of their family there can be unhappiness and conflict. So we have to teach them the factors that affect their rights.

Scholarly literature in HRE stresses the importance of balancing rights and responsibilities (Leung, Yuen & Chong, 2011; UNICEF, 2009; Vanobbergen, 2012). My understanding and lifetime experiences strongly supported the opinion of the classroom teachers and I was very open to accommodating their understanding and recommendations during the planning of human rights lessons. We observed that 'rights' and 'responsibilities' were

included separately in the textbooks, but we decided to develop a lesson plan for grade 7 and 9 titled 'rights and responsibilities,' aiming to develop deeper understanding among the students. The lesson also had a connection to the topic 'rights of elder people'. Students' responses and reflections during and after the implementation of lesson provided significant insights in favour of addressing 'rights and responsibilities' together. Both groups of students argued that they learnt how they could avail their rights and contribute to others' rights. They believed that this learning would be helpful in their own life. When I asked them, "What have you learnt from today's lesson?" Some examples of students' reflections were:

> **G9S1:** I learnt that rights and duties come together. If we have rights, we have also duties.
>
> **G9S2:** We have rights as well as we have responsibilities. We should not think only about our rights, we should try our best to respect others rights.
>
> **G9S4:** I have right to move independently as well as my responsibility to allow/respect others to move independently. I have right to practice my own religion as well as give opportunity to others to practice their religion freely.
>
> **G9S6**: I learnt that I have right to express my opinion as well as I will give opportunity for others to express their opinion. This is my responsibility.
>
> **G7S1:** I understand that our parents work hard for the betterment of our life and fulfilling our rights. Since they are working for our rights, we should take care of our parents.
>
> **G7S2:** I have rights to education.
>
> **G7S4:** I don't think that I should help my parents do some family work. But from today, I will try to help my mother. For example, I can help to organise dining table during our meal, and in the home.
>
> **G7S6:** I have right to go to school. My responsibility is to encourage and help other children to go to school.

Beauty noticed that the students were interested in the discussions and he said that "although their understanding might be not deep, I am sure these small things will encourage them to think about their lives and society. We should continue the practice of discussions".

Parents' final reflections through the focus group discussion were also encouraging, since they reported some changes among their children. Parents in both groups reported instances of their children being more responsible members of their families, more caring to them and more cooperative. Teachers also reported positive changes of students' behaviour in the classroom and in the school. Overall, it was found that educating children about their rights in line with their responsibilities showed positive impacts in their learning and behaviour at Green Bird School.

6.6 The importance of understanding the difference between rights and wants

UNICEF Canada (2009) defines 'wants' as "not protected as rights since they *generally* are not necessary for a child's survival, growth and development" (p. 5). During the planning of human rights lessons, both classroom teachers said that the children had no clear ideas about the differences between rights and wants. They added that parents also had no idea about the differences and this caused problems in the classroom and in the school. One example Beauty discussed was the issue of mobile phones. She said that:

> A mobile phone is a 'want' not a 'right'. Without mobiles people can live. It is not a serious problem if someone has no mobile, especially children, but many students argue with their parents about having a mobile phone and some parents don't say no to their children. Although using mobile phones is completely prohibited in the school, some students bring them without permission.

The teachers and I agreed to develop a lesson about the topic 'rights and wants' for all students. The teachers first planned a quiz on rights and wants as a teaching and learning strategy to tune students in to the issue, and then involved students in discussion. When Beauty and Shumi asked their students to separate the list of rights and wants, I observed that very few students were able to give a correct answer. For example, most of the students argued that having a 'mobile phone' was a right. After the lesson, both groups of students from grade 7 and 9 said that the topic was interesting and important and agreed that prior to the lesson, they had no clear ideas about the differences. When I asked them to explain their new understanding, one student from grade 7 said, "Rights' are essential to live, for example, food, water and clothes. 'Wants' are not as essential to live, for example, having

a television, mobile phone or computer." Another student said, "I learnt that 'getting safe water is our right but cold drinks such as Coca-Cola is our want". Beauty and Shumi confirmed that they had not previously thought about students needing to clarify concepts such as HR, rights and responsibilities, but after planning lessons together in the action research, they were able to teach their students about HRE in more focused ways.

Beauty and Shumi became increasingly committed and ambitious about creating a long-term effect on students' learning, especially in the school and family through their different ways of exploring rights. Shumi provided a further example of students developing better understanding of rights and wants. She said that:

> Sometimes parents think that only high cost food is good for their children, but some cheap foods have more nutrition than costly foods. Since students learned about this difference in one of our classes, they now understand that nutritious food is their right, not costly foods. I think they will share with their parents and both of them would benefit.

While this topic was not included in the curriculum or textbook, both classroom teachers argued in favour of its relevance as a topic for HRE in the school.

6.7 Development of context-based education about HR in the school

MacNaughton and Koutsioumpas (2017) argue that HRE should be implemented "on a continuous and reflective basis in the specific social context" (p. 25). Vanobbergen (2012) stresses the importance of socio-historical contexts to realise realities and Bajaj (2011b) also recommends mediating "existing community realities and societal structures" (p. 207). Beauty, Shumi and Reba all stressed the importance of context-based HRE that included local, national and global contexts and perspectives. Therefore, in developing the scope of education 'about' HR during the action research, we planned lessons so that students would be encouraged to think about their own lives and communities, but to also have opportunities to be engaged in reading, seeing and learning about HR issues that were very different from their own perspectives, so that they could develop empathy and critical perspectives on other world views. In the

following section, examples of planning HR lessons to encompass broader contexts are discussed.

6.7.1 Integrating national and international lenses on HRE

At the start of the study, both teachers had very limited understanding of the UNDHR and CRC; two fundamental documents informing HRE at the school level. They also had limited understanding of HR policies and practices related to the Bangladesh context, such as the Human Rights Commission of Bangladesh and the Bangladeshi Ministry of Education. But through our professional learning workshops we agreed that it was important to plan teaching and learning approaches that integrated national and international lenses on HRE, so that students' world view was broadened.

Together we discussed and developed sound knowledge of the National Children Policy (NCP), (MWCA, 2011) and Bangladesh: The Children Act (CA) (2013). Beauty and Shumi also read about the constitutional obligations for human rights in Bangladesh, and role of the National Human Rights Commission of Bangladesh (NHRCB) for the promotion and protection of human rights. As a result of our continued collaborative planning through the action research, I observed that they made logical connections between HR lessons and these documents and organizations. For example, when Beauty developed lessons based on the topic 'Child labor' in the classroom, she explained to the students that "it is forbidden in child rights policy and law". She showed students the constitution and other legal documents and showed the logo and motto of NHRCB picture of the Human Rights Commission to the students. This reinforced to them the important legal dimensions of HR and the serious implications when peoples' HRs are not considered. It was clear to me that the action research built the level of confidence of both teachers in the classroom. They realized the importance of making connections between local and international human rights documents and organizations that was completely absent in their previous limited HRE programs.

Both groups of students said they had never heard about the policy of child rights and child rights laws before this study. Though these documents were not listed as content in curriculum and textbooks, both the teachers and students saw these documents as very important for the Bangladeshi context to understand human rights issues. Students also

added that their teachers had not discussed the NHRCB and its role before. Meaningful connections between the local, national and international contexts, and drawing on examples in lessons of HRs issues in other countries, enabled a focus on more concrete, real life stories, rather than just abstract ideas.

6.7.2 Addressing contemporary issues *about* human rights in the classroom

Yamniuk (2017) argues that schools should have opportunities for students to talk about real human rights issues. Struthers (2015) agreed it is essential that teachers discuss, "the potential role of learners in the promotion and protection of human rights" (p. 64) in classroom teaching and learning, to promote education *about* human rights. Tibbitts (2002) recommends developing basic knowledge of human rights issues as a focus of education *about* human rights. Leung, Yuen and Chong (2011) show that issues-based learning is effective in creating students' interest. In spite of challenges in terms of curriculum restrictions, the teachers and I agreed that it was necessary to plan lessons focusing on contemporary human rights issues in Bangladesh. In selecting topics, both teachers argued about first focusing on the local context. Beauty suggested:

> Eve-teasing is an issue of human rights violation in Bangladesh that might be not an issue in USA or Australia. Similarly, 'militancy' is often a human rights violation in Bangladesh, but not an issue in many countries. We should address these issues in the classroom since they are important in our country and students should develop understanding of issues that are relevant in their own lives.

While Shumi noted that there are some significant issues in the curriculum and textbooks for grade 7 and 9 such as the ongoing issue of child labour, the continuing practice of early marriage and use of dowry, and violence against women in Bangladesh (NCTB, 2012), they had not previously planned focused lessons on these issues at Green Bird School. Beauty commented that these kinds of issues were not reported as human rights violations, since for example, 'child labour', the 'dowry' and 'violence against women' were reported as social problems in Bangladesh, rather than issues of human rights. However, in our planning we decided that it was necessary to make an explicit connection with these topics and human rights and children's human rights.

We agreed to plan and implement three lessons focused on contemporary HR issues in the action research. We were able to make links with existing curriculum and textbooks, but we also introduced new approaches and teaching strategies. We decided to focus on women rights and violence against women', 'the dowry', and 'early marriage' for grade 7 and 'child labour', 'violence against women', and 'juvenile delinquency' for grade 9. In every lesson conducted focusing on specific issues of human rights, teachers also provided opportunities for students to identify different issues related to human rights violations and involved them in activities to build understanding.

In this following section I provide examples of lesson plans that show how the teachers made links to HR documents, their aims and rationale for the learning and the ways that they motivated and engaged the students through using different learning activities and resources.

Lesson: 7
Topic: Learning from real life experiences of human rights violations
Grade: 7
Subject: Bangladesh and Global Studies
Link to human rights concepts: UNDHR, Article 5 (*No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment*); UNDHR, Article 29 (Everyone has duties to his communities); UNDHR article 26 (2): *Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms*; CRC article 29 (role of education for the development of child);
Teachers' focus on students' human rights in selecting and implementing pedagogies: Participation (CRC 12, 13, 14, 15, 31); freedom of expression (CRC 12, 13, 14, 15); identity and inclusivity (CRC preamble, 2, 7, 8, 16, 23, 28, 29, 31); dignity and security (CRC preamble, 19, 23, 28.2, 29); access to information (CRC 17), privacy (CRC 16).

Time Allotment: 45 minutes

Aim: Students will be able to learn from real life experiences of human rights violations

Rationale: Students will have witnessed or know about many examples of human rights violations and it is an expected part of grade 7 curriculum for them to develop this understanding.

1. **Learning outcomes - knowledge and skills.** The students will able to:
    - Share their experiences and views about human rights violations
    - Learn about human rights violation in their community from shared stories
    - Show empathy to others whose rights are being violated
    - Identify reasons for violations as well as possible solutions
    - Motivate themselves to take action against human rights violations

2. **Teaching and learning strategies**: Story-telling and pair-discussions.

3. **Introduction and motivating students and (5 minutes):** Teacher starts the lesson by telling a short story related to human rights violations and encourages students to discuss what happened.

4. **Development of the lesson:**

    4.1 Activity 1 (25 minutes): Teacher invites student volunteers to share their lived experiences about human rights violations in the school or community. The teacher explains, "You do not need to share your own experiences. You can share what you have observed in your community or society". When students finish their stories, they will be given an opportunity to think about and then discuss in pairs. Then there will be a whole class discussion to share understanding.

    4.2 Activity 2 (10 minutes): Teacher discusses issues arising from the stories that relate to human rights. She shows her empathy with the victims and thanks the students who share stories. She also points out the values of empathy to others whose rights are being violated and reminds students they have rights as well as responsibilities as the UNDHR article 29 mandates.

5. **Conclusion (5 minutes):** Teacher asks questions to the students, "What could you do if you witness violations in future? She then explains what local support there is for victims through the facilities provided by the government and NGO's. The teacher ends the lesson by reminding the students how important it is for us to realise the pain of people whose rights are violated and that we should stand beside them and against the violations. We should also motivate the victims to raise their voices against any kind of human rights violations.

Resources: Printed copies of article 5 and 29, UNDHR.

Table 5: Sample lesson plan 1

Lesson: 8

Topic: Human Rights in schools in Bangladesh

Grade: 7

Subject: Bangladesh and Global Studies

Link to human rights concepts: UNDHR, Article 29 (Everyone has duties to his communities); UNDHR article 26 (2): *Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms*; CRC, article 12 (1): *States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child*; CRC article 28 (right to education); CRC article 29 (role of education for the development of child);

Teachers' focus on students' human rights in selecting and implementing pedagogies: Participation (CRC 12, 13, 14, 15, 31); freedom of expression (CRC 12, 13, 14, 15); identity and inclusivity (CRC preamble, 2, 7, 8, 16, 23, 28, 29, 31); dignity and security (CRC preamble, 19, 23, 28.2, 29); access to information (CRC 17), privacy (CRC 16).

Time Allotment: 50 minutes

Aim: Students will be able to learn about human rights in the school and their roles to improve human rights.

Rationale: Students should be able to relate their understanding of human rights to their own school context and to the situation of children in other communities

1. **Learning outcomes - knowledge and skills.** The students will able to:
   Understand their human rights in the school
   Discuss how they achieve their rights
   Identify their roles in the school community to improve human rights
   View and discuss how children's rights are improved through going to school through a YouTube film of a village school in Bangladesh.

2. **Teaching and learning strategies:** Group-discussion and problem-solving**.**

3. **Introduction and motivating students (5 minutes):** Teacher checks students' understanding about human rights and human rights issues in society from previous lessons. Then asks student in pairs to make a list of what rights are related to school. (e.g. "right to play; safe and clean environment").

4. **Development of the lesson:**

   4.1 Activity 1 (10 minutes): The teacher then asks students to share their ideas in groups, and record their views on poster paper using dot points. Then one group writes their ideas on the board and add new points.

   4.2 The teacher then identifies some significant issues from the list and asks the group to discuss "How can we improve the human rights in the school and how can you contribute?

   4.3 Activity 3 (10 minutes): The teacher then shows the Youtube clip: 'Bridging the gap in education in in Bangladesh' (2015) (2 minutes). Students discuss how children's rights are improved through going to school in a rural village and make comparisons with their own lives.

5. **Conclusion (5 minutes):** Teacher asks the open question: "How can we continue to improve the school environment?" After discussion the teacher tells the students about the limitation of resources, even though the school is trying to ensure students' rights.

Resources:

Poster papers; Printed copies of extracts from the CRC.

YouTube clip: 'Bridging the gap in education in in Bangladesh' (2015)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RUYsAAUkQ_E

Table 6: Sample lesson plan 2

Lesson: 4

Topic: Addressing violence against women in Bangladesh

Grade: 9

Subject: Bangladesh and Global Studies

Link to human rights concepts: UNDHR article 3 (right to life, liberty and security); UNDHR, Article 5 (*No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment*); UNDHR article 7 (*All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination);* Constitution of Bangladesh (all citizens are equal before the law).

Teachers' focus on students' human rights in selecting and implementing pedagogies: Participation (CRC 12, 13, 14, 15, 31); freedom of expression (CRC 12, 13, 14, 15); identity and inclusivity (CRC preamble, 2, 7, 8, 16, 23, 28, 29, 31); dignity and security (CRC preamble, 19, 23, 28.2, 29); access to information (CRC 17), privacy (CRC 16).

Time Allotment: 50 minutes

Aim: Students will be able to learn about how to address violence against women.

Rationale: Violence against women has been a serious social, cultural and economic problem in Bangladesh, where nearly two out of three women have experienced gender-based violence during their lifetime, and domestic violence is a common, though largely underreported, occurrence. Since this is a grade 9 class, this issue is in the curriculum.

1. **Learning outcomes - knowledge and skills.** The students will able to:
    - Understand that 'violence against women' is a serious violation of human rights in the society
    - Identify different forms of violence against women
    - Think critically about the issue and identify possible solutions to addressing this issue through a Sustainable Development Goals case study
    - Know what support there is in the community through for victims through facilities provided by the government and local NGOs.
    - Develop skills to work in group and value others opinion

2. **Teaching and learning strategies**: Reading and discussing resources, brain-storming and critical thinking; problem solving

3. **Introduction and motivating students:** Teacher shows a poster-containing image of woman being hit and asks the students:
    - What is the poster about?
    - Who is the victim?
4. **Development of the lesson:**

    4.1 Activity 1(15 minutes): The teacher asks the students to form groups of 4. The teacher provides poster paper and instructs students to think individually first and then in groups, make a list of forms of violence against women. Then discuss possible ways to stop violence against women.

    4.2 Activity 2(15 minutes): Teacher invites each group one by one to present the outcomes of group discussions. Teacher invites all members of group in front but asks one representative to present from each group.

4.3 **Activity 3 (10 minutes)**: Teacher discusses the summary of group presentations, linking with international and national human rights documents. UNDHR, Article 3:

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person. Article 7:

All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination. Article 27 of the Constitution of Bangladesh:

Equality before law: All citizens are equal before law and are entitled to equal protection of law.

Teacher summarises 'the Prevention of Oppression Against Women and Children Act 2000, Bangladesh' explaining the legal procedures to prevent violence against women in Bangladesh.

5. **Conclusion (5 minutes):** Teacher asks final questions and ends the lesson by telling the students: In spite of UNDHR obligation for human rights and having Bangladeshi laws to prevent violence against women, many forms of violation still exist in our society. Young people can play a significant role by being aware of HR and creating awareness among people in your society.

Resources:

Web resource: 'Case study: Addressing violence against women in Bangladesh'
https://www.sdgfund.org/case-study/addressing-violence-against-women-bangladesh

PDF file https://www.sdgfund.org/sites/default/files/case_study_-_bangladesh_-_en.pdf

Poster; poster paper; article 3, 5 & 7 of UNDHR; Article 27 of the Constitution of Bangladesh.

Table 7: Sample lesson plan 3

Figure 4: 'Case study: Addressing violence against women in Bangladesh'

Lesson: 8

Topic: Understanding issues of children's human rights violations: 'child labour'.

Grade: 9

Subject: Bangladesh and Global Studies

Link to human rights concepts: UNDHR article 3(right to life, liberty and security); CRC article 1(definition of Children); CRC article 32(protection of children's rights); National children policy of Bangladesh 2011(definition of children; children's education, health, recreation; child protection);

Teachers' focus on students' human rights in selecting and implementing pedagogies: Participation (CRC 12, 13, 14, 15, 31); freedom of expression (CRC 12, 13, 14, 15); identity and inclusivity (CRC preamble, 2, 7, 8, 16, 23, 28, 29, 31); dignity and security (CRC preamble, 19, 23, 28.2, 29); access to information (CRC 17), privacy (CRC 16).

Time Allotment: 50 minutes

Rationale: Child labour continues as a serious social, cultural and economic problem in Bangladesh, with children comprising 30% of the labour force. Since this is a grade 9 class, this issue is in the curriculum.

Aim: Students will be able to learn about 'child labour' as one of the issues of children's human rights violation in the society.

Learning outcomes - knowledge and skills. The students will be able to:

- Learn and understand the issue of 'child labour' as a form of children's human rights violation in Bangladesh.
- Identify the reasons for child labour through a real case study
- Explain the policy and laws related to the issue and why ending this human rights violation is difficult
- Identify the possible ways to remove violations of children's rights from the society
- Develop values and skills to work in a group and sharing of views and opinions

1. **Teaching and learning strategies**: Viewing of video clip and discussion.

2. **Introduction and motivating students (5 minutes):** The teacher plays the video clip on Bangladesh child labourers
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_y6nATqtGDs
3. **Development of lesson:**

   3.1 Activity 1 (15 minutes): The teacher asks the students to form groups of 4. The teacher provides one poster paper for each group and instructs to discuss in groups:

   - Why are is these children working?
   - What would happen to their families if the children didn't work?
   - What can be done to improve this situation?

   3.2 Activity 2 (10 minutes): Teacher ask one representative from each group to name the points and teachers writes on the white board.

3.3 Activity 3 (15 minutes): Teacher discuss the summary of students' response. With this context teacher further, discuss the issue linking with human rights or children's human rights perspectives. Teacher explain the article 1 of CRC: *For the purposes of the present Convention, a child means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.* Then teacher explains extracts from article 32 of CRC(1989):

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.

2. States Parties shall take legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to ensure the implementation of the present article. To this end, and having regard to the relevant provisions of other international instruments, States Parties shall in particular:

(a) Provide for a minimum age or minimum ages for admission to employment;

(b) Provide for appropriate regulation of the hours and conditions of employment;

(c) Provide for appropriate penalties or other sanctions to ensure the effective enforcement of the present article.

Linking with these articles teachers also connect to the National Child Policy of Bangladesh (2011). The teacher explains the Labour Act (2006) that includes a chapter on child labour. This act fixed the age for children to be allowed to be in employment to 14-18. It also prohibits hazardous forms of child labour for children before 18. However, the Act allows children aged 12 years and above to be involved in 'light work' which is risk free for children's physical and mental health and does not hamper their education. However, in 2010, the Ministry of Labour and Employment adopted a National Child Labour Elimination Policy, aiming to eliminate all forms of child labour from the society.

4. **Conclusion (5 minutes):** Teacher can ask questions or give assignments on the topic to check their learning**.** The teacher ends the lesson by telling the students: In spite of having CRC obligations as well as Bangladeshi laws and policy to eliminate child labour, it still exists in our society due to many reasons, such as lack of enactment of law, poverty, and lack of awareness among the people. You can play a significant role by creating awareness among people in your society.

