

Reflection of Social Values in Primary Education of Bangladesh: An Analysis

Abdul Mannan¹

Abstract.

Social values have a significant role in forming the basic foundation of a society as well as the nation. The purpose of this study is to examine how social values are represented in "Bangladesh and Global Studies (BGS)" textbooks of the primary level. Primary Class III-V textbooks have been analyzed as documents using the content analysis approach. The findings reveal that social values were explicitly and indirectly reflected across the textbooks. However, analyzing the social values from 'individual' and 'societal' perspectives, this research revealed that although the textbooks were focused on both 'individual' (e.g., awareness, respect, responsibility, love, courage, patience etc.) and 'societal' (e.g., patriotism, peace, cooperation, and sharing etc.) values, these books also have the scope of integrating some emerging social values (e.g., endurance, decency, hospitality, modesty, loyalty, leadership, belief and benevolence etc.). Furthermore, this study also finds that certain values are explicitly articulated and most of the values are presented indirectly in plain texts, occasionally in characters, pictures, or sometimes guided activities, and that the textbooks lack guidance for practicing values through various co-curricular activities. This study will provide implications for the policy makers, curriculum developers, textbook writers, and the subject teachers of BGS as it reveals the scope for incorporating social values to create value-aware and socially responsible human beings.

Key Words: Primary education, BGS, Social values, Content analysis

1. Introduction and Background

Primary education is the cornerstone of the educational system in any country. Bangladesh has improved access to education, particularly at the primary level, with remarkable success. According to the report of BANBEIS (2023), the gross enrolment ratio in primary education in 2022 has reached 110.48% and the net enrolment rate 97.56%. Although participation in primary education has increased, considering the socio-economic condition of the country, questions remain about the quality of primary education (Banu et al., 2018). Therefore, to obtain quality primary education, the lessons, skills, and values acquired must be aligned with the intended goals and applied in social contexts.

¹ Lecturer, Institute of Education and Research (IER), University of Chittagong, E-mail: mannan.ier@cu.ac.bd

Values are inseparable parts of social life. Today's society is the output of different values. Recent years have brought societal and technical progress, which has led to some societal issues because many societies have not been able to effectively pass on their values to the next generation (Türkkahraman, 2014). Due to the decline of social values, various criminal activities like the Kishor Gang, theft robbery, drug addiction, and child marriage are constantly taking place in society. Incomplete textbook education and disobeying social values are the main reasons for social crime by teenagers specially Kishore Gang (Mamun, 2020). In this age of globalization, the accessibility and efficiency that globally brings are extremely susceptible to shifts in national and social culture, behavior, and value systems (Kristanto & Sundari, 2024). Pereira (2016) stated in his report that without incorporating values into the education system and instilling them in pupils, education would be inadequate, and useless. Social values and the education system are both connected parts of society. In the phase of aims and objectives of national education policy, it has been embedded as one of the aims of education to foster students' practical and intellectual abilities to establish moral, human, cultural, scientific, and social ideals on a personal and national level (Ministry of Education, 2010). The national education goals and objectives are considered when formulating the curriculum. Curriculum as the entirety of the learning opportunities that offered to pupils in order to help them acquire general information and skills across a range of learning contexts as stated by Marsh and Willis (2007). Bangladesh's 2012 curriculum places a strong emphasis on the development of social values through the education system (NCTB, 2012). The last detailed curriculum for primary education was developed in 2012, which was mostly competency-based. There were twenty nine competencies listed for primary education, fifteen number competency focused on developing moral and social qualities among students and create scope for practicing it in society as well (NCTB, 2012). In 2021, the NCTB has announced a new national curriculum framework (NFC). In NFC (2021), the goal is to produce a generation that is moral, honest, value-driven, scientifically minded, self-assured, productive, inventive, and content (NCTB, 2021). Therefore, it is very clear that the goals of the primary education curriculum and the education policy are to develop social values among students.

2. Research Objectives

The purpose of the study is to investigate social values reflected in the Bangladesh and Global Studies (BGS) textbook at the primary level of Bangladesh.