Resources:

YouTube Video clip: Bangladesh child labourers

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_y6nATqtGDs

Poster paper; articles 1 and 32 of CRC; printed version (specific section) of Bangladesh labour Act 2006 (Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, 2006)

Table 8: Sample lesson plan 4

Figure 5: YouTube example of Bangladesh child labourers

Based on my observations and multiple reflections from students and teachers, it was evident that the careful planning involved in developing issues-based human rights lessons engaged the students and impacted on their learning and attitudes. Students were very interested in participating in discussions of HR issues and were keen to be involved in

group work where they completed activities, commented on what their had learned from film clips, and then shared their ideas in whole class discussions and reflections. Some reflections from the students follow:

> **Researcher:** What have you learnt that you did not know about HR?
> **G7S1**: If we do see any instances of violation against women or children, we can inform different organisations since we now know their phone numbers. This is really important for us.
> **G7S2**: I learnt that creating awareness in the family and in the society is important to protest human rights violations. It was really interesting to see films with other students and what they are going through, for example in child labour.
> **G7S3**: I learnt that we have laws to protest early marriage.
> **G7S4**: Dowry is a social disease. Those who give dowry and who receive both are guilty.
> **G9S1**: I learnt that though the rate of child labour is decreasing, it still exists in our society and in other parts of the world.

I observed the students in the classes and talked to them in group discussions. I saw that they were very engaged and expressed forthright opinions and critical reflections. However, the teachers and I were also realistic that these lessons were only able to reach an 'awareness raising stage'. We discussed the fact that building this kind of understanding with these grade 7 and 9 groups was significant, but was only a starting point for what needed to be a continuing focus across Green Bird School, and more importantly in schools across Bangladesh, in order for long term HR concerns to be addressed and for social change to occur.

However, it was evident that the issues-based discussions did develop students' attitudes to the importance of HR. The students talked about the need to create awareness among other students in the school to protect human rights and protest about human rights violations. One grade 9 student said:

> …we see human rights violations but don't stand up for the victims. This is not fair. We see people taking pictures of victims, but it is more important to stand beside people who are being abused rather than taking their picture.

Another grade 7 student said, “people sometimes video-record and capture instances of violations on their phones and upload them on the Facebook. But what we should be doing is protesting about violations. If we can create awareness among people, we do something”. The reflection from another grade 9 student provides further evidence of engagement. He said:

> As we are children, now we cannot do many things to reduce violence against women, but we can raise awareness among the people in our society. We can share our ideas with the organisations who are working for human rights; we can be volunteer to pester and campaign.

Based on the effectiveness of the implementation of these lessons, both the teachers showed interest in continuing to address HR issues in further classes. Overall reflections from the teachers and students and my observations confirmed the significance of addressing contemporary human rights issues in the classroom claimed by different scholars and researcher (Tibbitts, 2002; Struthers, 2015; Leung, Yuen & Chong, 2011) and demonstrated that co-planning and action research with collaboration and reflection can build learners’ understanding.

6.7.3 Learning about HR in the school community through student action teams

One of the lessons planned in the action research was designed to give the students opportunities to explore human rights issues in the school community through first developing their understanding of the situation of human rights in the school. Then they were asked to explore to suggest how they could possible play more active roles in the improving rights in the school community in the future in relation to issues of concern to them and their peers. While the teachers and I were realistic that we could only initiate this on a very small scale because of the time available, I explained that this approach reflects the work of noted youth researcher, Roger Holdsworth (Holdsworth, 2013, 2018, 2019). He argues that young people need opportunities to play real roles, and to learn how to take-action to create meaningful change.

Students were divided into groups and then teachers asked them to identify human rights issues in the school and what they thought they could do to improve the situation. Teachers allocated 15 minutes for discussion and provided the students with poster paper on which to write down their opinions. After the discussion, the teachers invited each group to present their findings to the class. The students were able to identify some issues in the school that could be addressed and they had some ideas about how students could be involved. But it was interesting that their ideas were largely about the school environment, and they had no ideas about other possibilities for student involvement in issues such as improving student wellbeing and behaviour, greater equity in the school or connections to wider community organisations, such as Amnesty International. This was not surprising, since HRE had not been a strong focus in the school before, but it did signal to Beauty, Shumi and I that there was scope to broaden the teaching and learning focus that we had already implemented on HR.

Researcher: What issues have you identified about human rights in the school?

G7S5: We have a library but we cannot use it. Most of the time it remains closed. We could discuss these issues with our head teacher and teachers and maybe the students could help with book borrowing.

G9S3: If we can enter into the library, we can learn many things besides from the textbook. Only textbook is not enough for knowledge. The best way is that school authority can give us a library card and we can use it. We can take book using library card and return it easily. However, school authority is not doing this though we have rights to get information.

G9S2: The playground is not suitable for play. Students are often injured during play since there are many rocks in the field. Only the seniors play in the fields and girls are not getting the opportunity. I think that both boys and girls should have equal opportunity to play.

G9S4: The classroom is not clean. We drop different things on the floor. We should use the bin. We should create awareness among the students to keep the environment clean.

Researcher: How are these issues are related to human rights?

G7S1: If we live in dirty classroom, it is not good for our health. Therefore, our environment is not safe. We have right to live in a safe environment.

Both teachers and students saw this lesson as a very innovative and effective in developing students' learning and understanding. Beauty said that "if the students know the issues of human rights in the school they would be able to contribute for the improvement what will encourage them to know their society and contribute to the society". Shumi added that "if we inform students of their rights in the school, we can expect their involvement and contributions for the improvement of the school environment in terms of HR. However, we were realistic that longer periods of time would need to be devoted to involving students in identifying issues beyond the school environment in the local or wider community. We also knew that the wider world and its complex issues can be brought into the classroom if there is access to computers and the internet, but this was only occasionally possible at Green Bird School.

6.8 Influences of rights-based pedagogies for developing understanding

Although the practice and development of 'education *about* human rights' has been analysed and discussed, in this section, I explore how different human rights-based pedagogies focused on education *through* human rights developing students' understanding. Data indicated that rights-based pedagogical approaches (see chapter 7) strongly influenced students' learning about human rights and human rights issues. Classroom teacher Beauty said, "Students learned about human rights and human rights issues from group-discussions, role-playing, and debate rather than from reading textbooks. These approaches not only engaged them in activities but also clearly influenced them to learn about human rights". She also added that the rights-based pedagogies were much more effective for promoting human rights knowledge and understanding among the students than traditional textbooks-based lecture method. Shumi noted that:

> Rights-based approaches provided opportunities for the students to think, get involved and pay attention to the topic. They gained a better understand the topic and will be able to remember what they have learned through experience. For an example, I used 'story-telling' approach for conducting the lesson 'learning from real life experiences of human rights violations'. I am sure that students' learning from this lesson will be sustained since they enjoyed the lesson and learned differently.

Students made similar comments. For an example, Beauty conducted lesson 8 (Understanding issues of children's human rights violations: child labour) and engaged students in discussion following a video clip. One grade 9 student said after the lesson:

> This approach is very good because our knowledge is increasing and we are learning by different activities. Using this kind of video in the classroom is attractive for the students, and we were all involved and attentive in the classroom. We watched the video, discussed in groups and provided our conclusions.

My personal observations supported the comments of the teachers and students. Overall, it can be concluded that rights-based pedagogies were evident very supportive and influential to the development of students' knowledge and understanding (education *about* human rights).

6.9 Conclusion

Based on my empirical findings it can be concluded that the implementation of education *about* human rights can be achieved when the classroom teachers first develop their own knowledge and understanding of HR and HRE developed, so they are then able to build their capacity to plan teaching and learning strategies for their classes. The findings also show that human rights education should be contextualised in schools, so that the issues explored begin with the students' own experience and then focus on their own country and beyond.

Several challenges in the development of education about human rights were identified. One was that when we commenced the action research, there was no specific strategy and curriculum direction and no expectations about what time and number of lessons could be dedicated to HRE. The teachers also found it difficult to decide on and incorporate appropriate content and issues of HR within the constraints of the curriculum. For the school to move ahead in developing HRE, in the next stage of developing policies, strategies and curriculum, Reba or other school leaders would need to work in developing a whole school approach to HRE, so that the focus could move beyond selected classes in grades 7 and 9.

Insufficient physical space in classrooms, lack of access to computers and the heavy teaching loads for teachers, lack of time for preparing lessons, and inconsistency of subject allocation to the teachers were identified as other obstacles that require more attention at the administrative level of the school. But the teachers and I all knew that addressing these challenges is difficult when resources are limited, and it is often the passion and commitment of individual teachers that makes change happen. Beauty and Shumi also discussed the fact that their situation at Green Bird School was in many ways similar to other schools in Bangladesh in terms of large class sizes and limits to facilities and resources, but they commented that they knew other teachers in other schools who could see the importance of this work.

Although the findings from this study are not generalizable, the research does provide evidence of positive impacts of implementation of education *about* human rights through professional learning and action research, albeit on a small scale.

Chapter 7: Practice and development of education *through* human rights

7.1 Introduction

This chapter explores how education *through* human rights was developed in the Green Bird School through the implementation of the action research. I analyse and discuss data captured from planning and reflection sessions with teachers and students, classroom observations and field notes. I also include data and findings from post-action research interviews with the teachers and the head teacher, and focus group discussion with students and their parents.

As discussed in Chapter 2, education *through* human rights requires a learning and teaching environment where the rights of learners and educators are equally respected and where students know what their rights are and how they can be enacted. Education *through* human rights emphasises students having opportunities to participate in various planned activities that enable them to express their rights. Education *through* human rights also includes the wide-ranging implications of the Conventions of the Rights of the Child (CRC) for pedagogical practices and rights-based teaching and learning approaches in the classroom and school. In our collaborative work in developing lesson plans we made sure that connections were made to the CRC (See examples in chapter 6).

In UNICEF UK's (n.d.) website, a summary is provided of the key CRC articles that student relate to how can be achieved *through* human rights. These include:

> **PARTICIPATING**
> All children have a right to be able to give their opinion when adults are making a decision that will affect them, and adults should take it seriously. **Article 12**
>
> All children have a right to find out things, and say what they think through speaking, writing, drawing etc. unless it breaks the rights of others. **Article 13**

> All children have the right to meet, make friends with, and join clubs with other children. **Article 15**
>
> All children have the right to information from TV, radio, newspapers and the internet. These media should provide information that children can understand. **Article 17**

Beauty, Shumi and I discussed the importance of including these in the development of education *through* human rights in lesson plans and school practices, as part of the action research conducted in this study. What we implemented is discussed in this chapter.

7.2 Students' voice and participation in the classroom

The importance of activating students' voice, agency and participation has been given significant attention in promoting human rights education (UN General Assembly 1989; UNHRC, 2011; UNHCHR, 2004; UNICEF, 2007). (See also section 6.7.3 which focuses on students learning *about* HRE before they can learn *through* HRE).

Shumi, Beauty and I planned an explicit focus on ensuring that students' voice and active participation was a focus so that they were able to give their opinion, say what they were thinking and express their agency in different ways. Shumi admitted that:

> In the past, there was no opportunity for all students to take part in classroom activities. Only a few students got these opportunities. I did not know how I could create an environment for the students to express their opinion and participation in different activities. For example, I didn't know about 'think, pair and share', where all students are given a chance to think about their own views and then through discussion with a peer, and then whole class sharing, the students' views are heard. Based on the students' responses to this approach, I truly acknowledge the significance of students' voice and participation in the classroom for promoting human rights education.

In my observations I noted a visible change in students in terms of their voice and participation in both classrooms. Another participatory approach students' enjoyed was using art and drawing, to express their views. When I asked Beauty to explain the

effectiveness of this, she said, “I never expected this kind of response from my students. They were very spontaneous”. She had no deep understanding about the different ways she could get her students involved and said, “I understood that our students know many things and we just need to give them opportunities to think and express their opinion. Most important thing is giving them a chance to think, reflect, participate and discuss. But through the action research planning, I now have more strategies to draw on”.

I also observed that many students became more willing to participate in different activities, even if they were uncomfortable at the beginning. In student focus groups they compared their new involvement in participatory approaches with previous traditional lessons. Some data extracts are provided here as examples of their views:

> **G7S1:** In the last few lessons the teacher has really involved us in different activities where we can freely express our opinions. She has even asked us what we are interested in learning more about and we have talked about what we are learning and why.
>
> **G9S4:** Recent lessons were different because we were actually able to ask questions in the classroom. Madam encouraged us to participate, so we said what we wanted to say. The lessons were also different because we all were attentive which was very unusual in the traditional class. We really liked how our madam was teaching the lesson.

One grade 9 student said:

> Actually, Miss explained to us that we have the right for our opinions to be heard and to have a say in what we are learning. We also liked that we talked about what was going to happen in the lesson and why. This never used to happen before.

Overall, it can be concluded that after the teachers had professional learning on rights-based teaching and learning approaches and were involved in co-planning and preparation through the action research, they were able to successfully ensure an increase in students’ voice and participation in the classroom. Teachers’ professional learning and development did reduce the gap identified in this study (see Chapter 4) between policy and practice in

HRE, although the teachers and I agreed that given a longer period of time for the action research, we could have developed this further.

7.3 The impact of planned activities on students' learning and development

Jennings (2006) developed "standards for human rights education" (p. 292) for classroom teachers that emphasise students developing values and skills through discussions of human rights issues and participation in planned activities. Gollob et al. (2010) argue that "students need a supportive learning environment. They require methods of teaching and learning that allow them to exercise their human rights, such as freedom of thought and expression" (p. 10). In this section I briefly explain how teachers used different participatory approaches in the classroom to allow students to exercise their human rights, and how these impacted on students' learning and development.

7.3.1 Learning and development through discussions

Discussion is recommended to be one of the most frequent teaching and learning strategies for the teachers in the classroom in the Bangladeshi curriculum (NCTB, 2012), so that students are encouraged to express and debate their opinions. During the implementation of lessons, Beauty and Shumi used small group and pair discussion in combination with brainstorming and problem solving. For small group-discussion they formed groups with 4-6 students. They included boys and girls in creating groups, but they could not maintain this all the time due to the unequal number of boys and girls in the classes. Beauty and Shumi explained the rules of discussion at the beginning of the lesson, for example, listening to the student who is speaking, not interrupting when someone is speaking, encouraging everyone in the group to participate, and finishing discussion within allocated time (NCTB, 2012). To facilitate the discussion, they set a topic or asked a question. When Beauty conducted a lesson on 'violence against women', she asked the students to suggest reasons why this happened and to develop a list of solutions to this problem. Shumi asked similar questions in a lesson on 'early marriage', which is still common in Bangladesh, and so an important issue for students to consider. Both teachers provided time for the students to think, discuss and present. They provided poster paper to the students and advised them discuss and write bullet points on these and then present their results to the class. They

repeated this strategy for a few lessons in order to encourage students learn *through* the human right of freedom of speech.

Based on reflections from teachers, students and my observations, it was evident that students' participation in discussions involving brainstorming and identifying solutions to problems improved their learning and development. Shumi argued that "through group discussions and working in a group, a sense of respecting and valuing each other's opinion was developed". Beauty said these approaches developed students' critical thinking skills about different problems and increased students' confidence. She explained:

> There are many examples of how students' confidence was increased. Most of the students were very uncomfortable and shy to come in front to say something or write on the board at the very beginning of this study. But now the situation is very different. Students are competing to be involved. They did not do this in the past. Our teaching approaches have encouraged them to be active, creative and confident.

The students said that:

> **G9S1:** What we have been doing in our discussions has really made us feel very confident. We share our views with other classmates. My thinking ability is higher than in the past.
> **G9S4:** As we worked in groups and shared our opinions, these approaches helped us to value other students' views.
> **G7S1:** We worked in groups or in a pair. These kinds of activities were new and we enjoyed it a lot. We also learned how to work in a group and how to maintain discipline during group discussion. The lessons were different as Miss did not teach us too much except summarising the discussions. We did the learning.
> **G7S4:** I understood that patience is important to work in a group.

7.3.2 Learning and development through debate

Different studies show that 'classroom debate' has potential for engaging students and developing their skills and abilities (Bellon, 2000; Goodwin, 2003; Liauchuk, 2015; Oros, 2007; Zare & Othman, 2013). Zare and Othman (2013) point out that "classroom debate is

a systematic instructional approach which has the potential to nurture the active engagement of students" (p.1506). They also add that this method of teaching has potential for developing students' critical thinking skills and speaking abilities. It is evident that 'debate' can be appropriate for many topics related to HRE (UNHCHR, 2004). This method is also included in the national curriculum in Bangladesh (NCTB, 2012), but Beauty and Shumi said that they had not used this approach before our action research. We planned two lessons to 'debate' the view that 'Enforcement of the law is the only one way to minimize early marriage' in grade 9 and that 'Poverty is the main reason for having dowries in our society' for grade 7. This choice was to intentionally encourage students to learn *through* exploring an issue that could well happen in their own lives. We aimed to engage students in thinking critically and then express and debate issues to clarify their understanding. Each small group planned what they were going to say and then we had a whole class debate.

Darby (2007) argues that "perhaps the greatest limitation of debate is its emphasis on competition, i.e. winning and losing without enough emphasis on compromise and the consensus building necessary for reaching the best solution" (p. 8). We considered this factor during our planning. Both Beauty and Shumi said that "winning and losing are part of any competition and we should accept both positively", but losing does not necessarily mean that the team could not argue properly, rather it means that the winning team argued more strongly with evidence. Students in both classes agreed with this view. I observed that both Beauty and Shumi successfully implemented the activity and students participated and responded spontaneously. Each side presented constructive arguments with logic and evidence. Like other activities, students in grade 7 and 9 had not experienced debate before, so they were very excited to participate. Some students were disappointed they could not directly participate in the whole class sharing because of the size of the classes, although they were able to participate in group discussions. After the debate, Beauty and Shumi asked a common question to the students: what arguments were presented by two groups? They asked students to discuss in groups and share. Both teachers committed to organise more debates in future and provide opportunities for all students to be involved.

After the implementation of lessons, I asked for reflections from the student focus group on how they learned and how effective the approaches were. Some data extracts are provided here from their views:

> **Researcher:** How did you learn in a different way?
>
> **G9S1**: We were involved in different activities … we all needed to think about and then express our views, talk properly and lead different activities.
>
> **G9S3:** We worked first in groups, so everyone had a chance to work out their argument. The winning team and defeated team both were respecting each other by shaking hands as well as celebrating together. We understand that winning and defeating both are part of our life and stand side by side. We should accept both positively.
>
> **G9S4:** We got an opportunity to think and present our opinion logically. This also helped us to develop our thinking skills.
>
> **G7S3:** It increased our skills of argument.
>
> **G7S5:** This debate helped to develop our self-confidence and creativity.

Both Beauty and Shumi found that debate was an effective participatory approach. Beauty said that "both groups of students provided different valuable information in favour of their position and also tried to establish their argument. Undoubtedly, their thinking skills and logical argument capacity has been increased**".** Similarly, Shumi said:

> I can say that the students responded to this approach very positively. Both those who participated in debate and observed all enjoyed it a lot. Both groups argued using their knowledge and experiences and presented in an organised way with logic. The students felt empowered as they could raise their voices.

In spite of this success, both Beauty and Shumi said it was stressful for them to organise the debate with short time for preparation. They also noted that students having no prior experiences and opportunities to debate in the classroom made their task more difficult. However, both students and teachers acknowledged the benefits. Overall the findings are well informed by the scholarly literature in HRE (Bellon, 2000; Goodwin, 2003; Oros, 2007; UNHCHR, 2004; Zare & Othman, 2013).

7.3.3 Learning and development through dramatization of HR issues

The UNHCHR (2004) comments that "Role-plays have particular value for sensitizing students to the feelings and perspectives of other groups and to the importance of certain issues" (p. 29). This approach is recommended as a pedagogical strategy in the secondary school curriculum in Bangladesh (NCTB, 2012). The UNHCHR (2004) argues that "role-plays work best when kept short" (p. 29) and allow enough time for the students to discuss after this activity to maximise possible benefits. Considering these factors, as part of our action research we planned two lessons for grade 7 and 9 using role-play as a teaching and learning strategy. We selected curriculum focus topics on 'violence against women' for grade 9 and 'the dowry' for grade 7. Two individual teams developed and performed a short drama lasting for five minutes each with help and instructions from Beauty and Shumi. Other students were involved in discussions and questioning. As part of preparation and planning, Beauty and Shumi first briefed students on the procedures of role-play and then debriefed both participants and observers following the role-play on how the role-play went and how they felt.

During the implementation of this strategy I observed that both performers and other students were very excited and engaged before and during the role-play. Both teachers found it hard to control their students since they created so much noise and energy in this first opportunity to perform and enjoy role-playing. The teachers and students agreed that next time they needed to create shared rules about behaviour, but they found the approach very effective in making human rights issues more concrete and understandable. They also argued that this approach ensured students' voice and participation. Beauty said, "It presented the topic in a real way so students could take part in discussion and understand easily". She also added that the role-plays increased the confidence of the students who played different roles as well as those involved discussion and questioning. Shumi argued that "the discussion after the role-play was very engaging for the students, and he students spontaneously expressed their views on the issues demonstrated by other students. This approach impacted on students' learning in terms of enjoyment and sustainability". Both teachers agreed to use role-play for selective topics in future with prior planning and preparation.

7.3.4 Learning and development through audio-visual resources

Using audio-visual resources in teaching and learning has significant benefits for enhancing students' learning and development (Ashaver & Igyuve, 2013; Idris, Shamsuddin, Arome & Aminu, 2018; Rasul, Bukhsh & Batool, 2011). Idris, Shamsuddin, Arome and Aminu (2018) argue that "the power of audio-visual lies in the fact that it is multisensory, and interactive, enabling the end users of the application to control the content and flow of information" (p. 33). Well-chosen resources build students' content knowledge about new issues and encourage learners to be involved and active participants in the learning process instead of being passive. Rasul, Bukhsh & Batool (2011) argue that these kinds of resources can make teaching and learning activities easier and more interesting. According to the UNHCHR (2004) audio-visual materials including videos and films can enhance teaching and learning *through* human rights. Many organisations, including Amnesty International (2017b) and Youth for Human Rights International (2013), produce video documents for teaching HRE. However, the language of all these resources is English, creating challenges for using them in the Bengali-speaking school.

However, when we planned lessons for two contemporary human right issues, 'rights of older people' for grade 7 and 'child labour' for grade 9, we were able to access relevant Bengali language film clips. We talked about the fact that audio-visual aids can lead to engaged discussion and direct student participation.

Beauty and Shumi implemented the planned activities and found that students in both grades concentrated on watching the video-clips and were very engaged. The video clip 'rights of older people' showed the difficult living conditions of some older people, who live in care homes when relatives are not available to look after them (Rtv, 2013). The people were sharing their struggles in this last stage of their life. The government of Bangladesh enacted the 'Parents and Senior Citizens Act 2007' and 'Parents' Care Act 2013' to protect the rights of elderly parents (Chowdury & Al-Mamun, 2017). Chowdury and Al-Mamun (2017) explain that as the law is enacted "children will have to take necessary steps to look after their parents and provide them with food and shelter. Furthermore, under no circumstances are children allowed to send them in old homes beyond their wishes" (p. 149). To increase awareness among the children for looking after their parents, this content is included in the national curriculum (NCTB, 2012). The

students were very interested in this real- life issue and were actively involved in discussing the complex factors in caring for the elderly if they need professional health care and nursing that families cannot provide, including the costs and the difficulties if their children are working.

Figure 6: YouTube example of life in an aged care home.

Figure 7: YouTube example of child labour in Bangladesh

The video clip focused on 'child labour' showed scenarios in Bangladesh where children are involved in work activities that are risky for their physical and mental health, explained why they were involved, and reported how they felt about their lives without having education (Channel 24, 2011). At the end of watching the videos most of the students became emotional and a few of them were crying. An engaged learning environment was created in both classrooms that had never been seen by Beauty, Shumi or the student-participants before. I observed that the video clips stimulated students to be very involved in further discussion about the issues. The students said that they were very interested in the lessons and learned many things as the following data extracts demonstrate:

> **G9S1:** This is the first time in my life I watched a video about a real problem of human rights and participated in group discussion. We all instantly forgot everything from our mind and concentrated on watching the video. All students were very attentive. In normal classes this never happens.
>
> **G9S2:** I knew that child labour is a problem in our society, but I never watched the real situation and thought seriously about it. This is the first time I watched a video that showed the reality of some children. It helped me a lot to understand and think about this problem.
>
> **G9S3**: This lesson was totally different. The main difference is that we can remember it for a long time as we observed a real example.

Overall, my observations of the discussion of the video clips depicting human rights issues showed that they were effective in engaging students in active participation and stimulated their learning of HR concerns. This finding is well informed by scholarly literature (Ashaver & Igyuve, 2013; Idris, Shamsuddin, Arome & Aminu, 2018; Rasul, Bukhsh & Batool, 2011).

7.3.5 Learning and development through sharing real-life experiences

Mihr and Schmitz (2007) argue that the direct and indirect experience of injustice and other abuses can serve as a link between cognitive knowledge and emotional reaction, however the individual would not themselves need to have experienced a human rights violation; rather they would need to learn about someone who has experienced a human rights

violation, which then inspires them to learn more and to take-action to stop human rights violations to others.

One planned activity in the action research involved using students' real-life experience. Following the national curriculum (NCTB, 2012), story-telling was used as a strategy. Teachers started the lesson by telling a short story related to human rights violations and encouraged students to share their experiences. Both teachers said that no one needed to share their own experiences of violation; they could share what they observed in their community and society. I observed the lessons from the beginning to end and noticed a very different environment in both classrooms. Many of the students were very willing to share their experiences. A few stories were very sad and emotionally touched the students, teachers and me. One grade 7 girl shared that her father sent her mother to her grandmother's house because she gave birth to a baby girl when his father expected a baby boy. At the same time, she was crying and other students became emotional. Another student told a story of observing "a woman being tortured in the yard of a village family, and other people just watched. No one came to help her". When he told the story, he was very emotional. Shumi quietly spoke to the students, expressing her empathy to the victims and thanked the students who shared the stories. She also encouraged the students to stand beside the victims and raise their voices against any kind of human rights violations. Although teachers' advocacy for HR has critical importance in promoting HRE in schools (Bajaj, 2011a) class teacher Shumi argued that it was really challenging to identify how children's agency could be established where children had no previous experience of speaking out about challenging issues. Further research should be developed and professional learning provided for teachers on how they can support students who are victims of human rights violations. Teachers could then be better advocates for HR agency in schools.

Another grade 9 boy shared that a student was physically punished by one of the teachers in the school and said that his father came to the school to meet the teacher and discuss the issue. The teacher did not accept the matter positively and scolded the student as 'a son of driver' (poor and lower class in the Bangladesh context) after his father departed. The boy was seriously disheartened by the behaviour of the teacher. When the boy finished his story, I observed that the whole class remained silent and a different environment was created.

Both Beauty, Shumi and I felt very emotional after hearing the real story, and shared our concerns that schools currently have no support mechanisms in place for students who have seen these kinds of HR violations. Through our focus, we were able to express empathy and show our concern to the student, but currently the reality is that there are still instances of children from low socio-economic sectors being badly treated. While corporal punishment in schools is banned, there are instances of it occurring. From the student-participant responses, I realised that this approach was very effective in developing students' empathy with others. The students commented that:

> **G7S1**: This is a very different approach because I shared my experiences as well as I learned from others.
> **G7S2**: We all love to listen to stories though our madam never used this in the past. It is totally different and hundred times better than reading textbooks.
> **G9S3**: We learned many things from real examples of human rights violations. 'Story-telling' was a creative idea what our madam used first time today.

It is important to report that although I did not allow students to share their direct experiences related to human rights violations, their shared information about others was still very sensitive in terms of confidentially and privacy. However considering the contextual variation of ethical issues (Honan et al., 2013) I believed that given opportunities to share their indirect experiences was necessary for the broader interest of the children participating in this study to build their HRE experiences.

It is also interesting to point out that although the students were advised to not share their own experiences considering ethical issues, all six participants from each group were very interested in sharing their own experiences. Honan et al. (2013) argue that "although the meaning and valuations of privacy are not universal, but are variable across culture, the ethics rules and expectations are generally informed by hegemonic sociocultural norms and therefore may not apply to societies such as Bangladesh" (p. 388). Both classroom teachers Beauty and Shumi were comfortable with the ways students were given opportunities to share experiences as well as what and how they shared.

Beauty and Shumi evaluated this approach as one of the best ways of stimulating students' thoughts through sharing real-life experiences of human rights violations and identifying

solutions, and it was helpful for students to see that their teachers were concerned about their wellbeing. When I asked them to evaluate the effectiveness of this approach, Beauty said:

> I can say it is an exceptional approach. Everything was real that students shared and discussed in the class. Their feelings were also real. I am sure that this created feelings inside the students about the people whose rights are being violated. During the discussion, some students committed to stand beside the victims in future. Their self-realisation was the best achievement of that lesson. Actually, the classroom environment motivated them to be committed and to protect human rights violations. Overall, their learning would be sustainable.

Similarly, Shumi said:

> To me it was really an excellent teaching-learning approach for HRE. I did not use any teaching aids or video clips. In a word, I used nothing except telling a story. Just through story, they shared many things. They shared their real-life experiences and learned from different stories. I was surprised how well they presented their practical experiences through stories. I want to say that this is one of the best approaches to develop students' values and attitudes as well as empathy to others whose rights are violated.

The findings offer further evidence of the strength of using 'narratives' in teaching for human rights (Osler & Zhu, 2011). Osler and Zhu (2011) argue that narratives have considerable potential as tools for teaching human rights which permits learners to stimulate their empathy and solidarity to others. Though their arguments in favour of narratives support the findings of my research, their narratives are not the same as what I used in this research. While they argued in favour of narratives written by the teachers, they do not explain or discuss how narratives based on students' own experiences can be used in teaching human rights in order to develop students' empathy to others. In this regard, findings from my study provide new insights into the scope for narratives based on students' own experiences in teaching HRE, particularly for creating students' empathy with others whose rights are violated.

The findings also offer discussion and argument about the role of emotions in teaching HRE (Zembylas, 2008, 2012, 2017). Zembylas (2008) notes that "it has to be stressed that feelings for others and their suffering provide signs of obligation to others" (p.5). Zembylas (2017) suggests that "a theory of HRE that acknowledges the significance of emotions in critical ways can provide productive pedagogical orientations to the teaching of human rights" (p. 47). As I discussed above, my findings also indicated that the connection between children's emotion and the issues of human rights violation had impacts on developing their empathy that indicated the role of emotion in developing empathy as well as promoting HRE. Zembylas (2008) argues that, "human beings have a universal emotional potential, that is realized through emotion practices enacted in particular social and cultural settings" (p.3). This has critical importance in the Bangladesh context since "the perspective of emotions-as-practices emphasizes the connection between inner feelings and their external manifestation through action" (Zembylas, 2008, p. 3). Although my findings indicated that students showed empathy to others whose rights are violated through their emotional connection with issues, the findings did not indicate that the students would be given space in the school or in their community to transform their emotion into actions. This kind of space was not yet established in the school and in the society due to particular social and political context. My findings acknowledge the role of emotions in HRE and recommend that there be further studies to identify how students' emotions about HR can be transformed into actions.

7.4 Inclusion and equal opportunity in the classroom

Article 5(1) of UNDHRET (2011) recommends a focus on equality, inclusion and non-discrimination for promoting HRE. Based on the CRC (1989) (CRC preamble, 2, 7, 8, 16, 23, 28, 29, 31), Osler and Starkey (2005) suggest a principle of *identity and inclusivity* which requires participants to value diversity in the classroom in terms of cultural, emotional or physical deficiencies and differences. The National Education Policy (Ministry of Education, 2010) in Bangladesh clearly emphasises the development of an environment for teaching and learning in the classroom where equal opportunity is provided for all students. However, my study (see Chapter 4) identified that teachers were not treating all students equally in the classroom before implementing education *through* human rights as part of the action research. Before

this, children's right to have a voice and express their views and to be included were not part of the existing teaching and learning practices in the classroom.

Following the initial findings, both classroom teachers and I discussed how they could ensure inclusion and equal opportunities through their teaching and learning practices. We also discussed how they could pay attention to all students rather than favouring some students. The strategies then introduced by the teachers included providing opportunities for all students to ask and answer questions, ensuring all students' involvement in classroom activities (including through group work, and peer work), equal opportunities for boys and girls, encouraging students to get involved in classroom activities who were often unwilling to participate, and appreciating and acknowledging participants and their activities.

Both Beauty and Shumi similarly acknowledged the change and development. During the post-action research interviews, they commented:

> **Beauty**: I realised that I was actually discriminating against some students in the past since I did not ensure that they were all included as learners. My teaching was mainly based on traditional lecture methods, with only limited student involvement. I did ask questions and generally good students answered. I would be happy with the answer, but other students did not get the opportunity. That was really discrimination. In the last three months, I've used different strategies that we planned to get students involved in classroom activities. They have been more attentive throughout the lessons. I love this culture of no discrimination and equal opportunity.
>
> **Shumi:** In the past, I did not provide opportunity to all the students for participation. Many students were inattentive in my class for this reason. Now most students are more attentive and active in the class.

7.5 Development of positive dimensions of teacher-student relationship

Following the wide-ranging implications of the CRC, Osler and Starkey (2005) argue that "the student's right to dignity implies a relationship between teacher and students to avoid

abuse of power on the part of the teacher, including the avoidance of sarcasm" (p.143). They also recommend that teachers establish "a classroom atmosphere in which name-calling and mockery are unacceptable" and students' dignity and security are ensured (p. 143). In Chapter 4, I reported that both teachers lacked understanding of how to ensure students' wellbeing and the establishment of a positive classroom environment. We discussed this during our action research planning sessions. We agreed to work to establish good relationships between teachers and students as part of this study.

Both classroom teachers committed to not using sarcasm and mockery that would make their students feel humiliated and dishonored. From the very beginning of the implementation of the human rights lessons, I observed that both of them were very concerned about this. I also noticed that positive dimensions of relationships began improving. Moreover, the teachers were concerned about students' participation, equal opportunity, creating a positive environment and becoming friendlier. Students acknowledged and appreciated the change in their teachers' behavior. Students said they would be happy if their teachers would call them by name rather using other local language. They recommended students having name badges so their teachers could know everyone's name. Beauty and Shumi supported the idea and recommended this to the school.

The teachers acknowledged the rapid shift in the development of positive dimensions of teacher-student relationships in their classrooms. Beauty said, "Now the students are very close to me and it is better than any other time in the past. Now they can spontaneously share their opinion and they can easily ask me if they want to know anything". The students strongly agreed with the opinion of their teachers as these comments demonstrate:

> **Researcher:** How do you see your current relationship with your teacher?
>
> **G9S1**: Some students in the class were very weak and never asked anything because they had no courage to ask. On the last few weeks, I found that students are now very relaxed to ask questions to our madam and we have a very good relationship with our teacher.
>
> **G9S3:** Our teacher has changed her behaviour and in the last few months, our relationship became stronger.

Though parents were not included in the regular planning and reflection in this study, they commented on the positive dimensions of these relationship during the post-action research focus groups. They said their children noticed the changes and they saw changes in the teachers' behaviour when they visited the school. Since both group of parents recommended improved relationships by the teachers during the initial focus groups (see Chapter 4), they were very satisfied to see the development.

The human rights-based teaching and learning approaches recommended by Osler and Starkey (2005) significantly influenced the establishment of positive dimensions of teacher-student relationships in the classrooms. The development of teachers' concern about students' dignity and security as well as a better environment in the classroom were important aspects of establishing positive dimensions of teacher-student relationships in line with children's human rights.

7.6 Students' views and opinions through creative co-curricular activities

Dziva, Bhebhe and Maphosa, (2014) argue that co-curricular activities can include important approaches for teaching human rights education. As part of education *through* human rights, we planned to involve students in co-curricular activities. We agreed to engage students in developing a wall magazine in the school addressing and representing their learning and thoughts on HR issues. According to the United Nations (1998), "the arts can help to make concepts more concrete, personalize abstractions and affect attitudes by involving emotional as well as intellectual responses to human rights. Techniques may include stories and poetry, graphic arts, sculpture, drama, song and dance" (p. 14).

Through the wall magazine, students were encouraged to express their views and opinions using creative approaches such as short stories, rhymes and drawing. Based on the curriculum, grade 7 and 9 teachers highlighted the issues of human rights, particularly women's rights, children's rights, violence against women and children, child labour, early marriage, and the use of the dowry. They encouraged students to express their opinions and views through their creative activities. Both classroom teachers instructed their students how they could develop the magazine, particularly their time allocation, splitting students into groups, and putting their creative works together for the magazine. The students worked during the tiffin period and after school hours. Both class teachers

monitored the students' cooperative learning tasks and played the role as editors to make the magazine presentable to all students in the school. However, I observed that students did their creative work independently and only asked their teacher if they needed any help. The United Nations (1998) argues that "teachers do not need to be artists themselves" (p. 14) for organising these kinds of activities, but they need to set tasks and provide a way for the students to share their creations. Both classroom teachers also confirmed this. However, they argued that their professional learning workshop (see Chapter 5) helped them to be confident to organise this kind of activity, since they had no prior experiences of engaging students with creative activities for HRE. In addition, they reported that this experience would definitely help them for further involvement with creative activities.

It is important to note that this activity was open for all students in both grades. Since other students were included in their groups, and the school and head teacher's name were included on the magazine, the images below were edited to ensure anonymity:

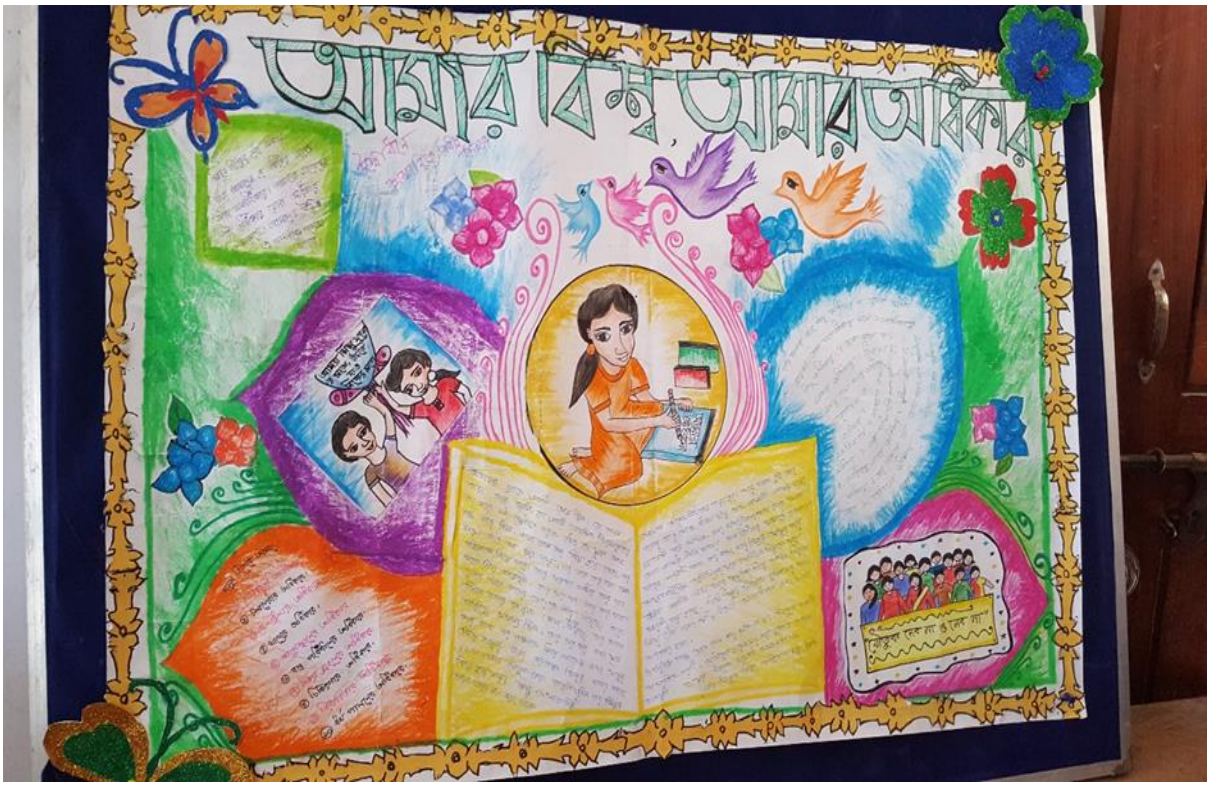

Figure 8: Wall Magazine, Grade 7: My World, My Rights

Figure 9: Wall Magazine, Grade 9: Participation for All: Implementation of Human Rights

Both magazines demonstrate students' learning and understanding, emotions, commitments and creativity. Grade 7 students visualised different children's rights, the story of children's rights violations, early marriage and dowry. The story and artwork says, "We are children. Please let us live with joy and happiness". Another art work includes the slogan, "Say 'no' to dowry". The students made the wall magazines attractive through their colourful art work. Grade 9 students stressed understanding and participation for implementing human rights with slogans, "Let's save all children from all kinds of abuse and violence", "Stop early marriage", "Don't involve children as drivers", and, "Call strikes if people don't stop involving children as drivers".

According to reflections from the student-participants, Beauty, Shumi, Reba and my observations, the wall magazine activity was very successful. The students showed their excitement since it was their first experience of getting involved with these kinds of creative activities, though they knew about the idea of wall magazines.

A grade 9 student said that:

> Through the wall magazine, other students in our school who don't yet have this learning can know about human rights and children's rights. They will also understand our feeling and thinking about human rights through the stories, rhymes and drawing. This has really helped to increase our thinking and creativity about human rights. We are really proud of the work we have done.

Beauty said:

> I think that this is a very constructive and enjoyable way of teaching and learning as it creates opportunities for the students to show their views, opinions and creativity together. This has created a student-friendly environment to motivate the students.

Another reason for the success of the wall magazine identified by the students was that it had captured the new knowledge about human rights and human rights issues they had learned through recent teaching and learning in the classroom. A grade 7 participant said, "I could not have done this if you asked me few months ago".