Specific objectives of this study are to-

1. find out different types of social values embedded in the primary BGS textbook;
2. demonstrate how the contents of those social values are represented in different chapters of textbooks;
3. reveal the scope of incorporating social values in the textbooks.

2.1 Research Questions:

- I. What types of social values are described in primary BGS textbooks?
- II. What are the individual and societal values reflected in BGS?
- III. How do the different chapters of the textbooks represent those values?
- IV. What are the scopes of incorporating social values in the textbook?

3. Literature Review

Social values are ideal standards that the majority of a society adheres to, all of which contribute to a better society (Türkkahraman, 2014). The long-term practices of individual, family, societal, cultural, religious, national, and global experiences and beliefs shape values (NCTB, 2021). Social values can be seen as a criterion for determining whether social action is right or wrong (Türkkahraman, 2014). The values of one society are usually different from those of another. For example, the values of Indian society may differ from many values of Bangladeshi society. Again, the same values may carry different meanings in different societies. Additionally, values are interrelated and strongly associated with the development of skills, attitudes, and knowledge (NCTB, 2021). Elsayed (2024) described knowledge, emotion, and behavior as the three major components of social values. The social standards, objectives, or aspirations that serve as the foundation for assessing various social circumstances are known as social values. There is a social and cultural foundation to these ideals. Sharma (2024) also suggested some social values like kindness, trustworthiness, acceptance, focus, responsibility, dedication, loyalty, honesty, open-mindedness, growth, companionship, belief, understanding, leadership, optimism, spirituality, compassion, respect, desire, appreciation, tolerance, diligence, bravery, benevolence, endurance, optimism, and decency in his study.

Social values in the education system as the framework that enables the community to uphold its current beliefs (Kristanto & Sundari, 2024). Social values have long-term effects on a student's personal, practical, and professional life (Pereira, 2016). Education is one of the main agents of social change which helps its pupil to better understand their environment and society by providing knowledge, social beliefs, and values among them as described by Akujobi and Jack (2017). Social values must be restored through the educational system in light of all the injustices and values erosion that are present in society. Ahasan et al., (2023) identified different values listed in the national curriculum framework-2021, such as solidarity, patriotism, tolerance, respect, empathy, integrity, etc. According to NCF-2021, primary education has been considered as the foundation of socialization and specialization (NCTB, 2021). Additionally, NCF (2021) listed some desired values (e.g., honesty, enthusiasm, democracy, non-communalism, positivity, initiative, aesthetics, humanity, responsibility, solidarity, tourism, harmony, tolerance, respect, empathy, and integrity etc.) of learners to ensure the expected competencies from pre-primary to Class 12 (NCTB, 2021). In primary level, there isn't a distinct subject in Bangladesh that teaches fundamental cultural, religious, and social values (Faisal & Akhter, 2020). As primary education is one of the medium of instilling values, it promotes social cohesion and sustainability (Yasmin & Rumi, 2020; Tasnim et al., 2023; Asadullah et al., 2009). Hasan et al. (2018) addressed that primary schools lay the groundwork for human development that will impact a person's entire life by instilling values that ensure sociocultural identity and continuity. In this situation, the reflection and scope of social values are rarely explored in primary textbooks. Therefore, by in-depth analysis, this study seeks to reveal how societal values are reflected in BGS as an integrated textbook at the primary education level.

In addition, primary school may have a significant impact on pupils' deployment of social ideal (Hasan et al., 2018). Roy et al. (2020) found both overt and covert educational problems in Bangladesh that stem from cultural norms, especially moral and religious values. Molla (2015) asserted that one of the issues facing primary education is the inappropriateness of curricula and pedagogy, and he recommended that educators and the text board authority choose materials that incorporate children's own cultures, attitudes, values, and trustworthy role models. Sayem (2023) also recommended enhancing the learning content, adding lessons on values and morality, and emphasizing in-depth education to inculcate values at the

primary level. Since these studies recommend improving instructional materials and integrating values into the subject matter, it is still unclear of how primary textbooks actually reflect these notions.