The teachers agreed that connections were made between the HRE classroom activities and the school community. For example, Beauty said:

> The wall magazine created an opportunity for other teachers and students to see the feelings, ideas and creativity of the grade 7 and 9 students and to be aware of HR and motivated to do these kinds of activities. Previously this idea was not in our thinking. Already others teachers highly appreciate our initiatives.

Shumi pointed that "this can attract students' attention quickly and other students can see the magazine and be motivated to think and work for human rights issues". Reba highly appreciated this initiative and was pleased to launch the magazine to all the students. She advised other teachers to use this creative approach and to place the magazines in front of the stairs on the ground floor for all students and teachers to see. The following image shows her support.

Figure 10: The head teacher Reba inaugurating the grade 9 wall magazine.

After the launch the head teacher spent time reading the content of the magazines. Beauty and I noticed that Reba became very emotional after reading one story from the magazine about violence against women and students' commitment to protect human rights and protest violations in future. She gave positive feedback to the students and teachers and an acknowledgement said, "I am proud of my students. I hope you will continue your creative work". During the post-action research interview, she said: I am impressed by the wall magazine. It was unimaginable for me since I didn't see this kind of student activity before in the school.

I observed that other teachers and students from different classes visited the wall magazines and appreciated the students' and teachers' work. Other teachers not involved in this study appreciated the action research and told me that they were impressed by the creative activity of their children. Overall it can be concluded that students' creative activities through wall magazines demonstrated their capacity to transfer their learning and

understanding about and through human rights into visual depictions for others to see their emotions, creativity and commitment to human rights. It was also evident that the students' contribution to the school community influenced teachers and fellow students thinking about the importance of nurturing and developing a human rights culture in the school through creative co-curricular activities informed by the ideas of UNHCHR (2004).

7.7 Teachers' professional learning on education *through* human rights

Although teachers' professional learning and development have been discussed in this chapter, in this section I provide further data on teachers' opinions about their learning and development through the implementation of education *through* human rights. Beauty and Shumi said they were enriched through the practices of rights-based teaching and learning approaches in the following ways:

> **Shumi:** The approaches I used in the past were completely bookish and not creative at all. Personally, I had believed that using participatory approaches could create a lack of discipline in the classroom. But what we have planned and implemented has changed my beliefs and increased my self-confidence. I now see that these approaches can minimise discipline issues if I can utilise the approaches properly with full preparation.
>
> I now understood that teaching human rights is not a matter of a day or few days of teaching, it is a matter for our daily life. If we can continue to use these rights-based approaches in our teaching and learning, it will be an example of practicing human rights education and human rights values through our regular teaching and learning.
>
> **Beauty:** At the beginning of planning the new approaches, I was afraid as well as nervous about whether the students would accept the approaches or not. But from the first lesson, I saw that the students responded spontaneously. The approaches not only ensured students' that students could express their opinions and participate, but also made the content easier to understand. Truly speaking, my confidence has increased significantly and I can use these approaches in future.

> In the past I did not fully prepare lessons and I did not used rights-based participatory approaches in the classroom. As a teacher I find a big change in me. The world of my thoughts has been totally changed. Now I believe that I would not be able to conduct lessons like in the past. If I will do that my acceptance among the students would be reduced. They will not like lecture methods anymore since they have experienced and enjoyed different activities. Now I believe that I can do many things in the classrooms. Without interrupting the syllabus, examinations, textbooks, there are still many opportunities to build students' opinions and participation. Now I am conducting all the lessons using activity-based participatory approaches and in an organised way. Students benefit since the lesson is conducted with the combined efforts of me and the students. I can say that I developed myself much during last 3 months. More than I learned in my five years of teaching career.

Both teachers acknowledged the contribution of the collaborative and participatory action research for their professional learning and development which enabled them to co-plan, act, and reflect on their practices. They argued that they were empowered and could make decisions about different approaches to HRE confidently. They also understood the nature of the action research. For example, Beauty said:

> There are differences between action research and other forms research. Other research just gathers information from participants and makes statements about the problem, but action research includes identifying the problems, planning, reflecting and solving the problems. Our research is a real example. I want to say that action research is very fruitful in our context.

Overall their reflections about action research are in line with the literature on the power of participatory action research to create change and improved outcomes (Boog, 2003; Bradbury & Reason, 2003; Cahill, 2007; Creswell, 2012; Perrett, 2003). This finding is also informed by the literature on HRE. UNESCO (2011) emphasises the need "to link research and policy in a way that enables not only the identification of common problems and challenges, but also the design of practical and effective solutions" (p. 15). In addition, the findings confirmed the claims of previous studies that identified positive impacts of

action research on teachers' professional learning and development in Bangladesh (Alam, 2016; Harun & Amin, 2013; Salahuddin & Khatun, 2013).

7.8 Challenges in developing education *through* human rights

The most important finding was that the teachers' attitudes to the challenges of educating students *through* human rights shifted from a lack of understanding about how this could be achieved to very positive actions and views. Through the implementation of new approaches, teachers became more aware of how they could encourage students to express their views, and be engaged in activities such as brainstorming, group discussions and presentations about issues that made them aware of their rights. It was time consuming and was difficult to ensure that all groups participated. Beauty said: "We have learned that we can plan participatory approaches in the class without hampering our achievement of the required curriculum and regular schedule".

The teachers also found that even with more than 40 students in Beauty's class and 60 in Shumi's class, with lessons of about 45 minutes, with a carefully planned lesson, the learning objectives could be achieved. However, Beauty and Shumi continued to struggle at times with the limited availability of resources, lack of equipment in classrooms, and their own academic and administrative loads.

7.9 Conclusion

This chapter provides evidence of the successful implementation and development of education *through* human rights. The action research challenged the existing power relations of teachers and students, promoted democratic approaches as a method of teaching (Tsolidis, 2001). It showed how learners could rediscover power within themselves to act upon situations as subjects rather than as objects to be acted upon, which indicates that both students and teachers had greater agency within the classroom (Nazzari et al., 2005). One of the chief concerns of critical pedagogy is "the humanization of teachers and students" (Monchinski, 2008, p. 122). The findings of this study showed how teachers' and students' rights became more mutually respectful in the classroom through the practices of rights-based teaching and learning approaches. The students appreciated the ways in which the teachers engaged them all in more meaningful learning tasks that

were related to their own lives and the teachers saw the benefits of their action research being appreciated by the students, their parents, their colleagues and the head teacher.

There are a number of implications of the findings of this study for practice and development of education *through* human rights in schools. The Bangladeshi national education policy (Ministry of Education, 2010) and current national curriculum (NCTB, 2012) as well as international human rights declarations have significant implications for the practice and development of education *through* human rights for all schools. In our action research focused on developing new practices to build knowledge and understanding of HR through new pedagogical approaches in classrooms, we observed evidence of greater student voice and participation.

But the study did show that more could have been achieved if the teachers had further access to teaching and learning resources such as more frequent access to computers with wifi connections in order to access the internet. We would also have been able to achieve more if the duration of lessons were longer. The teachers and I could see the potential for further development of strategies for teachers' and school leaders' professional learning on education *through* human rights, but were limited by the scope of the study.

The findings have significant methodological implications. As education research *through* human rights, this study showed how participatory action research can contribute to the examination and development of new approaches and to the promotion of HR. Ensuring that teachers and students were continuously able to voice their views, reflect on their participation and be engaged in planning, implementing and reflecting on new approaches contributed to examining how education *through* human rights could be implemented.

Chapter 8: Practice and development of education *for* human rights

8.1 Introduction

One of the aims of the action research was to increase HRE through collaboration between the teachers and students to build the development of the *student cabinet* in the school. This chapter explores how this form of education *for* human rights evolved through the process. I discuss how we worked with the students, and analyse and discuss data captured from reflection sessions with the teachers, members of the *student cabinet* and field notes. The chapter also includes discussion of post-action research interviews with the teachers and head teacher, and focus group discussions with members of the student cabinet, two groups of students and their respective parents.

As discussed in Chapter 2, education *for* human rights requires the empowerment of persons to enjoy and exercise their rights as well as respecting and upholding of the rights of others. Students should be given opportunities to achieve these rights and work together for the interests of the school community, for the cultivation of democratic values and to enact human rights in their everyday lives. Education *for* human rights also requires students' voice and participation in decision-making process in the school (Holdsworth, 2010). Learners should be equipped with the knowledge, skills and understanding of how they can make decisions that recognize and make a difference to human rights and be able to include others to encourage positive changes in the school and their lives. Jensen and Schnack (2006) argue that this requires the development of 'social action competence', while Henderson and Tudball (2016) agree that "this concept emphasizes the appropriate use of knowledge and action to achieve an outcome" (p. 3). In addition, they suggest that "young people need to learn about the issues, and be involved in actions for change" (p. 14). Overall, this requires a culture of human rights in the school as a way of empowering learners to build a universal and respectful approach to human rights. All this is well grounded in international literature as education *for* human rights (Council of Europe, 2010; Mager & Nowak, 2012; Osler & Starkey, 2005; 2010; UNHRC, 2011).

An increasing literature has evolved about the importance of student involvement in what are variously named as student representative councils (SRCs), youth councils or cabinets, as part of citizenship and human rights education, to ensure that young people are citizens

now, not citizens in waiting (Osler & Starkey, 2006). SRCs usually involve students being elected by their peers to represent all students within the school. SRCs should democratically represent the student body in school decision-making and organise ways for students to participate actively in their own school and the wider community, so achieving this was a priority for this project.

In Chapter 2, I identified that the national education policy in Bangladesh is supportive of education *for* human rights in schools. In addition, the Ministry of Education recently supported the development of student cabinets in secondary schools to ensure youth voice. However, as noted in Chapter 4, having a policy supportive of education *for* human rights doesn't ensure that the school could develop a democratic, functioning, student cabinet. This chapter explores the extent to which the action research process achieved this goal.

8.2 Training for the student cabinet

Providing appropriate training is one of the critical factors for achieving success in developing student representative bodies (Holdsworth & Jones, 2006; Osler & Starkey, 2010; UNICEF, 2007). The National Education Policy of Bangladesh (Ministry of Education, 2010) and student cabinet manual promote this view (DSHE, 2015). However, early discussion with students in this study identified that the student cabinet did not receive any training from the school and that students had a very limited view of what their involvement could achieve. The head teacher and teachers strongly acknowledged the importance of training, so we planned and implemented two training sessions of two hours each for the cabinet members. Beauty, Shumi and I were the facilitators, with the teachers drawing on new understanding from their professional learning workshops (see Chapter 5) about the scope and potential role of student cabinets.

The training sessions had two parts. First, we explored students' existing understanding of student cabinets and their roles as cabinet members. Students initially showed poor understanding of the meaning and potential activities of the cabinet. Following the student cabinet manual (DSHE, 2015), I asked members if they had any idea about their possible involvement in improving student voice and involvement in areas such as the school environment, water use, health and safety, sports and co-curricular activities. They had not

been involved with these kinds of activities previously, but had some prior experiences in working to celebrate different national days such as Victory Day and Independence Day. When I asked them how they became cabinet members, they thought they been elected by the vote of the people (*janogoner* vote), which is generally used in traditional politics in Bangladesh. When I said they had been elected by the vote of students, not by the general public, all the cabinet members felt shy and laughed a bit. They agreed that they were not well acquainted with the concept of a student cabinet or their potential roles. Understanding their lack of prior knowledge was very helpful in conducting the next training sessions.

Beauty and Shumi used the student cabinet manual (DSHE, 2015) to discuss the aims and roles of student cabinets, how the members could be involved in the school community, and the roles and responsibilities of cabinet members, teachers and school authorities (see Chapter 2 for details). They paid significant attention to the practices of democratic values in the school, for example listening and respecting the opinions of others (article 2.1, DSHE, 2015), and active participation in the development of the school environment, for example creating awareness among other students (article 2.6, DSHE, 2015). They made the training participatory by engaging cabinet members in group-discussions and presentations by group members after the discussion, and by providing cabinet members with opportunities to express their views and ask questions. Following the discussions led by Beauty and Shumi, I added points related to the implementation of new student cabinet initiatives for education *for* human rights. For example, I explained that when they conducted meetings with the head teacher, I would not be involved in the discussion, but I would record the conversations as part of my research. During the training sessions, cabinet members were allowed to ask questions to Beauty, Shumi and me. Two training sessions of two hours each were conducted and all nine cabinet members participated.

Based on my observations and the opinions of the teachers and cabinet members, it was clear that the training was very interactive and effective, with students engaged in lively and active discussions and questioning. Beauty said:

> This is the first time the cabinet members have participated in training sessions and they benefitted. The members learned the aims and objectives of the student cabinet and their possible roles and activities in the school. During and after the training, I found them highly motivated to work for the school community.

Similarly, Shumi acknowledged the effectiveness of the training, noting that "after the election of the cabinet, schools should provide training for the cabinet members as soon as possible, as without this we could not expect good outcomes from our cabinet". The responses of cabinet members to questions about the training included:

> **CM1**: The training was a very positive initiative because this was the first time I could discuss and learn about what our roles could be.
> **CM2:** This training is very helpful. I learned that we could discuss different issues with our teachers and the head teacher. We had never thought about these opportunities before.
> **CM3:** Now I understand that cabinet can do many things for the school community and we are going to receive opportunities and support from our teachers and the head teacher to get involved in different activities. I am highly motivated and determined to work sincerely.
> **CM5:** I can see that the activities of cabinet members are not only good for the school but also good for ourselves. It is good for developing leadership skills.
> **CM6:** The cabinet has not really been functioning before the training sessions.

8.3 Students' voice and participation for human rights

Article (2) (c) of the UNDHRET (2011) defines the third element of education *for* human rights as, "empowering persons to enjoy and exercise their rights and to respect and uphold the rights of others (p. 4). Osler and Starkey (2010) argue that "the degree of exercising rights by children and young people in the wider society depends significantly on the ways they experience schooling and the ways they experience human rights and democracy in schools" (p. 101). The UNCRC includes an obligation in its article 12(1) that "states parties shall assure the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child" (UN General Assembly, 1989, p. 4). Osler and Starkey (2010) argue that "in order for young people to claim their rights to express a view on matters which may affect them at school, teachers and school principals need to provide a space or opportunity for them to do so" (p. 105). The government policy to develop student cabinets in secondary schools aimed to give special attention to the cultivation of democratic values through students' representative bodies. In the following

section, I examine the extent to which students' voices and participation were developed through their student cabinet.

8.3.1 Voice and participation of the student cabinet in school activities

Since the Green Bird School did not ensure voice and participation of the student cabinet in school activities in the past, Beauty, Shumi and I discussed with Reba how progress could be made to create opportunities for more involvement. She offered to regularly discuss issues with students and involved them in planning a function when Ministry of Education officials visited the school. Reba was impressed by their mature involvement in the event. The students said this increased their confidence and gave them an authentic role as cabinet members in the school. While Reba said that, "it might be not possible for the school to consider all students' suggestions, she was prepared to consider their views is more frequently". Beauty and Shumi felt that it was important that Reba made a commitment to looking at the role of the cabinet more closely.

8.3.2 Representing the voice of all students

In Ministry policy, the student cabinet is supposed to be a representative body of all students in secondary schools in Bangladesh (DSHE, 2015). In addition, the student cabinet manual (article 21.7), states that schools should provide a general meeting every few months where students and cabinet members meet together to review the activities of the cabinet. However, the cabinet manual does not provide explanations about how this should be organized to ensure all students' voice and opinions are heard. Beauty, Shumi, Reba and all cabinet members agreed it could be difficult to organize a meeting between 650 students and the cabinet members, especially since the school had no auditorium large enough. We decided that meeting with class representatives, generally known as class captains, every month would be a useful strategy. During the period of action research, two meetings with class captains were held (26 out of 33 class captains participated in the meetings). Beauty coordinated the meetings as an assigned teacher and explained the importance of procedures and made sure that the students set an agenda and developed an understanding of how meetings should be run efficiently.

I observed that the meetings were well organized, interactive and participatory. At the beginning, the cabinet members thanked the class captains for participation and explained why and how they could cooperate with the cabinet, noting that:

> It is not possible to meet all students together so we have planned to meet all captains every month. You are requested to discuss different issues with your classmates and note down points. During our meetings, we will discuss together how we can contribute to our school.

The class representatives appreciated the opportunity to be involved. They suggested that the cabinet should organize a visit to all classes to introduce themselves and motivate students to share their concerns directly with the cabinet members or via the class captains. According to their decision, with Beauty's help, the cabinet members visited all classes for a few minutes to seek their views in the following week. They introduced themselves and their roles as cabinet members in the school. They also pointed out that they would always welcome the opinion of students to improve school environment. While the students did not have any opportunity to meet cabinet members in the past, this meeting was very helpful in establishing a connection between the cabinet and students as Beauty and Shumi reported. Observations showed that the students valued the visits and made many suggestions to the cabinet leaders.

During the second meeting, I observed that many important issues were identified by the class captains and considered by the student cabinet including their concerns about unhygienic washrooms, unsafe playground equipment and the quality of tiffin. The cabinet sincerely extended thanks to the class captains for identifying valuable issues that required improvement for students' wellbeing. They committed to discussing these concerns with the head teacher (see Section 8.4).

These meetings were very effective ways of considering students' views. Shumi said that "these practices are important in developing democratic values". Beauty added that:

> The government has introduced student cabinets so there are opportunities for practicing democratic values and developing leadership qualities among the students. It requires valuing the voices of all students. Now cabinet members are regularly meeting with class captains and being informed about different issues. They are sharing and discussing their ideas with us and meeting the head teacher. These practices are supportive to the aims and objectives of student cabinet.

All these actions meant that the student cabinet began to work for the empowerment of all students *for* their human rights.

8.4 Working for the school community

Gollob et al. (2010) argue that students should be given opportunities to work together for the common good and to cultivate human rights values. UNICEF (2007) argues for human rights and democratic citizenship through "student government" (p. 80) in line with the UNESCO views that:

> Children's governments work to improve many different aspects of school and community life, such as education, health, protection, water and AIDS awareness. Activities include tutoring, initiating dialogue with teachers, holding awareness-raising campaigns, improving the school's physical environment and practicing good hygiene. (p. 81)

According to the student cabinet manual, recommended areas of student cabinet involvement and contribution include: the school environment; textbooks and teaching aids; health; sports, culture and co-curricular activities; water resources; tree planting and gardening; different days and program celebration, reception and entertainment; and information and communication technology (DSHE, 2015). In our action research, the students, teachers and I discussed how the student cabinet could contribute to these areas. We agreed that it was difficult to address all the areas within the period of the research. Moreover, there were other limitations in the school to develop all aspects demonstrated in the literature of 'student government'. In the following section, the activities that were planned and implemented are explained.

8.4.1 Improving the school environment

All stakeholders agreed that the school environment required significant improvement including the washrooms and playground. Cabinet members began to talk to students during the tiffin period about the value of improving the school environment. They also gave motivational speeches during the student assembly asking the students to "consider the school's washrooms as your own home …we are requesting your help".

Observations showed that the cabinet members did successfully create awareness among the students and the school environment was improved. Students stopped throwing rubbish in the school grounds. The head teacher said, that "the students have been motivated and changed by the student cabinet and their speeches". One cabinet member said:

> We are continuously trying to create awareness among the students to keep our school environment safe and clean. It is really great that we have found some changes. Students are not throwing their used boxes of foods and other things on the floor of school building and on the school grounds. We did not achieve our hundred percent target, but most of the students are using specific bins instead of open places.

8.4.2 Welcoming new students

'Welcoming new students' was a new initiative created by the student cabinet. Every year around one hundred and twenty students come from different primary schools for admission at grade VI. Generally, the school does not provide any formal orientation except information and from classroom teachers. The student cabinet decided to provide welcome sessions for new students. Beauty and Shumi provided necessary support and guidelines for their preparation. The student cabinet met together several times to finalize their planning for two welcoming sessions for Section A and B of grade VI. Beauty, Shumi and I were present, but our only involvement was in providing reflections for future programs during our planning sessions. One cabinet member coordinated the sequences of sessions. Initially they introduced themselves and the new students. Then another member shared basic information about the school such as the history, teachers, classrooms, and another member discussed school rules. Other cabinet members provided advice including saying to the new students that:

CM2: We are here to provide you with support. Please feel free to communicate with us and inform us if you find any problem in the school.

CM3: You know this a government school and there are limited resources. Therefore, we should look after our school resources.

CM4: We should not keep lights on when we have enough day light. This way we can save our energy.

CM5: When you play in the field, please be careful that you do not hit others and don't get hurt.

CM6: Enjoy your school life, but think before acting. When you speak with your friends, consider whether someone is getting worried or not. Please do not do anything harmful for you as well as others. Love your school and keep it clean.

The initiatives were highly appreciated by the new comers, teachers and the school community. Beauty said, "Already the whole school knows that the cabinet organized a welcome program for the new grade VI students. They all are praising our cabinet and acknowledging our new initiatives". All the cabinet members said the practice of welcoming new students should be continued. The head teacher and teachers agreed and committed to providing more support from the school such as allocating a small budget for refreshments and purchasing small gifts of pens or pencils.

8.4.3 Removing discrimination

It discussed in Chapter 4, discrimination has existed between boys and girls in the school. For example, the school has a very small playground and only the boys had regular access to play. This issue was discussed during the planning sessions and the cabinet wanted to remove this discrimination from the school. They asked Beauty and Shumi to provide suggestions. Beauty proposed that, "boys and girls could share the playground with equal access. Creating awareness among boys is important to change the current situation". She also added that the student cabinet could work on it. Consequently, the cabinet sat together to identify strategies and shared their ideas with Beauty and Shumi. The cabinet also gained support from the head teacher.

The cabinet then shared their views with the class captains who appreciated the initiative and agreed to support the proposal during the student assembly. The class captains campaigned to create the change. Finally, one of the cabinet members delivered their prepared speech during the assembly:

> We all are friends. This is our school and we should all have equal rights. Unfortunately, up until now, only boys have been able to play in the playground and girls cannot. As your student cabinet, we propose sharing the playground so boys will play three days and girls will play in the next three days. Firstly, please raise your hands who are in favor of this proposal and secondly, please raise your hands who are not in favor.

I observed that no one was against the proposal. All the class teachers present were surprised, including the head teacher. The cabinet extended thanks to the students. The head teacher declared that, "the school authority will support the proposal. From next week it will be implemented". In the following weeks, members of the student cabinet supported the new policy. It was considered by the teachers and head teacher to be a big achievement for the cabinet as well as for the school. The head teacher said, "the students have showed us how it could be done".

It is significant to report that although discrimination in the playground was resolved by the initiatives of student cabinet and through the support of teachers and the head teacher, two other factors were identified which played a role in making the decision of sharing the playground with boys and girls in practice. One was the influence of rights-based teaching and learning practices in the classroom conducted by Beauty and Shumi. Both of them argued that the new approaches influenced the attitudes of the students of grade 7 and 9. The head teacher supported their argument. The second factor was Beauty's role as a physical education teacher. During the practical physical education sessions in the playground, Beauty tried to develop 'no discrimination' in these ways:

> I had forty-minute physical education lessons with students of different grades. During the practical session, I divided them into two groups. I instructed girls to

play in the first 15 minutes and advised boys to stay near the open space in front of school. Then boys had the opportunity. I found that both groups were very happy. The boys also understood and accepted the changes positively. Girls were happy as they could play in a big field. Repeatedly I practised this approach and found positive changes among the students. I believe that this factor also influenced the changes initiated by the student cabinet.

8.4.4 Improving the quality of tiffin

Students are charged 75 Bangladeshi taka per month for their tiffin and the school provides students with traditional sweets or snacks such as cakes, jilapi, singara and samosa. Through the discussions with the class captains, the student cabinet identified that students were not happy with the range of food. They claimed that the school had been serving the same kind of tiffin for a long time and they were getting bored with the food. Therefore, the student cabinet discussed the issue with their teachers and the head teacher, who considered the issue very seriously. I observed the meeting which lasted for around 30 minutes. The cabinet suggested some alternative snacks, particularly cakes, jilapi (traditional sweet), singara/ samosa (traditional tiffin snacks), and bread with sweet instead of one item for a long time. The head teacher considered their opinion to be valid and significant and was pleased to have this issue raised by the cabinet. Immediately she initiated new orders from the school food supplier to provide variety.

Implementation of this initiative was acknowledged and appreciated by the students. While the students, including the cabinet members, never said anything about the quality of their tiffin to their teachers, this initiative gave them the opportunity to voice their opinion to the school through the student cabinet. Beauty argued that these kinds of practices would make the students and the school more aware about the rights of students as well as value of their opinions.

8.4.5 Increasing community involvement

One of the aims of student cabinets is to increase parental involvement in schools with the help of cabinet members (DSHE, 2015). Prior to the action research, parents in the case study school did not understand how a student cabinet should function. We discussed how the cabinet could contribute to increasing community involvement in the school. The

cabinet members argued that since the school authority (the head teacher and teachers) did not invite parents regularly into the school, they did not know about the cabinet. The head teacher committed to organizing regular meetings between parents and the school authority where members of student cabinet would also be invited. How this was developed is discussed in Chapter 9.

8.5 Development of skills necessary for students' empowerment

As discussed in the literature review, students require skills for their empowerment, such as effective communication, co-operation, negotiation and decision-making, and campaigning skills (Pike & Selby, 1988). This study identified that to some extent, members of cabinet achieved these skills. I asked cabinet members to reflect on their learning. They responded that:

> **CB2:** I have developed self-confidence through my involvement with the student cabinet. I can now talk with teachers and have even talked to the head teacher.
> **CB3:** As a student cabinet member, I communicate with other students through the class representatives and solve some problems in the school that students are concerned about.
> **CB5:** I learned how to work with a team. I never had this opportunity before.
> **CB6:** We have had a chance to build our leadership skills for future.

Beauty, Shumi and Reba agreed that the training and initiatives for the increased roles for the cabinet members did develop their skills and capacity to be involved in meaningful activities. As a researcher, I observed that the students developed some skills, however, what was possible was limited by the time frame of the study. Further development of the student cabinet could be initiated, such as students could be provided with further training and opportunities to develop negotiation and campaigning skills. Student cabinets can focus on issues that develop higher order thinking skills which Holdsworth and Jones (2006) define as "activities that challenge students to think, explore, question, problem-solve, and discuss" (p. 8). (This is further explained in Section 8.11).

8.6 Importance of developing attitudes and sense of responsibility

In conversations with the students at the end of the action research cycle, it was evident that they had developed a sense of responsibility about their roles as cabinet members which were significant for them as student representatives. Student commented:

> **CM2:** I have changed myself very positively. In the past, I did nothing as a cabinet member. I did not even realize what I should do. I was engaged in quarrelling with other students frequently. There was no difference between me and other students**.** I realize now that I have responsibilities as cabinet member. As a student representative, my behavior and attitudes should set an example for others.
>
> **CM3:** As a cabinet member, I need to be a role model for positive activities and behavior.
>
> **CM4:** I used to be absent from the school without reason, but after our student cabinet training, I come to school regularly and realize that I have responsibilities to perform my duties and do the right thing so other students look up to us as a cabinet.

Cabinet members argued that working for the school community for three months was so worthwhile, that they could in the future move onto doing service in the local community in relation to human rights. One cabinet member said, “the habits of doing something for school community will lead us to do something for our society in future”.

The findings also indicated that while prior to action research, some members of the student cabinet considered themselves powerful and behaved badly towards other students (see Chapter 4 for details), post action research focus group data showed that both groups of student participants in this study highly appreciated the new dimensions of cabinet members’ attitudes and behaviour. For example, one grade 7 student said, “I now find the cabinet members very helpful and caring”. Another grade 9 student said, “the attitudes and behaviour of the cabinet members have changed positively. Now they are very caring for the students and the school environment”.

Beauty, Shumi and Reba also noticed the development of positive attitudes and behaviour among the cabinet members. It was also identified through the discussion with the cabinet

members that the training, regular monitoring of their roles through support from teachers, their engagement in meaningful school activities, and appreciation from the students and teachers, all played a role in developing their sense of responsibility.

The action research with the cabinet showed that in future, the school should continue to provide cabinet members with leadership training so they are clear about their roles, can understand their rights and responsibilities, and be respected by the student community.

8.7 Recognition of student cabinet and their activities

The National Association of Secondary Schools Principals (2016) argues that it is important to recognize and celebrate students' achievements and activities to ensure their ongoing motivation and success. Andrews (2011) argues that recognition is important for both teachers and students. McNae (2015) points out that developing a culture of appreciating and embracing students' leadership and activities creates positive impacts on achieving student engagement. The teachers and head teacher agreed that student activities should be recognized, so new initiatives were identified during this study to motivate cabinet members, and build their confidence and commitment.

One initiative was to provide a badge for all cabinet members with their name and the logo of the school. The cabinet members said that having a badge increased their recognition and identity in the school community. Participants' commented that:

> **CM1:** In the past, no students knew us as cabinet members and nobody asked us anything. Now every student knows us because we have a badge indicating our identity as cabinet member.
> **CM2:** Now we are for the school and are doing positive things and play important roles part in the school.
> **CM4:** I believe that wearing the badge makes us more committed and active.
> **CM5:** I am proud that our head teacher herself has given me the badge.

Reba also decided to provide certificates to the cabinet members for their service. The cabinet members felt honored that their activities would be recognized by the school authority.

CM3: Recognition of any activities is important. When we get involved in different activities in the school, college and university, this certificate will be an important evidence of recognitions and experiences. It will also be helpful for our career.

CM4: I think that certificate is the best honor for us from the school.

This study also identified that appreciation from the teachers and school authority was valued by the cabinet members. The head teacher acknowledged their contributions in front of the chief guest (high official from the Ministry of Education) when she delivered her speech. One cabinet member said, "It is really an honor when your school head appreciates your activities in front of a distinguished guest".

In conclusion, it can be argued that formal and informal recognition of cabinet activities through different strategies motivated cabinet members and increased their confidence.

8.8 Monitoring activities of the student cabinet

According to UNICEF (2007), when creating opportunities for children to participate in the school community through a student representative body, "it is also necessary to take appropriate measures to ensure they are protected from manipulation, violence, abuse or exploitation and that the process takes account of their evolving capacities and is designed to promote their best interests" (p. 81). This study identified that some cabinet members behaved badly towards their fellow students.

Beauty, Shumi, the head teacher and I discussed this issue and agreed to monitor the cabinet. The head teachers assigned Beauty to coordinate the cabinet activities and asked the teachers to regularly communicate and interacted with the cabinet members. The head teacher also met and talked with cabinet members as a part of this research initiative. During the training sessions, we discussed the cabinet members' duties and responsibilities to increase their commitment to avoiding any kind of conduct not in line the values of cabinet activities. The members wanted to show exemplary behavior. The head teacher also realized the importance of monitoring and said that "having misbehavior by a few cabinet members towards other students was a problem of our system. We needed to keep them on the right way, keep in touch with them, and keep them busy with activities".

8.9 Teachers' cooperation and relationships with cabinet

The student cabinet manual states that the head teacher is responsible for assigning an assistant teacher to coordinate the activities of student cabinet (DSHE, 2015). Prior to this study, the previous head teacher selected a senior male teacher for this role, though no criteria was fixed for selection. Beauty said:

> It is generally believed that senior teachers are more effective in implementing activities but I do not believe this is true. Teachers' knowledge, skills and motivation are more important than seniority. For example, I was very interested to work with the student cabinet, but was not considered since there were many senior teachers in the school. I would like to recommend considering other factors rather than just seniority. I am happy that our current head teacher is informed about my knowledge, skills and willingness to work for school.

Since Beauty showed a strong willingness to coordinate the activities of the student cabinet and meet with them regularly, the head teacher appointed her and said she would ensure that active and sincere teachers would be assigned to support future cabinets. Beauty and I discussed having regular meetings with cabinet members. In the planning session, it was decided that the cabinet would discuss different issues regarding their lives and the school community and that teachers would provide them with guidelines going forward that would be also be discussed with the head teacher. The cabinet was to meet every two weeks with the assigned teacher(s). The cabinet met Beauty and Shumi regularly during the research and cooperated well together.

All cabinet members acknowledged the benefits of regular meetings with their teachers. One cabinet member said, "The teacher's cooperation helped us to work smoothly and effectively". The study showed that teachers' good relationships, cooperation and regular involvement with the cabinet supported the implementation of their activities.

8.10 Role of school leadership for the development of student cabinet

In developing a whole school approach to human rights education and democratic citizenship through student senates *or* councils, principals or head teachers play a significant role. According to the report of the Department of Education and Science, UK (2002), "the role of the school Principal is of central importance in the establishment and operation of a Student Council" (p. 10) since they can promote a school culture that recognises student's activities. They can work with teacher leaders and students, assist in the development of activities, and discuss the role and functions of student councils (Department of Education and Science, UK, 2002). Osler and Starkey (2010) say that "in order for young people to claim their right to express a view on matters which may affect them at school, teachers and school principals need to provide a space or opportunity for them to do so" (p. 105). It is also evident in the Bangladeshi context that school leaders can improve the school environment and learning outcomes (Salahuddin, 2012).

The teachers and members of cabinet acknowledged that the cooperation and contribution of the head teacher was very valuable for the implementation of different activities. Reba supported the focus of the action research as she recognized the importance of human rights education professional learning. Before the action research began, she was willing to acknowledge her own lack of understanding, saying: "I did not have sound knowledge of student cabinets since I had not read the policy deeply and this is a recent initiative by the ministry". However, her views after we worked with the cabinet was that:

> Young students are the future of the country as well as leaders. If they are being prepared for their roles and responsibilities, not only the schools and the students, but also the country will benefit. Based on my current observations, I can say that student cabinets could be change makers for every school if they receive sufficient support from us. I recommend that every school authority, particularly the head teacher, should support their activities.

8.11 Achievements in developing education *for* human rights: next steps for the student cabinet

It is evident that to some extent 'education *for* human rights' was developed through the student cabinet in the school. While it was inactive in the school before this study, the members began to participate in and lead school activities, and to know what could be achieved. But they had not yet reached the point where they were engaged in the wider local community and there was potential for further development.

International literature on HRE advocates for more student voice, participation and leadership in promoting 'education *for* human rights' in schools (Amnesty International, 2012; Holdsworth & Jones, 2006; Holdsworth, 2013; 2019; Osler & Starkey, 2010; United Nations Human Rights Council, 2011;). Holdsworth (2013) argues that student representative bodies are most effective when students are engaged in authentic and significant issues of concern to the school and wider community, in researching issues, reporting findings, and taking-action to make changes. He adds that while elected student councils can play a key role as representatives who express the views of other students from across the school views to teachers and school leaders, it is also important for *all students* to take-action *for* human rights. Holdsworth (2013) says students can "do this as part of their school studies, recognising it as a learning approach as well as a leadership approach" (p. 27). He advocates for a whole school approach to student participation that is strongly linked to citizenship education in schools that can promote the development of active and informed young local and global citizens in schools.

Jensen and Schnack (2006) argue that for all students to be active, participatory citizens, they should be able to develop "action competence" that includes these key elements:

1. Development of social skills, such as the ability to cooperate and articulate a point of view.

2. Building of coherent knowledge.

3. The motivation and commitment to resolve the issue under investigation, together with the capacity to envisage how particular conditions or situations might look in the future.

4. Development of ideas, visions and perceptions about their future lives and active citizenship in society. Envisaging alternate and future worlds can be considered as a critical component of being action competent.

5. Taking concrete action as part of in-school learning so that young people's reflections, values, knowledge and action are valued within the school and wider community.

Holdsworth (2010) points out that "while the role of young people in society has changed dramatically, schools have remained relatively fixed in the assumptions they make about young people and society, and about the responsibilities of schools" (p. 850). Beauty, Shumi and Reba agreed that the overall roles of school are fixed, which include the completion of syllabus and a focus on students' examinations result rather than creating citizens who possess desired knowledge, skills and values. All of them also agreed that schools have minimal opportunities to changes their roles within the existing education system as Kabir and Islam (2019) claim, "school autonomy is not evident and teachers' voice are not valued … they are rarely considered in the schools' operation" (p. 217). However, what can be achieved is the planned approach to building HRE that includes contemporary issues, youth voice and engaging teaching and learning strategies that motivate students and ensure their learning.

As Beauty was the assigned teacher for the student cabinet, she commented on why it was difficult for the school to go further, stating that:

> We implemented HR lessons in the classrooms using a rights-based approach and organized co-curricular activities. All of this was possible because we were reflecting the curriculum and textbook and had connections with current Bangladesh education policy. The cabinet manual lists the aims and objectives of the cabinet, the area of involvement in the school and some instructions about hold elections and operating the cabinet. While most of the schools are not doing anything except holding elections, what we have achieved is really significant and encouraging.
>
> It is not possible to consider students' voice and participation in the decision-making process of school. I think this is not possible in our country and government

> will not create this scope in the school since it will create many negative consequences in our context, for example students will misuse their power, and there would be a possibility of local political involvement in the school.

Her argument indicates that educational change, particularly changing the authoritarian pattern of the education system, is not easy, consistent with the comments Fullan (1993) who says:

> We have an educational system which is fundamentally conservative. The way that teachers are trained, the way that schools are organized, the way that the educational hierarchy operates, and the way that education is treated by political decision-makers results in a system that is more likely to retain the status quo than to change. When change is attempted under such circumstances it results in defensiveness, superficiality or at best short-lived pockets of success. (p. 30)

While the Ministry of Education has developed a focus on creating enlightened young people who can contribute to the development of Bangladesh to attain the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (DSHE, 2019), which includes the objectives of education is "to ensure skills of high standard at different areas and levels of education so that learners can successfully compete in the global context" (Ministry of Education, 2010, p. 2), in the past, the school had very little opportunity to meet the global criteria of education *for* human rights. However, through the development of the student cabinet student voice and agency was improved. To attain the criteria of education *for* human rights demonstrated in the extensive global literature of HRE, specific policies and strategies for schools are essential which would not only provide detail guidelines for HRE but also provide space for schools to incorporate new ideas in the school context what might be beneficial for students, school and community.

8.12 Conclusion

I conclude that while the student cabinet was totally inactive and not well known to the general students and parents prior to action research in the Green Bird School, institutional supports through action research such as training for the cabinet members, instruction and

cooperation from the head teacher and teachers, recognition of cabinet members, and monitoring the activities of cabinet did ensure some forms of empowerment of the cabinet in the school. It was encouraging and inspiring since to some extent the cabinet began to work for the school community and showed their potential in improving their own lives and lives of fellow students in line with education *for* human rights. Considering that these changes are obviously significant, much more development is essential in developing education for human rights as illustrated in the global literature through the development of student representative bodies in schools in Bangladesh. Therefore, achieving education *for* human rights requires more development and further demonstration of youth voice and participation in the school decision-making process and much more democratization of schooling and student leadership. Policy formulations and ensuring practices in a deeper manner at school level are obvious requirements.

The findings have significant implications for schools, educators and policy makers involved in planning and implementing education *for* human rights through the development of student cabinets. Though the concept of 'student cabinet' is not new globally, its inception and implementation in the secondary schools in Bangladesh is a recent initiative. This could be a real empirical example for other schools where student cabinets or other student representative bodies have been enacted but not well developed. It showed how schools in Bangladesh and developing nations move forward in HRE in ways that empower youth. It is important to note that the policy makers should not expect to achieve the goals from any new initiatives in the schools like student cabinet if they cannot ensure that teachers and school authorities are well informed about the meaning and objectives of new initiatives as well as their roles and responsibilities.

The findings have also significant methodological implications. As educational research *for* human rights, this study showed how it examined the process of empowering students for human rights as well as ensured students' empowerment through the process. The process itself ensured students' voice and participation in the study and their school. It not only identified the skills and values for students' empowerment but also created some spaces for students' engagement for developing skills and values.

Chapter 9: Implementation of HRE: progress in one year

9.1 Introduction

This chapter explores evidence of progress in the implementation of HRE captured through follow up interviews one year after the completion of the action research in the Green Bird School. The findings showed that in spite of some challenges, substantial progress continuing to be achieved in education *about*, *through* and *for* human rights, leading to the creation of a developing culture of human rights in the school. Although the outcomes and impacts of new approaches were very similar to what was identified during the initial action research (see Chapters 6, 7 & 8), some further evidence of progress and activities were encouraging for HRE. What was particularly evident was the key role that Beauty and Shumi continued to play as 'teacher champions' (Miller & Liebermann, 1988). Kurtus, (2017) defines "'a champion' as a person who can achieve a difficult goal or overcome challenging obstacles" (para 1). The teachers worked collaboratively with me in achieving the implementation of new plans and approaches to HRE and in the following year, maintained their motivation, energy, and determination throughout the action research.

In this chapter, I analyse and discuss data collected from follow-up interviews with the two teachers and head teacher who were involved in the action research, using thematic analysis to examine transcripts of the interviews and field notes.

9.2 Follow up collaboration with the school

In planning to review the progress of action research one year on, I contacted Reba, Beauty and Shumi. They were all willing to be involved in reflecting on what had been achieved. Reba said, "I am sure that you will find further development of HRE in my school. We have continued to build on strategies commenced during the research. My teachers have also supported other teachers to implement HRE".

9.3 Significant progress of teachers' professional learning and practices of HRE

When I interviewed them Beauty, Shumi and Reba provided a range of examples and explanations of what had been achieved. Beauty commented that her students are continuing to be motivated and engaged:

> Since the action research, I have continued to teach the grade 9 students in the 'Bangladesh and Global Studies' (BGS) subject, using the participatory approaches we developed through the action research. The students have been keen to keep discussing contemporary issues and their interest in human rights has been maintained. They have also asked for opportunities to participate in debates about topics. The students continue to be involved in talking about what we are learning, why and how; something that never happened before the study. While there are still limited internet resources, which means we can't access global resources, like Human Rights Watch, many of the students talk about things they have read online at home, and bring their views into their learning.

Beauty was also able to talk about how she was continuing to promote student involvement and voice:

> As we are living in the age of technology, students are not involved in writing letters and sending them through the postal service. I asked my students to write a letter to me exploring their thoughts about human rights issues and the school environment. I told them to find their own post office and then send the letter to me. You could not imagine how many lovely letters I received expressing their emotions and thoughts about human rights. I shared my idea on Facebook and it many teachers from different schools in Bangladesh put posts saying they would use the same strategy with their students.

Beauty was excited to show her own post on Facebook and different comments amongst teacher's communities where people acknowledged her innovative idea. Shumi also provided evidence of her progress and development in HRE in the school (discussed in Section 9.5).