On the other hand, Sharma (2024) identified the education system as the most crucial component of imparting social values among students. By which students may adapt to their family, school, society, and other environments. Şahin (2019) conducted a study aiming to explore personal and social values embedded in the primary textbook of Turkey. He found different values and listed them. According to his list, social values were limited to the unity of family, friendship, peace, being scientific, cooperation, following rules, freedom, and patriotism, and personal values included being fair, humble, courageous, generous, diligent, devout, honest, self-devotion, respect, love, responsibility, fidelity, truthfulness, cleanliness, and patience, etc.

Although it has been explored that our society has different social values, the function of education in promoting values in social life through the education system has been extensively studied, little is known about how those social values are reflected in primary-level textbooks, especially in Bangladesh and Global Studies (BGS) as integrated subjects of social and environmental studies.

4. Definitions of Key Terms

Social Values- The set of ideas or rules that members of a society consider to be good or bad, necessary or unnecessary, and according to which social action is conducted, is called 'social values' in terms of sociology. Sharma (2024) stated that social values are primarily derived from tradition and cultural background. This Study analyzes the social values from 'individual' and 'societal' perspectives. Individual values refer to the personal beliefs, principles, and guidelines that direct a person's actions and choices (Schwartz, 2017). Societal values are the collective principles, norms, and beliefs that a society or community holds as important (Haidt, 2021).

Bangladesh and Global Studies (BGS)- BGS is a mandatory subject at the primary level of Bangladesh. It is a combined subject comprising various aspects of social and environmental education (NCTB, 2012).

5. Conceptual Framework of the Study

The research seeks to reveal the reflection of social values in primary education through the analysis of the textbook "Bangladesh and Global Studies (BGS)" in primary education in Bangladesh. The National Education

Policy 2010, National Curriculum 2012, National Curriculum Framework 2021, and the results of various national and international research have been considered as the main and legal basis for integrating values in education. From among various primary textbooks, "Bangladesh and Global Studies (iii to v)" is adopted as a comprehensive subject and an attempt is made to find the social values directly and indirectly indicated in the content, pictures, teaching-learning instructions, and assessment sections of the said textbook. For that purpose, the researcher divides social values into social, personal, and emerging categories. The values reflected are identified through the review of various chapters and lessons of the three textbooks. At the same time, it also explored the scope of integrating values in those lessons.

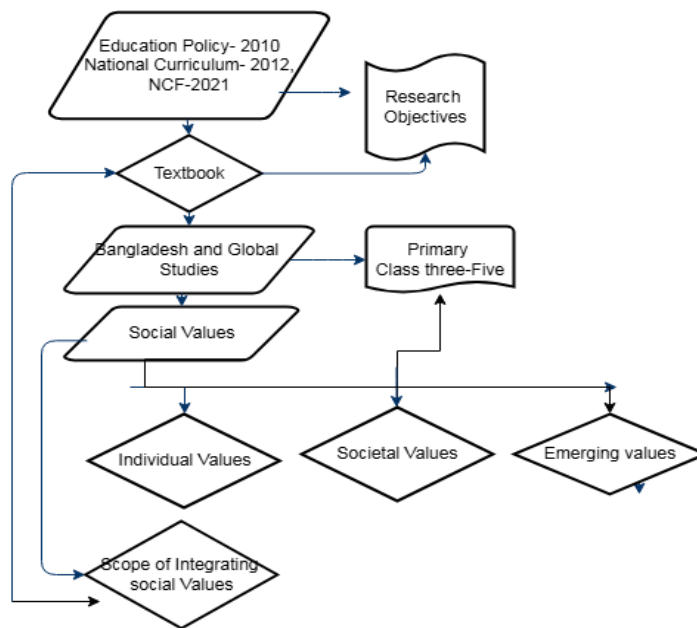


Figure 1. Flow chart of the conceptual frame

6. Methodology of the study

This study used the content analysis method to examine how social values are reflected in Bangladesh and Global Studies textbooks for primary classes (three to five). Content analysis is a systematic, reproducible process that uses specific coding principles to compress large amounts of text into a smaller number of content groups (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). The researcher followed some steps to get the data for this investigation. At first, the textbooks were

chosen. Textbooks, as the main source of knowledge transfer, are effective tools for establishing common social structures and for the process of building a nation (Srivastava, 2006). Since BGS is one of the integrated subjects with many social components at the primary level, it was chosen. Secondly, these textbooks were thoroughly reviewed and analyzed.