9.4 Students' learning progress and development

Beauty found that when she compared her students' improvement in writing about HR after the implementation of new approaches to HRE during and after the action research, that there was a substantial progress in her students' learning evident in the Bangladesh and Global studies examination scripts. Beauty explained that:

> The students in grade 9 were my previous students in grade 7. I knew them very well and their writing ability in examinations. I was surprised when I examined their scripts this year. It was amazing! The topics of human rights I taught using new approaches were reported by the students very clearly and meaningfully. They answered questions using experiences and knowledge that I knew had been developed in our study. In some cases, I marked them 10 out of 10 and some students achieved very high grades (80% marks and above). This was unusual in the past for the science group students.

Beauty also said that her activities were highly appreciated by Reba over the year, and explained that this has had a significant impact on her being given leadership opportunities in the school:

> Following my progress and activities, the head teacher began to invite me to be more involved in school activities. Though in the past she involved more senior colleagues, now she involves me in working with leading the student cabinet and school sports. I also invite her to see what I'm doing when I use any innovative ideas in my teaching and she is very willing to come to observe.

9.5 Becoming teacher champions

As explained previously, Beauty and Shumi showed evidence of becoming 'teacher champions' (Kurtus, 2017; Miller & Liebermann, 1988) who not only improved their own approaches to HRE during the action research, but continued to implement new student focused practices and share them with colleagues. Shumi received recognition of her leadership through a 'teacher champion award' in the school in 2017, based on her teaching performance and leadership in HRE and other activities related to students' behaviour. She

said that the HRE action research was pivotal in her development. She explained that in 2017:

> Our head-teacher declared a prize for the best teacher in the school based on classroom activities, classroom environment, behaviour of the students and discipline. I became a champion based on my work with a grade 6 group. Since these students came from different primary schools, they were new to the school, so it was challenging at first to get them involved and to develop a positive climate for learning with them.
>
> But I drew on approaches to HRE I had learned from the action research. I now mostly use participatory approaches in my teaching, such as encouraging students to pose questions and problem solve. I often use pairs or group work to encourage students to share their ideas, even for short times in the classes to get them involved. I can manage my classroom and motivate my students more effectively than in the past as they respond so well to the less teacher-controlled instruction. Although it was an English class I taught, I discussed different values of human rights such as becoming a good citizen, and being aware of rights and responsibilities in the classroom and school. I consider that all of these are related to human rights as well as children's rights. Overall, my confidence has been increased significantly and the award is recognition of what I've achieved

9.6 Significant progress in the development of the student cabinet

In Chapter 8, I discussed how education *for* human rights was developed in the school through the development of the student cabinet in the first stage of the project. In follow up interviews with the head teacher, Reba explained the progress that had been achieved:

> After your departure from our school, a new student cabinet was elected by the vote of the students and I followed what we did together last year. Using the student cabinet manual, I divided them into different ministries (health, environment, and discipline). While last year we provided them with a badge with a common colour, this year we provided different colours for members of different ministries. I found

> them very proud and happy. It was also helpful for other students to recognise the cabinet members. They also gained experience of learning about what ministries are, about government roles, processes and responsibilities. Across the year I found that my cabinet members were very active since they led activities such as volunteering for the celebration of different national and international days, and campaigning for increasing environmental and health awareness among the students.

Beauty and Shumi noted that the members of student cabinet were more actively involved in different activities in the school than in the past. Beauty said that, "during the tiffin period, the cabinet members move around the school to inspire other students to keep the environment safe and healthy".

9.7 Significant progress on community empowerment

In Chapter 4, I discussed how members of the community, especially parents, had in the past very limited opportunities to get involved in the school. During the action research, steps were taken to get parents more involved and empowered. The follow-up review identified that parental involvement had been increased in the school, since parents were invited to discuss issues that affected students' lives, including academic issues.

Beauty said that generally teachers lacked information about the students and their learning needs, especially grade 6 students when they were newcomers from different primary schools. It was decided that teachers could meet with their parents, to meet their needs better and to solve issues such as truancy by sharing information, discussing issues and finding solutions. Beauty explained that:

> During and after our research our head teacher realised that parental involvement should be increased. Therefore, she made some changes to organise meetings with the parents of all grades' students and special meetings with parents of students identified as problematic or inappropriate in their behaviour. She also advised all class teachers to keep regular communication with the parents.

9.8 Influences and motivation on school leadership

The evidence of Reba's increased leadership of the student cabinet, discussed above shows her commitment to planning for greater student voice and action in the cabinet and more widely in the school. She said that:

> I understand that the concept of a student cabinet is good if they have real roles. If the activity is limited to elections only, it is meaningless. I also understand that to make it really meaningful, the head-teacher has a significant role. If the school leader is involved with the students, motivates them, engages them, and monitors them, they can do many things. I meet with the Ministry of environment and discuss their roles and observe their activities regularly.

Beauty and Shumi said that at the beginning of our research the head teacher was quite unsure about our activities and progress, but over time she became motivated by our initiatives. I also saw photos of cabinet activities with the head teacher on the school Facebook page. Since the head teacher was very concerned that the action research should not affect the completion of the curriculum, it was important to seek her reflective views. Reba said that the research activities we had implemented:

> …were relevant to our school and curriculum. Nothing was irrelevant. The positive side is that we built our children's understanding of their rights and responsibilities in the classroom and through, the student cabinet. I am really inspired by the initiatives.

9.9 Development of teachers' professional learning community (PLC) and culture of HRE

As discussed in the literature review, teachers play fundamental roles in promoting HRE (Bajaj, 2011a) and teacher education can be a means to developing teachers' knowledge, attitudes and skills related to HRE (Osler & Starkey, 1996, 2010). However, scholars also argue that teachers' professional learning is not static, but rather should be considered a continuous process (Crosswell & Beutel, 2013; Hill, 2007). Sustainability of an innovation and change in schools requires continuous professional learning which can be developed

through the concept of a teachers' Professional Learning Community (PLC). This is well established in the literature (Cowans, 2005; DuFour, 2004; DuFour & Eaker, 2009; DuFour & Mattos, 2013; Hord, 1997; Hord, 2009; Lee, Zhang, & Yin, 2011; Stoll et al., 2006). PLCs can be defined as a structure where there is ''an ongoing process in which educators work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve'' (DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, & Many, 2006, p. 11)

Hord (2009) argues that a PLC is an ongoing learning platform where passionate and committed teachers "come together in groups in order to interact in meaningful activities to learn deeply with colleagues about an identified topic, to develop shared meaning, and identify shared purposes related to the topic" (p. 41). She points out that PLCs involve the development of "shared beliefs, values and visions of what schools should be" (p. 41) and that for change and improvement in schools to occur, other factors such as supportive leadership, time and resources, collective learning based on students' needs and action on feedback must be in place. Cowans (2005) claims that PLCs offer "a fresh and invigorating approach to improving school performance through collaborative effort, ongoing professional learning and increased teacher involvement in the running of the school" (p. 4). He adds that when teachers belong to a PLC in schools they "seek to improve student achievement by focusing less on how they teach and more on how students learn-a somewhat specious distinction, along the lines of: teachers don't teach subjects, they teach students" (p. 3).

Reba, Beauty and Shumi volunteered and participated in the action research project to be involved in an intensive period of professional learning and to implement and develop education *about, through* and *for* human rights in the Green Bird School. They did operate as a small PLC with their structured, collaborative and continuous efforts focused on improvement. But we were concerned that the professional learning of other teachers who did not participate was essential to developing a sustainable culture of HRE in the school. So, at the conclusion of the action research, Beauty, Shumi and Reba committed to sharing their learning and new practices among the other teachers in the school.

Their first initiative was inviting all teachers to see and discuss the HR Wall Magazine created by the grade 7 and 9 students as part of the action research (see Chapter 7). Many

teachers showed interest in knowing more about the HRE study, and asked Beauty, Shumi and Reba to share their experiences and learning. They organised a two-hour session in the teachers' meeting room followed by a lunch where we discussed the teaching approaches with their colleagues, which was highly appreciated. Beauty, Shumi and Reba then had further meetings after the action research to share practice.

During the follow up visit to Green Bird School, I found that the teachers and the head teacher had formed a PLC as they were sharing their knowledge and understanding with their colleagues and working together towards developing a vision for HRE in the school. This was consistent with Hord's (2009) view that a PLC dedicated to learning about and improving practices in the school. Both classroom teachers saw that their activities created examples of HRE for other teachers in the school to follow. Many of the teachers began to participate in different activities organised by Beauty and Shumi. For example, Beauty explained: "when I organised a debate in the classroom, Reba and other teachers joined with us, especially those who had no class on that time". Shumi said that "other teachers were very interested to know how I conducted lessons with students' engagement and participation since I became a 'teacher champion' in the school". Reba's support, commitment and overall leadership significantly influenced the development of the PLC (Hord, 2009). Shumi said that, "Reba repeatedly advised and encouraged other teachers to follow our examples, monitored teachers' activities in the classrooms and encouraged teachers and students' good work".

However, Reba said, "although the teachers showed strong commitment to work as team for developing a culture of HRE in the school, there are challenges," including limited time and resources in the school. She commented that, "Teachers are very busy completing the syllabus and preparing the students for examinations. However, there is no doubt that the use of more active learning strategies and focus on topics that interest the students, does motivate them to be better learners in all their school work".

Beauty and Shumi showed dedication to the idea of a PLC and its further development in the school. However, while they also acknowledged the challenges mentioned by Reba, they had developed understanding of Fullan's (1993) view that "individualism and collectivism must have equal power" and that "every person is a change agent" (p. 22).

They agreed with me that for all their efforts in developing HRE, they needed to bring other teachers in their school into their next steps.

Since having the characteristics of a PLC was identified as essential to developing a culture of HRE in the school, we tried to explore how the PLC could be further developed and sustained. Fullan (1993) argues that creating educational change is complex process and having "connections with the wider environment is critical for success" (p. 22). I have already discussed (Section 9.3) that Beauty began to share her new learning and HRE practices in the Green Bird School with the wider teacher community. She argued that:

> It is important to share my new learning and activities of students with other teachers, because we all know that human rights abuses are continuing and through education we can make a difference. We can also share with other schools, to help them as well. We need to remember that HR is a part of our formal curriculum, so we are obligated to teach it".

Beauty said that, "already we have shared some examples of the activities of the student cabinet with other schools through Facebook. If we could receive more media support, it would be spread". She provided a practical example showing her own published local newspaper article focusing on the significance of developing the student cabinet in the schools to build future generations. She also showed another newspaper article she had written focusing on recommendations to government to increase teachers' facilities to improve the quality of education. Both Shumi and Reba had similar opinions about the role of media and appreciated Beauty's dynamic role in creating examples. She clearly showed how the development of HRE in one school could be disseminated among others and have implications among the broader community.

While only Beauty and Shumi were directly involved in the action research project, the dissemination of new approaches to HRE among the teachers in Green Bird School was essential to developing a culture of HRE. Reba encouraged the expansion of Beauty and Shumi's professional learning, motivation and commitment and school leadership developed through the action research to other teachers in her school.

9.10 The challenge of creating education change

Some other challenges were identified during the follow up interviews, so in this section, I report on how these could be addressed to bring changes in the school for HRE.

A key challenge is that across the school, there was insufficient subject knowledge about human rights amongst teachers. Beauty, Shumi and Reba pointed out that teachers lacked HRE subject knowledge since most of them had no professional learning in this area. Reba saw the development of Beauty and Shumi as a result of the collaborative action research and knew that professional learning based on building content knowledge, planning, structured and shared learning and reflection cycles were all effective. So, she was willing to support further professional learning.

Another significant challenge that impacted on the implementation and development of HRE was that the published curriculum and associated teaching resources lacked a contemporary focus. Teachers found it difficult to select and incorporate appropriate content and issues of HR for the school context. While the teachers were able to find stories and information online that provided meaningful examples to engage the students in HR issues, they had limited time and access to web-based resources.

In the follow up interviews, it became clear that a number of factors identified by Fullan (1993) as being critical in achieving change had evolved in the school during the action research and in the following year. Fullan (1993) contends that schools should have a "moral purpose to make a difference in the lives of students regardless of background, and to help produce citizens who can live and work productively in increasingly dynamically complex societies" (p. 4). It was evident during our study, that Beauty, Shumi and Reba demonstrated a strong commitment to the moral purpose of HRE by first volunteering to commit to the three-month study, and then, in spite of the challenges, continuing to share and develop further HRE in the school. Fullan (1993) identified eight aspects of a change paradigm that he sees as essential in the change process that I found useful in analysing and reflecting on the study:

> (1) you can't mandate what matters; (2) change is a journey, not a blueprint; (3) problems are our friends; (4) vision and strategic planning come later; (5)

> individualism and collectivism must have equal power; (6) neither centralization nor decentralization works by itself; (7) connections with the wider environment is critical for success; and (8) every person is a change agent. (pp. 21-22)

Fullan (1993) argues that "you can't mandate what matters" (p. 21), since teachers need to believe in the change if they are to commit to building knowledge, skills and shared values. The Bangladeshi government has committed to HRE. It is in the curriculum and in addition, the introduction of student cabinets shows that the Ministry of Education is committed to both classroom-learning and student participation in democratic practice and action.

Fullan (1993) also says that "change is a journey, not a blueprint". Being involved in my study provided Green Bird School with an opportunity to begin to focus more deeply on HRE, but how we worked together evolved as a journey week by week as we co-planned, reflected and moved ahead. Many significant changes happened in the school during the action research, but as Beauty said, "the head teacher can support and monitor teachers' activities, advise teachers to implement rights-based teaching and learning approaches, but cannot ensure changes in the school if the teachers are not committed to change". As Fullan (1993) states, "vision and strategic planning come later". The fact that Reba, Beauty and Shumi's understanding of HRE had grown, and their commitment to be "change agents" was strong, meant that they could continue to plan to embed HRE further in the school.

My role as researcher was consistent with Fullan's (1993) view that "connections with the wider environment is critical for success in creating change". I commenced the research in the school as an external expert with knowledge and expertise in HRE developed in the UK and Australia, and also as a Bangladeshi national citizen, I have contextual understanding and a realistic view about what change could and could not be achieved in the duration of the study. Fullan (1993) also adds that "productive educational change, like productive life itself, really is a journey that does not end" (p. 25). Although the development of HRE in the Green Bird School was encouraging, all collaborators agreed that the journey needed to be continued. We also agreed that the PLC should be extended to other staff, as I discussed in the previous section.

The third aspect of change that Fullan (1993) sees as essential is that “problems are our friends” (p. 25) arguing that:

> Too often change-related problems are ignored, denied, or treated as an occasion for blame and defence. Success in school change efforts is much more likely when problems are treated as natural, expected phenomena, and are looked for. Only by tackling problems can we understand what has to be done next in order to get what we want. Problems need to be taken seriously, not attributed to 'resistance' or the ignorance or wrong-headedness of others. (p. 26)

Before the commencement of the action research, I identified that the head teacher and teachers were defensive about the lack of HRE in the school. But they saw through being involved in the action research that while change is hard to achieve, they could develop strategies for change. The follow up interviews demonstrated that the teachers changed their mind set to very positive views. Beauty pointed out that:

> I know that we have challenges and we cannot bring radical changes within a very short time. I also know that there are many challenges in the Bangladesh context. But my contribution to the school and my professionalism has significantly increased and Reba acknowledges this.

Beauty commented on the challenge of large class sizes. She said that “most schools have this common challenge including our school. I minimized this challenge during and after our action research where we worked together with patience, preparation, and planning”. Beauty admitted that “challenges are natural in our context, but I needed to do something meaningful within this situation”.

Fullan explains the fourth aspect arguing that:

> Visions come later for two reasons. First, under conditions of dynamic complexity one needs a good deal of reflective experience before one can form a plausible vision. Vision emerges from, more than it precedes, action. Even then it is always provisional. Second, shared vision, which is essential for success, must evolve

> through the dynamic interaction of organizational members and leaders. This takes time and will not succeed unless the vision-building process is somewhat open-ended. Visions coming later does not mean that they are not worked on. Just the opposite. They are pursued more authentically while avoiding premature formalization. Visions come later because the process of merging personal and shared visions takes time. (p. 28)

Fullan's argument is consistent with the development of the PLC for creating change in HRE at Greenbird School. I have discussed how two individual teachers and the head teacher developed their professional learning and commitment through action research first, and the PLC and vision of HRE began to evolve.

Fullan (1993) explains the sixth aspect; "neither centralization nor decentralization works" (p. 22) by arguing that "both to-down and bottom-up strategies are necessary" (p. 22). One of the significant challenges identified early in this study for creating HRE was that the school was following only a rigid top-down approach; implementing the Ministry's order for all government secondary schools in Bangladesh to introduce HRE, according the curriculum and policies of the Ministry. Kabir and Islam (2019) identified the fact that in Bangladesh, "school autonomy is not evident and teachers' voice are not valued …indeed they are rarely considered in the schools' operation" (p. 217). But the teachers did not seek a full "bottom-up approach", so we reflected the curriculum in our approaches, and recommended flexibility in incorporating and implementing ideas, for example, focusing on recent issues of human rights violations in classroom discussions. Our strategy reflected Fullan's (1993) idea that:

> Put differently, the centre and local units need each other. You can't get anywhere by swinging from one dominance to another. What is required is a different two-way relationship of pressure, support and continuous negotiation. It amounts to simultaneous top-down bottom-up influence. (p. 38)

Bringing meaningful changes in HRE in schools is, as Fullan (1993) argues, 'a complex process' and addressing one single aspect of the change paradigm will not succeed.

9.11 Recommendations for schools, policy makers and government

In their reflections one year on, the teachers and head teacher made some new comments and recommendations based on their progress in implementing new approaches and responding to challenges. They argued that the government should develop more clear policies for HRE that appropriately recognise contemporary human rights issues. They said that the role of all stakeholders in the schools; families, students, teachers, the head teacher and the community role should be part of a visionary statement for HRE. In the next section I discuss other recommendations related to HRE policy and practices based on discussions with the teachers, head teacher about the progress of HRE in the Green Bird School.

9.11.1 Creating active and participatory citizens

Both the teachers and head teacher recommended making space for the students to practice HR in their daily lives. The head teacher argued that creating active and participatory citizens with a full sense of human values is more important rather than just producing certificate-oriented people. She added that the government should have some strong policies and strategies for the school to make it happen. She also said that "I have an opinion regarding our education. I do not want many brilliant people, rather I want many good people for our society. We should think about it". She observed the impact of students' involvement in different HRE activities in the school and recommended more activities for students' involvement in citizenship activities and emphasizing the values of human rights. Beauty and Shumi agreed with Reba's views and made some other recommendations. For example, Beauty said: "The Ministry of Education ordered the development of student cabinets in schools, so I would like to recommend making HRE compulsory for secondary schools to ensure it is implemented". The head teacher also recommended monitoring and supervision teachers in the ways they implement HRE professional learning.

9.11.2 Involvement of families with school and their children

Beauty, Shumi and the head teacher agreed that families should be aware of their children's rights and responsibilities. Reba was concerned that sometimes families motivated wrong student behaviour and cited examples where "some families influenced their children to become cabinet members by using money and power". She said that:

Before becoming head teacher at this school, I worked in another government school in Dhaka city. When the student cabinet election process started, I found that some cabinet candidates were distributing money among the students to get votes. I understood that the political culture of their parents influenced them since they showed attitudes learned from their family. It was like our political election. However, the student cabinet should not be like that. The purpose of the student cabinet is for the welfare of students. The government should create awareness among the families. Some people do not know anything about human rights or child rights. Since this issue need to be addressed from root level, the government should increase publicity and information for parents.

9.11.3 Encouraging more collaboration and practitioner research

In the Bangladeshi context, it is not easy to change education policy and curriculum. For example, the current curriculum was only modified and revised 16 years after the previous version (NCTB, 2012). But this study has found that change could be achieved in teaching strategies at Green Bird School without modification of policy and curriculum. However, the impetus for change was our collaborative action research study. It required teachers' critical reflections on their own practices and support from school leadership. Motivation and commitment from teachers and the head teacher were essential. It can be argued that encouraging more collaboration and partitioner research could be an effective way of creating change in HRE in Bangladeshi schools, where policy modification or formulation for HRE is a lengthy and uncertain process.

9.12 Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that in spite of having many challenges, substantial progress was made in the implementation of HRE through action research. Teachers' professional learning through the implementation of education *about, through* and *for* human rights significantly influenced the development of HRE and a culture of human rights in the school. The teacher professional learning developed as part of the action research, and the continuing commitment and motivation of the teachers and the head teacher influenced the further evolution of a professional learning community. Their active involvement and participation in promoting HRE increased over the period. While bringing educational change is a complex process and challenges are constant, this study showed how

meaningful changes could be achieved. The follow-up findings confirmed the validity of this research and implications of findings.

Chapter 10: Conclusion

10.1 Introduction and overview of the study

This final chapter provides a discussion of the key findings and overall conclusions of the study. The implications of the findings and recommendations for HRE policy, practice and teacher professional learning are also discussed and possibilities suggested for future research.

The purpose of this study was to contribute new knowledge and understanding of how HRE practices in schools can be developed to improve teachers' and students' engagement with learning in this field. More specifically, the research aimed to investigate how pedagogies *about, through* and *for* human rights education *can* be developed in secondary schools in Bangladesh. The most recognized international framework of HRE 'education *about, through* and *for* human rights' derived from the *Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training* (2011) adopted by the UNHRC (2011) was used as one of the conceptual frameworks in this study. This was well grounded in international literature on HRE (For example, Evans, 2006; Holdsworth, Stafford, Stokes, & Tyler, 2001; Holdsworth, 2013; Jennings, 2006; Mihr & Schmitz, 2007; Osler & Starkey, 2005, 2008; Tibbitts, 2002). I would like to recommend making HRE compulsory for secondary schools so it is implemented. This work was important, because one of the aims of this study was to establish agency of students in classrooms through teaching and learning practices (education *through* human rights) and through democratic involvement of students through classroom representatives and a student cabinet, in line with the values of *critical pedagogy*. Fullan's (1993) research on educational change informed analysis of "the complexity of the change process" (p. 19) in the journey undertaken with school leaders, parents, teachers and students.

The human-rights based methodological approach was developed through the qualitative case study in the secondary school, and the tools of action research were used to enhance the teachers' professional learning about HRE.

In the first phase of this study, I developed understanding of current attitudes and practices involving human rights education (HRE) in the school, by examining the perceptions of students, teachers, the head teacher and parents. In the second phase, I led the development of new approaches to HRE through collaborative planning and participatory action research. In the final stage of this study, I reviewed the impact of the action research one year after the commencement of the research, through interviews with the head teacher and two classroom teachers who participated in the study.

The main research question and sub-questions explored in this study were**:**

Main question:

How can pedagogies for human rights education (HRE) be developed in secondary schools in Bangladesh?

Sub-questions:

1. How do teachers, students, the head teacher and parents perceive human rights education in a case study school?
2. How do teachers implement human rights education in teaching and learning practices?
3. How can the school develop new approaches to human rights education?
4. What is the influence on student learning of the development of new approaches to human rights education?
5. What are the challenges and issues in implementing human rights education in schools?

10.2 Practices in education *about, through* and *for* human rights: before the action research

In the first phase of the study I investigated how the teachers, students, head teacher and parents perceive human rights education in a case study school and how do teachers implement human rights education in teaching and learning practices?

Based on the findings, I concluded that the school did not have a recognized culture and practices for human rights education, except in minimal opportunities for discussion of

some human rights issues included in government provided textbooks for classroom learning. The head teacher in charge did not play a significant role in developing HRE, due to lack of understanding of specific policies and strategies for HRE. While classroom teachers had some limited understanding and positive attitudes towards the promotion of HRE, they lacked conceptual understanding and professional learning related to teaching and learning in this field. The teachers were working from textbooks, were not familiar with formal HR documents and seemed to be working from their own conceptualisation of HR and HRE which can have negative implications, consistent with the argument of Anamika (2017). She argues that "improper and limited understanding or misunderstanding of human rights on the part of the teachers can pose a danger to the successful implementation of human rights in the school setting" (Anamika, 2017, p. 121). What I found was that the limited understanding meant that human rights-based teaching and learning was largely absent in the classrooms and in the school.

The study also found that prior to the action research, teachers only approached human rights education using very traditional teacher centred lectures and reading from textbooks. Student's participation and opinions about their own human rights violations were not valued or listened to in and outside the classroom. A culture of remaining silent among the students in school and the wider society was clearly evident. Parents' involvement in the school was limited to discussion of public examination results, rather than important issues in society and the school community, focused on the lives of students. In spite of the government's recent initiatives in promoting practices of democratic participation and values through student cabinets, practising democracy inside the classroom and school community was limited to voting for the representatives. Although the teachers and head teacher showed a willingness to implement human rights-based education, they acknowledged their limited understanding and the challenges for its implementation.

A comprehensive and holistic approach to human rights education requires all the components: education *about*, *through* and *for* human rights, as article 2(2) of UNDHRET mandates (Struthers, 2015). The initial findings indicated that the school was not yet fulfilling the requirements except for some education *about* human rights. This clearly indicated the urgent need for teacher professional learning with integration of education *about*, *through* and *for* human rights.

Overall, the first phase of the case study showed that in spite of having supportive national policies for HR and HRE in Bangladesh, and global obligations as a signatory country for HRE, this was not enough to for the government to ensure that HRE with a rights-based approach was mandated. Moreover, in terms of power dynamics, the school was found to be authoritarian rather than collaborative and cooperative, which was not in line with the theory of critical pedagogy (Freire, 1985) where the chief concern is empowerment of both teachers and students.

10.3 Developing education *about, through* and *for* human rights in the school

In this section, I discuss key findings and conclusions related to the development of new approaches to HRE and the influence on student learning of these approaches.

10.3.1 Teachers' professional learning and development

Developing teachers' professional learning through the workshops and action research played pivotal roles in building their capacity to plan and implement HRE. As the teachers built their own knowledge and understanding of the fundamental concepts of human rights, and resources available, they were better able to plan and conduct effective HRE in their classrooms. Findings suggested that the development of teachers' sound understanding was subsequently a catalyst for the implementation of education first, *about* human rights, and then education *through* and *for* human rights. In my follow up interviews a year after the study, teachers showed their commitment and capacity to continue utilising their learning, as they were able to keep building their strategies because of their deeper understanding of HRE.

None of the participants had ever been involved in action research as a professional learning method before, yet many other studies have identified how powerful these tools can be in improving education (Gardner & Hammett, 2014; Goodlad, 1994; Grossman, Wineburg & Woolworth, 2001; Mertler, 2013).

Mertler (2013) argues that professional learning about the methodology is essential for teachers in conducting action research. Mertler (2013) notes that at first, teachers "tend to

be intimidated by the thought of conducting their own classroom research" (p. 41), so they should receive formal training in action research by someone with knowledge and experience the process. I found that Beauty and Shumi really appreciated the opportunity to be involved in cycles of planning, reflecting and planning. They were prepared to spend time making connections between human rights documents including the CRC and the Bangladeshi HRE curriculum and in exploring resources they could use in their lesson plans, so this dedication was a key aspect of their success.

It was evident that the workshops built the teachers' conceptual understanding of HRE and increased their confidence. The head teacher said, "This is the first time our teachers have received in-house training where they could discuss real HRE scenarios in our school and ways of further improvement".

I concluded that the teacher professional learning that this study provided was the most influential factor in implementing and developing HRE in the school. The workshops organised at the beginning of the collaboration and the powerful nature of participatory action research over the three-month period all combined to develop highly professional interactions in the action research.

10.3.2 Impact of new approaches on students' learning and development

Findings from the study indicate that through the implementation of the human rights lessons, students' learning was significantly enhanced. While both groups of students showed little understanding of fundamental rights before the lessons, their knowledge and concerns about HR grew rapidly as they developed understanding about both their own rights and the rights of others. Students' learning was also deepened through discussion of human rights issues that were relevant to their own local context and lives, so the lessons had authenticity and relevance to them. Students were particularly interested in our exploration of film resources that explore human rights concerns in Dhaka, in rural communities and the wider world during classroom lessons.

A further layer of the impact of new approaches on students' learning is related to activating students' voice, agency, their social action competence and capacity to be participatory citizens in communities. This focus has been given significant attention in

promoting human rights education (Jensen & Schnack, 1994; 2006, UN General Assembly 1989; UNHRC, 2011; UNICEF, 2007). While there were many classroom lessons taught that encouraged students to speak out and express their views, there was also progress made on this priority in the work that we did in empowering the student cabinet, through improving their roles and awareness of their responsibilities. The teachers had not thought about activating students' voice and agency before the workshops but when they were involved in co-planning and preparation through the action research, they were able to successfully ensure students' voice and participation in the classroom. Their professional learning and development reduced the gap identified at the start of this study between policy and practice. The participatory action research enabled them to implement changes and motivated them to make it happen.

Another area of focus in the study was on improving inclusion and equal opportunity in the classroom as recommended for children's human rights education in the literature and HRE documents (Ministry of Education, 2010; Osler & Starkey, 2005; UN General Assembly, 1989). Findings suggested that a number of strategies introduced by the teachers enabled improvement such as providing opportunities for all students to ask and answer questions, and ensuring all students' involvement in classroom activities (including through group work, and peer learning). But a key priority was encouraging teachers to check to see that there were equal opportunities for boys and girls to participate, and encouraging students to get involved in classroom activities who were often unwilling to participate. The teachers found that when they showed positive appreciation and acknowledgement of participants and their activities, through saying well done, great work, and giving feedback on students' views, these strategies helped to establish more inclusive teaching and learning.

Creative co-curricular activities, such as learning through the production of the wall magazine, debates and role playing, and the development of positive dimensions of teacher-student relationships were also found to be very effective in ensuring students' voice and participation. Further findings indicated that the co-curricular activities were successful because students gained ideas from the HRE lessons conducted in the classrooms, including the concept of human rights and different issues of human rights violation in Bangladesh such as child labour, early marriage. The relationships were built since teachers showed that they cared about students' rights in the classroom.

Education *for* human rights requires students' voice and participation in decision-making process in the school (Holdsworth, 2005; 2013). Jensen and Schnack (2006) argue that this requires the development of 'social action competence', and Henderson and Tudball (2016) agree that "this concept emphasizes the appropriate use of knowledge and action to achieve an outcome" (p. 3). In addition, they suggest that "young people need to learn about the issues, and be involved in actions for change" (p. 14). Findings suggested that through the action research, substantial development of the school cabinet was achieved. They became more involved with all students in the school as their representatives, and as a link to the class representative system that was already in place, so the cabinet was able to begin to take on meaningful roles such as working for the improvement of the school environment. The factors that influenced the developments were training for the cabinet members, positive relationships, cooperation and regular involvement of teachers with cabinet members, as well as the development of a culture of appreciating and embracing students' leadership and activities (McNae, 2015). However, findings also suggested that creating changes in the student cabinet during the study was challenging due to the nature of existing policy and examination-focused education system where the school has very limited scope to implement new ideas beyond the prescribed policy and curriculum. Our study found that achieving education *for* human rights requires further development and further demonstrations of youth voice and participation in the school decision-making process and more focus on practice of democratization of schooling and student leadership. However, it was beyond the scope of this study to achieve all that is possible in empowering youth voice through student governance.

10.3.3 Developing a professional learning community (PLC)

Hord (2009) argues that a professional learning community (PLC) is an ongoing learning platform where passionate and committed teachers "come together in groups in order to interact in meaningful activities to learn deeply with colleagues about an identified topic, to develop shared meaning, and identify shared purposes related to the topic" (p. 41). She also points out that PLCs involve "shared beliefs, values and visions of what schools should be" (p. 41) and that for change and improvement in schools to occur, other factors such as supportive leadership, time and resources, collective learning based on students' needs, and action on feedback must be in place. My findings indicated that the teachers

and the head teacher formed a professional learning community through the action research, because during our collaborative work and in the year after the initial study, they were sharing their knowledge and understanding with their colleagues and working together towards developing a vision for HRE that was consistent with Hord's (2009) view of a PLC.

I concluded that while the teachers' made substantial progress in implementing and developing education *about, through* and *for* human rights, further involvement of other teachers and the wider school community in the learning process would be essential in order to create further change, and the full development of a culture of HRE. Fullan (1993) explained in his theory of 'change forces' that "every person is a change agent" (p. 39). He argues that changes having "connection with the wider community is critical" (p. 38) and while "teachers still need to focus on making a difference with individual students, they must also work on school-wide change, to create the working conditions that will be most effective in helping all students learn" (p.38-39). It became clear to me that through the further development of the PLC, focused on whole school improvement in HRE, more progress would be achieved.

10.3.4 Theory informing practices of human rights education

My thinking about the development of HRE in this study was informed by Freire's (1970) work on critical pedagogy in varied ways. For example, my research was situated within the socially critical paradigm, so the purpose of my inquiry was "to challenge the status quo" (Macdonald et al., 2002). We changed existing teaching and learning practices and the action research challenged existing power relations between teachers and students. We also promoted democratic approaches as a method of teaching, rather than just as a goal of education (Tsolidis, 2001). We saw how learners could rediscover power within themselves to act upon situations as subjects rather than as objects to be acted upon, and had evidence of both students and teachers having agency and engagement within the classroom (Nazzari et al., 2005). A core focus of critical pedagogy is on "the humanization of teachers and students" (Monchinski, 2008, p.122). The findings of my study showed that teachers began to respect students' rights and value their views and perspectives in the classroom through the practices of rights-based teaching and learning approaches and the

focus on authentic human rights issues in the Bangladeshi community that students cared about.

Monchinski (2008) argues that "critical pedagogy is a praxis" (p. 1), with praxis constituting "action and reflection" (Freire, 1985, p. 155). Monchinski (2008) also points out that "praxis is thinking about what and why you're going to do before you do it and then reflecting on what you did, how you did it, and how it turned out" (p. 1). Reba, Beauty, Shumi and I had many discussions about the focus of our work in developing HRE in the school and genuinely valued our collaboration, action and reflection. As Monchinski (2008) argues, action and reflection "is a relationship that is always in progress, involving a constant give-and-take, a back-and-forth dialectical informing of practice by theory and theory by practice" (p. 1).

10.4 Future challenges to be addressed

In this section I discuss the key findings related to the final question related to the challenges and issues in implementing human rights education in schools. Being a socially critical researcher (Macdonald et al., 2002) and using the lenses of Freire's (1970) work on critical pedagogy. I wanted to conduct a study that would challenge existing authoritarian patterns in schools, and move beyond text book approaches to HRE through establishing agency of teachers to be able to build a social justice focus and actively engage students in the classroom in exploring HR issues that were important to them in their own lives. The aim of the research was also to empower all stakeholders including students, teachers and parents in the school community in our development of HRE. But the study did identify key challenges related to HRE that require further work and research.

One key challenge is the availability of time for HRE and space in the curriculum. Teachers in the case study school are not normally involved in collaborative planning because the text books become the pseudo-curriculum and team planning is not common practice. Yet there is a need to involve the whole teaching community in this work.

Mertler (2013) also sees managing time as a common issue in action research studies, because teachers are always busy. I found that at Green Bird School the teachers had many different responsibilities and both assigned and unassigned activities that included sudden

meetings with the head teacher, conducting lessons for absent teachers, as well as dealing with students' and parents' issues. Since I was keen to ensure completion of my study and was aware that 'time must be created, carved out, set aside" (Mertler, 2013, p. 41), I had to be flexible with the teachers. This included re-scheduling meeting times where required, and meeting on weekends and school holidays if this suited the teachers, in order to move forward. I was aware that collaboration with two teachers was more manageable than if I had been working with additional classroom teachers and student groups, but I acknowledge the limitations of the case and cannot generalise from the findings.

Another significant challenge identified in this study was the traditional beliefs of teachers, students and parents. My findings indicated that when they were more concerned about examination results as the main indicator of success rather than developing students' knowledge, skills and attitudes about human rights and societal concerns, they were less supportive of the project. They were curious to see how collaboration would benefit students' results. In addition, they all asked for a guarantee from me that being involved in the study would not have a bad impact on the students' results or create stress for the teachers who participated in the study. The significant reason that contributed to this challenge was the nature of curriculum, as Thornton (2006) argues that in the Bangladesh context, teachers have very limited autonomy in the classroom and their teaching is highly controlled by the centralised curriculum and textbooks. However, when I was able to explain to them that the planning of the content was based on existing curriculum and had strong connections with the school syllabus, this challenge was reduced. In addition, I was able to convince them about the positive aspects of this collaboration in promoting students' engagement in HRE; a point that was actually achieved in the study.

Being an outsider and researcher, it was not easy at first to establish collaboration with the school. However, I made sure that the stakeholders saw that I was passionate about HRE, was patient, and committed to positive change. I was willing to understand the local context and the practical situations, and ensured that I was flexible and adaptable to ensure success and develop the collaboration. These factors were influential in working with the teachers and school community. Demonstrating these personal characteristics was important in overcoming challenges.

Although the findings showed substantial progress in the development of education *about, through* and f*or* human rights, several challenges were blockers in the development of HRE. A key challenge is that across the school, there was insufficient subject knowledge about human rights amongst teachers. However, this study showed that when the teachers were willing to engage in ongoing professional learning, often in their own time, and when they are provided with engaging resources and collaborative planning, with expert external support, change is possible.

Another significant challenge that impacted on the implementation and development of HRE was the limited curriculum that lacked a contemporary focus and associated teaching resources. Teachers found it difficult to select and incorporate appropriate content and issues of HR for the school context. Findings suggested that to build effective HRE, education change is essential. In the follow up interviews, it became clear that a number of factors identified by Fullan (1993) as being critical in achieving change had not yet evolved in the school. Fullan argues that there is an "essential partnership of moral purpose with change agentry" (p. 4). The teachers and head teacher involved in the study did demonstrate a strong commitment to the moral purpose of HRE, in spite of the challenges, but their sense of purpose needed to be further shared and developed across the school community.

Before the commencement of the action research, I identified that the head teacher and teachers were defensive about the lack of HRE in the school. But they saw through being involved in the action research that change is hard. However, they were prepared to develop strategies for change, so collaboration was generated. The follow up interviews demonstrated that the teachers changed their mindset from negative approaches to very positive views. They saw that problems are natural, but can be tackled. The head teacher acknowledged the power of the action research and that the attitudes of Beauty and Shumi could be followed by other teachers to bring meaningful changes in HRE in the school. I concluded that bringing meaningful changes in HRE in schools is, as Fullan (1993) argues, 'a complex process'.

10.5 Implications for policy, practice, and research

10.5.1 Implication for policy and practice

This study demonstrated that being a signatory to international declarations of human rights and having a supportive policy for HRE (for example, the National Education Policy of Bangladesh, 2010) was not enough to ensure the development of HRE in the Green Bird School in Bangladesh. Deficiencies of comprehensive and consistent policies and strategies for HRE in schools and lack of targeted professional learning for teachers creates obstacles for the practice and development of education *about, through* and *for* human rights.

The findings of this study demonstrate the possibilities for implementing and developing new approaches to HRE in schools. For schools where HRE is not well developed, targeted action research can support professional learning, but having committed school leaders and teachers is significant in this process. This study identified that teachers developing new knowledge and understanding of core concepts, and access to appropriate resources and teaching models are all of critical importance in implementing new approaches. In addition, having appropriate professional learning to support teachers helps them to become more active, engaged and empowered. Overall, this research challenged authoritarian approaches and didactic teaching in the school and achieved some progress in building new and more positive dimensions in relationships between teachers and students, and the school and community.

10.5.2 Implications for research

For the successful implementation of human rights education, UNESCO (2011) emphasises the need "to link research and policy in a way that enables not only the identification of common problems and challenges, but also the design of practical and effective solutions" (p. 15). This study is an example of research that not only identified problems and challenges, but also achieved improvement and practical solutions through the action research. It shows how a human rights-based methodological framework based on 'research *about, through* and *for* human rights' was developed and utilised to investigate HRE as well as to develop new approaches. The study showed how practitioner-research can lead change.

Most importantly, this study showed how this research *about, through* and *for* human rights is itself rights-based and participatory in nature, since it ensured the voice and active participation of all participants throughout the research. It examined the existing situation of HRE in the case study school in Bangladesh, and how schools can develop education *about, through* and *for* human rights through the active engagement of different stake holders in collaborative and participatory action research.

10.6 Recommendations

The recommendations proposed in this section emerged from this study to inform further development and implementation of education *about, through* and *for* human rights in schools in Bangladesh and beyond:

First, as Fullan (1993) claims, the vision and mission for school change often comes later. It became evident during the research that a consistent culture of human rights and HRE should be established in schools.

Second, HRE policy, strategies and curriculum should be appropriate for the local and national context, taking into account evidence of human rights abuses, and contemporary human rights concerns. At the same time, school level HRE should be more focused on creating citizens with the knowledge, skills and values relevant to HR, rather than certificate or exam focused education that does not include personal and social learning related to health, wellbeing, rights and equity at local, national and global levels.

Third, both pre-service and in-service training for education *about, through* and *for* human rights should be available for all teachers' development and understanding of HRE.

Fourth, at the school level, some challenges, including insufficient school resources, excessive teaching loads for teachers, lack of time for preparing lessons, and inconsistency of allocation of time and focus on HRE should be resolved at a policy and administrative level.

Fifth, acknowledging the achievement of teachers and students who implement human rights and HRE in the schools should be encouraged, so that their programs are widely disseminated.

Sixth, governments need to build a vision and strategies for implementation of HRE, and opportunities for school leaders and teachers to have appropriate professional learning to enable the reflection of human rights values in teaching and learning practices. Structural support is required so schools have appropriate classroom resources. Processes need to be put in place to support parental and community involvement in HRE in the school. This is in line with Hord's (1997) landmark review of literature related to the effective development of professional learning communities (PLCs) in schools, that can act as a powerful force for change and school improvement when the vision, leadership, structural support and team-work amongst teachers functions well.

Seventh, students' direct and indirect experiences of human rights violations is strongly connected with their emotions and is very sensitive issues in terms of their well-being, security, and privacy when they are involved in HRE. This requires institutional support such as counselling and opportunities to discuss their issues and develop strategies so their issues can be resolved. Therefore, one strong recommendation is to ensure that these supports are provided in schools.

Eighth, partnerships between schools and different stake holders such as local community, NGOs, mass media should be strengthened to support HRE in schools and disseminate good practices.

Ninth, further investigation and research on the development of HRE and overcoming the challenges is strongly recommended.