According to the tradition of content analysis, the researcher needs to perform two major observations (Gharbavi & Mousavi, 2012). In the first stage, the researcher carefully reads the documents to find the related units of textbooks. In the second phase of the analysis, the researcher studied in depth the selected units to explore the various categories for the expected outcome.

In line with the conceptual framework, social values were divided into three categories: individual, societal, and emerging values. These categories were derived from a synthesis of curriculum goals and scholarly insights on value formation and transmission in education.

The data analysis process followed three main stages of qualitative content analysis as proposed by Elo and Kyngäs (2008): preparation, organization, and reporting.

1. Preparation involved a thorough reading of the textbooks to become familiar with the content and context.
2. In the organization phase, open coding was used to identify phrases, images, stories, and instructions that explicitly or implicitly convey social values. These codes were grouped under the pre-determined categories.
3. In the reporting phase, codes were analyzed across chapters and classes to detect trends in value representation and scope for integration.

Each value was noted based on its mode of presentation (e.g., narrative, character illustration, moral statement, activity suggestion) and mapped against the relevant chapter and lesson. The researcher developed a matrix to present values reflected in each textbook by chapter, highlighting both existing and missing opportunities for value integration.

7. Findings and Discussion

While reviewing the issue of social value reflection in BGS, there are two types of social values that emerged through the literature review. One is the values related to the individual, and the other is the values related to society. Therefore, the researcher finds out the social values reflected in various

chapters in Bangladesh and Global studies from the class three to five of primary school. The reviews and discussions are presented in several tables below.

Table-1, Primary Class and Relevant Unit of BGS

Textbook (Bangladesh and Global Studies)	Relevant Chapters of Books
Class Three	Our Environment, We All Are Human, Our Culture, Child's Role at Family and School, Child Rights and Safety, Moral and Human Qualities, Different Occupations, Use of Money, Addressing Emergency Situations
Class Four	Our Environment and Society, Cooperation in Society, Ethnic Groups of Bangladesh, The Rights of Citizens, Values and Behavior, Tolerance, The Dignity of Work, Social and National Assets, Developing our Locality, Disaster Management, Population of Bangladesh, Our Liberation War, Our Culture.
Class Five	Our Liberation War, Historical Places and Artifacts in Bangladesh, Our Economy: Agriculture and Industry, Population, Climate and Disaster, Human Rights, Gender Equality, Our Duties and Responsibilities, Democratic Attitude, Bangladesh And the World

7.1 BGS of Class Three and Social Values

While reviewing, the researcher found that the BGS of primary class three consists of a total of thirteen chapters. The contents are mainly integrated and arranged sequentially. Through a review of each chapter, the researcher has determined and presented existing individual-related and society-related values based on the type of social values, all while keeping in mind the goal of his research.

Table-2. Chapter of BGS Class Three and Social Values

Chapter Number and Title	Reflected social values		Scope of integrating values
	Related to Individual	Related to Society	
01. Our Environment	Environmental Awareness, Cleanliness, Responsibility	Nature Love, ,	Endurance
02. We all are Human	Love, Trust, Self-Devotion	Love To Society Love To People Living Together	Understanding
03. Our Father of the Nation	Helpfulness Kindness Mercy Love For Animals	Living Together	
04. Our History	Respect to Mother Tongue Way Of Showing Respect To Martyrs	Freedom Patriotism	Bravery
05. Our Culture	Respect	Harmony	Decency
06. Continents and Oceans	Geographical Awareness		
07. Child's Role at Family and School	Love, Respect, Indulgence, Helpfulness Problem-Solving Responsibility Cleanliness	Taking Care, Cooperation	Hospitality

08. Child Rights and Safety	Duties, Awareness Safety Loyalty	Responsibilities, Peace Obeying Rules	Modesty
09. Moral and Human Qualities	Truth, Honesty, Morality, Praise.	Empathy	Humble Self-Devotion
10. Our Country	Geographical Awareness	Patriotism	
11. Different Occupations	Kind, Generosity		Empathy
12. Use of Money	Frugality		Following Rules
13. Addressing Emergency Situations	Courage, Being Patient, Valor, Mercy	Social Responsibility	Cooperation