Tenth, practices of action research for teachers' ongoing learning and development should be encouraged and strengthened.

Finally, encouraging researchers and experts in HRE to develop collaborations with schools should be appreciated and encouraged, in order to build teacher professional learning and to empower students to protect their own human rights and the rights of others.

10.7 Conclusion

Although there are significant global and international concerns about HR and emphases on the importance of developing human rights education in schools in policy and curriculum for HRE, it has not been well developed in Bangladesh. Substantial research in schools has not been conducted and there is also a dearth of research in Bangladesh focused on the implementation of the United Nations' human rights education framework - education *about, through* and *for* human rights - in developing a holistic approach to HRE in schools. Therefore, my case study focused on answering the overarching question: How can pedagogies for human rights education (HRE) be developed in secondary schools in Bangladesh and my focus on how schools in Bangladesh can promote and develop HRE is a significant question. My study has contributed new knowledge and understanding of these questions to through the case study of Green Bird School.

I can conclude that while education *about, through* and *for* HR was absent at the commencement of this study, the small scale highly planned collaborative action research, professional learning and implementation of innovative practices did lead to significant change and the establishment of a culture of human rights education in the school. However, despite this success, many potential challenges were identified that could create obstacles for making this development sustainable. It is evident that teachers and school leaders require ongoing professional learning and commitment to HRE in order to further embed that approaches that were developed in this study.

In the review of the literature in the early stages of my study, I explored global views on the question: Why is it important for young people to learn about equality and human rights in schools? My reading convinced me of the need for a focus on HRE in any country in the world, since the understanding and improvement in practices that can be achieved are of universal importance. In recent reading of global policies emphasising HRE, I was once again reminded of the purpose and education goals for HRE. For example, the rationale for HRE by the Equality and Human Rights Commission for England, Scotland and Wales (EHRCE, 2019) tells educators that:

> ‘Young people need to understand equality and know their rights, to understand both how they should be treated, and how they should treat others. Teaching these topics creates a safe place for students to explore, discuss, challenge and form their own opinions and values.
>
> The knowledge and respect of rights that students gain from this, combined with understanding, respect and tolerance for difference, can empower them to tackle prejudice, improve relationships and make the most of their lives.
>
> Educating students about equality and human rights empowers your students with learning they can use far beyond the classroom – in fact they will take it out into the school corridors and playground, into their homes and beyond into the wider community. The respect and tolerance it teaches will help students to create a healthier, happier, fairer school culture, and could lead to reductions in bullying and other negative behaviour, and improvements in attainment and aspirations.

In addition to my personal knowledge and understanding of the need to address continuing human rights concerns in Bangladesh, these were the kinds of aspirations and reasons for focusing on HRE that were the motivation for me to conduct this study. My study provides an empirical contribution to the literature on the implementation of HRE in schools and provides recommendations for policy makers, school administrators, teachers, teacher educators and researchers. It is my hope that in ongoing work at Green Bird School and others in Bangladesh and beyond, schools will work to build environments which respect the rights and differences of both students and teachers and through their learning, achieve understanding *about*, *through* and *for* human rights.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Ethical approval for the study from the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC)

MONASH University

Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee

Approval Certificate

This is to certify that the project below was considered by the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee. The Committee was satisfied that the proposal meets the requirements of the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* and has granted approval.

Project Number: 0953
Project Title: Developing pedagogy for Human rights education and democratic citizenship in Bangladesh
Chief Investigator: Assoc Professor Elizabeth Tudball
Expiry Date: 24/10/2021

Terms of approval - failure to comply with the terms below is in breach of your approval and the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*.

1. The Chief Investigator is responsible for ensuring that permission letters are obtained, if relevant, before any data can occur at the specified organisation.
2. Approval is only valid whilst your hold a position at Monash University.
3. It is responsibility of the Chief Investigator to ensure that all investigators are aware of the terms of approval and to ensure the project is conducted as approved by MUHREC.
4. You should notify MUHREC immediately of any serious or unexpected adverse effects on participants or unforeseen events affecting the ethical acceptability of the project.
5. The Explanatory Statement must be on Monash letterhead and the Monash University complaints clause must include your project number.
6. Amendments to approved projects including changes to personnel must not commence without written approval from MHUREC.
7. Annual Report - continued approval of this project is dependent on the submission of an Annual Report.
8. Final Report - should be provided at the conclusion of the project. MUHREC should be notified if the project is discontinued before the expected completion date.
9. Monitoring - project may be subject to an audit or any other form of monitoring by MUHREC at any time.
10. Retention and storage of data - The Chief Investigator is responsible fo the storage and retention of the original data pertaining to the project for a minimum period of five years.

Thank you for your assistance.

Professor Nip Thomson

Chair, MUHREC

Appendix 2: Application to the Ministry of Education, Bangladesh for approval of this research.

07 November, 2016

The Director General
Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE)
Ministry of Education, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Dhaka 1000

Subject: Application for permission to conduct research in secondary schools in Bangladesh

Dear Sir,

My name is Md Khairul Islam, and I am an Assistant professor, Institute of Education and Research (IER), University of Dhaka. I have been doing a PhD at the Faculty of Education, Monash University, Melbourne, Australia since 25 October 2015. The research I wish to conduct for my doctoral thesis involves 'developing pedagogy for human rights education and democratic citizenship in a secondary school in Bangladesh'. This project will be conducted under the supervision of Associate Professor Elizabeth (Libby) Tudball (principal supervisor) and Dr David Bright (associate supervisor), faculty of education, Monash University, Melbourne, Australia. This project has gained ethics approval from Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee on 24 October 2016(**Project Number: 0953**).

I will utilize case study approach with action research component. My study involves interviewing, focus group discussion, classroom observation, co-teaching and other relevant activities related to case study and action research.

I am requesting you for your kind permission to conduct this research in secondary schools in Bangladesh.

I would appreciate your consideration in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Md. Khairul Islam
Assistant Professor (on study leave)
Institute of Education and Research (IER)
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Australia
Phone +61 (0) 426499940 (cell) and +61 03 99052219(study office)
Email:md.k.islam@monash.edu

Enclosed: Certificate of ethics approval

Appendix 3: Approval for this research from the Ministry of Education, Bangladesh

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তর
বাংলাদেশ,ঢাকা।
www.dshe.gov.bd

স্মারক নং- ওএম/২০৮-সম/২০০৭/২২৭২ তারিখ: ০৪/১২/২০১৬ খ্রি: ।

বিষয়: বিদ্যালয়ে গবেষণার জন্য তথ্য সংগ্রহের অনুমতি প্রদান প্রসংগে ।

উপর্যুক্ত বিষয়ের পরিপ্রেক্ষিতে জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, জনাব মোঃ খাইরুল ইসলাম, সহকারী অধ্যাপক, ইন্সটিটিউট অব এডুকেশন অ্যান্ড রিচার্স (আইইআর), ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়-কে বাংলাদেশে মাধ্যমিক বিদ্যালয় সম্পর্কে গবেষণা করার লক্ষ্যে তথ্য সংগ্রহের অনুমতি নির্দেশক্রমে প্রদান করা হলো।

(সাখায়েত হোসেন বিশ্বাস)
সহকারী পরিচালক (মা:-১)
ফোন: ৯৫৫৬০৩৭ ।
e-mail:addshesecondary1@ gmail.com

জনাব মো: খাইরুল ইসলাম
সহকারী অধ্যাপক
ইন্সটিটিউট অব এডুকেশন অ্যান্ড রিচার্স (আইইআর)
ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, ঢাকা।

অনুলিপি:

০১। সচিব, শিক্ষা মন্ত্রনালয়, বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা।
০২। পরিচালক (মাধ্যমিক), মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তর, ঢাকা।
০৩। উপপরিচালক, মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ শিক্ষা, ... অঞ্চল, ... ।
০৪। জেলা শিক্ষা অফিসার, ...।
০৫। প্রধান শিক্ষক/শিক্ষিকা, ... ।
০৬। মহাপরিচালক মহোদয়ের ব্যক্তিগত সহকারী, মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তর, ঢাকা।
০৭। সংরক্ষণ নথি ।

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Appendix 4: A sample explanatory statement for the participants

MONASH University

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT for classroom teachers

NOTE: This information sheet is for you to keep.

Project title: Developing pedagogy for human rights education and democratic citizenship in Bangladesh

Chief Investigator's name: Assoc. Professor Elizabeth (Libby) Tudball
Department of Education
Phone: 9905 9160
email: Libby.Tudball@monash.edu

Student's name: Md Khairul Islam
Phone : +61426499940, +8801716304044
email: mkisl3@student.monash.edu

You are invited to take part in this study. Please read this Explanatory Statement in full before deciding whether or not to participate in this research. If you would like further information regarding any aspect of this project, you are encouraged to contact the researchers via the phone numbers or email addresses listed above.

What does the research involve?

This study aims to investigate how teaching and learning or 'pedagogy' of human rights education and democratic citizenship can be developed through a case study of a secondary school in Bangladesh. As part of this investigation, I will explore the views of teachers, students, principal/head teacher and parents about the current status of human rights education and democratic citizenship in the school, and new approaches.

The study involves participation in semi-structured interviews with teachers and principal/head teacher; focus group discussion with students and parents. In the first stage of this study, you will be asked about your views on human rights and human rights education in school, for example approaches of teaching and learning, teachers and students' engagement in learning, challenges and issues etc. It will take approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour. Then you will be invited to

participate in an action research where you will be involved in planning, developing and implementing lessons on human rights topic with the researcher (me). Your opinions and reflections on new approaches will be captured after the implementation of each lesson. There will be 10 lessons during the action research and reflection session after the lesson will be approximately 30 minutes. At the final stage, you will be asked to participate in a semi-structured interviews to explore your overall views on new approaches, and it will take approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour. All reflection sessions and interviews will be audio recorded.

Why were you chosen for this research?

For this study, I am seeking a secondary school in Bangladesh, where the teachers are interested in human rights education and democratic citizenship. You have been invited to participate in this study because your school has this focus, you responded to my request and indicated your willingness to take part in this study.

Participation and withdrawal

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. To give consent to take part in this study, you are required to read this statement, sign the consent form and return it to the researcher. While I would be pleased to have you participate, I respect your right to decline. If you decide to discontinue participation at any time, you may do so without providing an explanation. However, it will not be possible to withdraw data once you have completed your participation and data has been used for analysis.

Possible benefits and risks to participants

The benefits to you participating in this study are that it provides you with an opportunity to reflect upon your views and experiences of human rights education and democratic citizenship in your school. Further, this study will contribute new knowledge and understanding of teaching and learning practices in human rights education through teachers and students' engagement with learning in this field. More broadly, it is my hope that this study will contribute to understanding of human rights that will lead to a decrease in human rights violations in school and in society. There are no potential risks and discomfort anticipated.

Confidentiality

All information will be treated in a confidential manner. Your name will be replaced by a pseudonym and your identity will not be used in any publication arising out of this research.

Storage of data

All data will be stored on my own computer that is password protected and not available to any other individual. In addition, storage of the data collected will adhere to the University regulations and kept on University premises in a locked cupboard/filing cabinet for 10 years.

Results

If you would like to be informed of the overall research findings, please contact Md Khairul Islam on mkisl3@student.monash.edu.

Complaints

If you would like to contact the researchers about any aspect of this study, please contact the Chief Investigator:	If you have a complaint concerning the manner in which this research is being conducted, you are welcome to contact:
Assoc. Professor Elizabeth (Libby) Tudball Faculty of Education, Monash University Phone: 9905 9160 email: Libby.Tudball@monash.edu	Umme Mustari Tithi Assistant Professor Institute of Education and Research (IER) University of Dhaka Mobile: 01552386002 Email: tithi116868@gmail.com

Should you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of the project, you are welcome to contact the Executive Officer, Monash University Human Research Ethics (MUHREC):

Executive Officer
Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC)
Room 111, Building 3e
Research Office
Monash University VIC 3800

Tel: +61 3 9905 2052 Email: muhrec@monash.edu

Fax: +61 3 9905 3831

Thank you,

Chief Investigator

Assoc. Professor Elizabeth (Libby) Tudball

Appendix 5: Consent forms for participants

5A: A consent form for head teacher

MONASH University

CONSENT FORM for Head teacher

Project: Developing pedagogy for human rights education and democratic citizenship in Bangladesh

Chief Investigator: Assoc. Professor Elizabeth (Libby) Tudball

I have been asked to take part in the Monash University research project specified above. I have read and understood the Explanatory Statement and I hereby consent to participate in this project.

I consent to the following:	Yes	No
• Taking part in two semi-structured interviews (duration:45 minutes to 1 hour for each interview)	☐	☐
• Audio recording during the interview	☐	☐

Name of Participant:_____

Participant Signature:_____ Date:_____

5B: A consent form for classroom teachers

MONASH University

CONSENT FORM for classroom teachers

Project: Developing pedagogy for human rights education and democratic citizenship in Bangladesh

Chief Investigator: Assoc. Professor Elizabeth (Libby) Tudball

I have been asked to take part in the Monash University research project specified above. I have read and understood the Explanatory Statement and I hereby consent to participate in this project.

I consent to the following:	Yes	No
Taking part in two semi-structured interviews (duration: 45 minutes to 1 hour of each interview)	☐	☐
Taking part in action research (up to 10 lessons of 50 minutes each)	☐	☐
Taking part in reflection session after each lesson (duration of each discussion session is about 30 minutes).	☐	☐
Audio recording during the interview and discussion session	☐	☐

Name of Participant:_____

Participant Signature:_____

Date:

5C: A consent form for parents group

MONASH University

CONSENT FORM for Parents Group

Project: Developing pedagogy for human rights education and democratic citizenship in Bangladesh

Chief Investigator: Assoc. Professor Elizabeth (Libby) Tudball

I have been asked to take part my child as well as me in the Monash University research project specified above. I have read and understood the Explanatory Statement and I hereby consent to participate in this project.

I consent to the following for my child:	Yes	No
• Taking part in two focus group of up to 6 students (duration: 45 minutes to 1 hour of each discussion)	☐	☐
• Taking part in group reflection sessions after 10 individual lessons (duration of each reflection session is up to 20 minutes)	☐	☐
• Audio recording during the focus group discussions and reflection sessions	☐	☐

I consent to the following for myself:	Yes	No
• Taking part in two focus group of up to 12 people (duration: 45 minutes to 1 hour of each discussion)	☐	☐
• Audio recording during the focus group	☐	☐

Child's name …….

Date of birth …….

Parents'/Guardians' name …….

Signature of parent/legal Representative…….

Phone or / and email …….

Date……..

5D: An assent form for student groups

MONASH University

Assent Form for Student Groups

Project: Developing pedagogy for human rights education and democratic citizenship in Bangladesh

Chief Investigator: Assoc. Professor Elizabeth (Libby) Tudball

I have been asked to join in this Monash University study. The letter that explained everything about this study has been read to me and I have had a chance to ask questions about it.I understand what this research project is about and would like to join in.

I understand that being in this study is my choice and that I can change my mind and choose to not be part of this study any time I like if I change my mind. I know that if I have any questions I can ask my teacher/parents or the researcher at any time.

I agree to:	Yes	No
• Join in with the group discussion	☐	☐
• Audio recording during the group discussion	☐	☐

Name: Date:

Appendix 6: Assenting letter from the local contact person

শিক্ষা ও গবেষণা ইনস্টিটিউট
ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়
ঢাকা-১০০০, বাংলাদেশ

Institute of Education and Research (IER)
University of Dhaka
Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh
Fax: +880-2-9667222
Web : www.du.ac.bd

18 September, 2016

Consent to Receive the Participant's Complaints

Research Title: Developing pedagogy for human rights education and democratic citizenship in Bangladesh

Researcher: Md Khairul Islam. Student ID # 26352982, PhD student, Monash University

I agree to receive the participant's complaints concerning the manner in which the above-mentioned research conducted. I will report such complaints (if there is any) to Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC) to the following address:

Executive Officer
Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC)
Room 111, Building 3e
Research Office
Monash University VIC 3800
Tel: +61 3 9905 2052
Email: muhrec@monash.edu
Fax: +61 3 9905 3831

Umme Mustari Tithi
Assistant Professor
Institute of Education and Research (IER)
University of Dhaka
Mobile: +88 01552386002
Email: tithi116868@gmail.com

Appendix 7: An example of coding of transcript

Data item: Extract from an interview	Initial codes	Comments
Actually, last year I was new here and I could not do much with student cabinet what I should to do. However, your instructions were very much fruitful regarding the cabinet. The members of cabinet tried their best as you instructed. They participated in different activities in our school such as volunteering in celebrating different programs in school, increasing health awareness among students. Specially, I would like to say about the logo of student cabinet (badge). They really fell proud when they wear the badge. Like last year, I gave them similar badge. I made different colour for different ministry. They felt different themselves and other students can recognize them easily. I am also associated with them as advisor for every ministry. Therefore, other students think that their head teacher is also observing their activities as well as cabinet activities are recognized by school authority. I tried my best to make the student cabinet dynamic and I tried my best. Concept of student cabinet is really good if it works properly. But if it is limited within election only, it is meaningless. To make it really meaningful, school leader (head-teacher) has significant role. If I just complete election according to government instruction and forming different ministry only, nothing will be significant. If school leader is involved with them, motivate them, engage them, monitor them, they can do many things. For example, today I met with the ministry of environment and discuss with them about their role. It is a matter of practice and head teacher should take these responsibilities to create opportunity for practice. Other teachers have also responsibilities. If we want to make them active all teachers, head teacher should be active. Otherwise, nothing would be possible. It would be meaningless. Our government indicate something meaningful. I think government should create a process of maintain accountability. If there is any significant observation or monitoring process by government, school must do at least something. Training for school leader as well as teachers is also required.	Fruitful instructions from researcher; Cabinet tried their best following instructions; Cabinet did volunteering in celebrating different programs in school, increasing health awareness among students; Cabinet felt proud having badge; Different colours of badge is helpful for identifying ministries and recognition; Reba is associated with every ministry; School authority recognised cabinet's activity; Reba tried to make the cabinet dynamic; Reba perceived student cabinet good initiative but only election is not enough; School leaders have significant role; School leaders can be involved with cabinet, motivate them, engage them, monitor them, head teacher should take the responsibilities for creating opportunities for the cabinet; teachers and head teacher need to be active to strengthen cabinet's activities; Government indicate meaningful activities by the cabinet; Government need to create monitoring procedures to ensure schools' accountability; training for school leader and teachers are required	This interview was conducted with the head teacher Reba after one year from the commencement of action research to review the progress of HRE in the Green Bird School. She provided examples of the progress of Student cabinet, her involvement with the cabinet and further recommendation for student cabinet in secondary schools in Bangladesh

Appendix 8: An example of qualitative observation protocol for individual lesson

Lesson: **Topic:** **Grade**: **Subject**: **Time allotment:**		
Area of observation	Descriptive notes	Initial reflections
Utilisation of teacher's knowledge and skills developed during the HRE workshop and in co-planning		
Ability to create changes in the classroom in terms of developing a safe environment and mutual respect.		
Students' active participation in the teaching-learning process and students' response to teacher's panned activates and initiatives		
Inclusive approaches in the classroom		
Others including challenges		

Appendix 9: An example of some field notes

Date: 6 March 2017 **Site**: Green Bird Secondary School Complex **Activity:** Inauguration of 'wall magazine' **Participants:** The head teacher, classroom teachers Beauty, and students from grade 9 **Length of Observation:** 30 minutes		
Descriptive notes	Initial reflections	Comments
I enter the classroom where the head teacher Reba will inaugurate the students' created 'wall magazine'. I notice that the magazine is hanged on the wall and very well decorated. Students are found excited, cheerful and having discussion with their teacher Beauty. All of them welcome me and start sharing their experiences of creating magazine though I have not asked them. Beauty explain how much students are excited and starts sharing her own experiences. When we all are taking part in an informal discussion about the magazine, the head teacher enters the room. She says, 'I am very busy with other works and do not want waste time. Let's launch the magazine'. One student gives a scissor to Reba and she cuts the ribbon and inserts her sign on the magazine. All students clap and celebrate the moment. I take some snaps of the magazine. Then head teacher Reba reads some writings of students from the magazine and shares her views and opinion. I notice that she became emotional after reading one story from the magazine about valance against women. Then she starts delivering her speech towards students. She says 'I was not sure about the ability of my students that they can do this kind of work'. She gives positive feedback to the students and teacher and an acknowledgement said, 'I am proud of my students. I hope you will continue your creative work'. She also thanks Beauty and me and appreciates for initiating these kind activities by the students. She finished her speech and advised the students to place the magazines in front of the stairs on the ground floor for all students and teachers to see. The students followed her advice and immediately placed the magazine in front of the stairs on the ground floor. Reba asks some teachers to visit the magazine and a number of teachers come. She advises them to engage their students through this kind of activities. Other teachers start appreciating the work. The head teacher leaves the place.	Students actively participated and enjoyed theses creative activities. Beauty was actively involved and she monitored the activities. Students can express many things through creative works if they are given opportunities. At the beginning of this project head teacher Reba was not so cooperative since she was not sure about the outcomes. She perceives these activities very positive outcomes of this project. These activities have impacts on HRE in the school community.	These notes were taken from the observation when the head teachers Reba inaugurated the 'wall magazine' as planned co-curricular activities for grade 9 students, and delivered her speech towards the students.