Sources; “*Bangladesh and Global Studies*” Textbook for Class Three, (NCTB, 2023a)

The table above shows the individual and societal values in primary class three of BGS. In this class, individual-related values are more noticeable than social-related values. The textbook has a chapter directly on values, named "Moral and Human Qualities". The chapter named “we all are Human” teaches students the importance of helping each other, respecting others' opinions, and living in harmony with neighbors and community members through its exercises given at the end of the lesson (NCTB, 2023, p. 6). Furthermore, several of the aforementioned chapters offer a range of instructed activities, such as reconciliation and gap-filling, that aim to promote social values indirectly. Moreover, the table also shows that other chapters are related to the knowledge and development of various values in an integrated manner of content organization (Gryzun, 2018).

7.2 BGS of Class Four and Social Values

In class IV, there are a total of sixteen chapters in the BGS textbook. Like the previous class, the textbook has started with the Environment and Society chapter. Moreover, the other chapters have been prepared in line with the chapters of Class-3. Which gradually indicates more knowledge and skills than its previous class like a spiral in method by which fundamental ideas are introduced in the first class and then revisited in increasingly intricate versions in subsequent classes (Tirol, 2022). From the chapters, the chapters related to personal and social values have been identified and various types of values have been inserted below according to the purpose of the research.

Table-3, Chapter of BGS Class Four and Social Values

Chapter Number and Title	Reflected social values		Scope of integrating values
	Related to Individual	Related to Society	
1 Our Environment and Society	Awareness,		Development
2 Cooperation in Society	Being Fair Kindness Mercy	Living Together, Equality, Cooperation	Dedication
3 Ethnic Groups of Bangladesh	Tolerance Integrity	Friendship Sympathy Sharing Peace	Appreciation Optimism
4 The Rights of Citizens	Solidarity Social Rights Duties		Sharing Loyalty
5 Values and Behavior	Discipline Generosity Truthfulness Humbleness	Cooperation Consideration Sharing	Devout
6 Tolerance	Tolerance Courage	Respect Others	
7 The Dignity of Work	Respect All Occupation		Being Tactful Appreciation

8 Social and National Assets	Being Tactful		
9 Developing our Locality	Cleanliness Awareness	Obeying Rules	
12 Disaster Management	Preparedness Awareness		Patience
13 Population of Bangladesh	Awareness	Family, Friendship, Peace	
15 Our Liberation War	Respect	Patriotism	Leadership
16 Our Culture	Cultural Awareness		

Sources; “*Bangladesh and Global Studies*” Textbook for Class Four, (NCTB, 2023b).

The table above shows the values related to the individual and society in the BGS of primary class four. Like the three class, there are more values related to the individual than to the societal, but the researcher believes that it is presented in a way that is relevant to the previous class according to the age and class of the student. In addition, the textbook has two chapters directly on values, named 'Values and Behavior' and 'Tolerance'. Moreover, the other chapters are related to the knowledge and development of various values in the manner of integrated and spiral content organization (Gryzun, 2018; Tirol, 2022), as shown in the table.

7.3 BGS of Class Five and Social Values

Traditionally, Class five is considered the last class of primary school in Bangladesh though the national education policy defined primary level from class-one to Class-eight (NCTB, 2010). The BGS textbook for this class has been prepared with a total of 12 chapters. Some differences can be seen at the chapter beginning. While the previous classes started the chapter in the textbook with the topic "Environment and Society", in Class-V, the chapter has been started with the content "Our Liberation War" related to the spread of patriotic values. Moreover, other chapters have revealed knowledge and perspectives directly or partially with guided activities related to various values of the society. The researcher, like the previous

table, has reviewed the chapters related to personal and social values from the chapters of the prescribed textbook for Class-V and inserted different types of values below according to the purpose of the research.

Table-4, Chapter of BGS Class Five and Social Values

Chapter Number and Title	Reflected social values		Scope of integrating values
	Related to Individual	Related to Society	
1 Our Liberation War	Awareness Responsibility Right Dedication	Patriotism	
3 Historical Place and Artifacts in Bangladesh	Sense Of Beauty	Nature Love Patriotism	Spirituality
4 Our Economy: Agriculture and Industry	Dedication	Respectful	
5 Population	Awareness Be Tactful	Being Scientific	
6 Climate and Disaster	Awareness Responsibility	Love For Animal Love For Nature	Belief
7 Human Rights	Desire Tolerance Awareness Taking Care	Following Rules Freedom Sharing	
8 Gender Equality	Awareness Respect Valour	Freedom Sharing	
9 Our Duties and Responsibilities	Respect Cooperation Awareness Responsibility	Following Rules Benevolence Patriotism	Benevolence

10 Democratic Attitude	Respect Others Opinion	Decision Making
12 Bangladesh And the World		Peace, Cooperation, Interdependency

Sources; “*Bangladesh and Global Studies*” Textbook for Class Five, (NCTB, 2023c).

The table above represents the values associated with the individual and society in the BGS of primary class five. The chapters have been arranged in a slightly different way from Class III and Class IV in order to achieve higher values in Class V. At this level, there is a greater emphasis on social values than personal values. The chapter named "Our Duties and Responsibilities" discusses individual and collective responsibilities towards family, school, and country with real-life examples. Various social and personal values have been presented through the chapters on human rights, gender equality, and responsibility and duty. Higher social values such as patriotism, freedom, sharing, and decision-making are identified at this class, as shown in the table.

The study revealed that among the values mentioned in the selected textbooks, some values that have been presented repeatedly with the aim of developing children's behavior with greater priority are awareness, respect, responsibility, patriotism, love, peace, cooperation, affection, courage, patience, etc. Specifically, the aim is to develop awareness about the environment, natural disasters, rights, health, and responsibilities and duties, and to develop a sense of respect and values, focusing on various professionals, the elders, and ethnic groups and to awaken a sense of responsibility towards family, school, society, and community. An attempt has been made to instill patriotism through the descriptions of struggle, wealth, and natural resources, and love for nature and animals.

The research additionally revealed that there is an opportunity to include some significant emerging social and individual values in the textbooks connected to contemporary society and the advancement of the country. For example, endurance, understanding, decency, hospitality, honesty, self-devotion, following rules, development, dedication, optimism, loyalty, devout, being tactful, appreciation, leadership, belief and benevolence etc.

While reviewing, the researcher found that most of the values presented in plain text, sometimes in story or character, the scope of practicing values

through different cocurricular activities in school is made limited as the textbook does not provide guidelines for it. Although the value-related texts have been presented in various chapters of the textbooks, an attempt has been made to develop values through guided activities with minimal effort. An effort has been made to indirectly enhance the child's behavior and values through a variety of tasks, such as matching, gap-filling, and other activities.

8. Study Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

This research has been conducted to explore and determine various social values reflected in different chapters of primary-level BGS textbooks only as an integrated subject. Nevertheless, social values may be incorporated in other primary textbooks (e.g., Bengali, English, Mathematics, etc.) too. This study only presented the information obtained through document analysis. Since values are basically a matter of practice, it is also essential to reveal the existing scope for teachers and students to practice values through their teaching-learning activities in schools and to what extent the students are inculcating these value-related knowledge, skills, and attitudes also needs further research attention.

9. Conclusion and Policy Recommendation

The study addressed the reflection and scope of incorporating social values into BGS textbooks. Instilling social values through textbook information is essential for improving children's knowledge, attitudes, and understanding of the social and natural world, as textbooks are the fundamental instructional materials provided by the government to students for practicing teaching-learning activities instructed by the teachers and the books as well (Sayem, 2023; Mollah, 2015). Law cannot be imposed in every aspect of life. In those areas, social values can bring about positive changes. The development of a common understanding of social values among students, taking into account their age and class through the educational system, must begin at the primary level in order to combat current societal degradation, unfairness, and discrimination etc. This study may offer useful insights for policymakers, curriculum developers, textbook writers, and BGS subject teachers by highlighting potential opportunities for further incorporating social values to support the development of value-aware and socially responsible learners.

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