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ASSESSING PEDAGOGICAL COMPETENCY AMONG TEACHERS IN ROHINGYA LEARNING CENTRES IN BANGLADESH

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ABSTRACT
This review discusses and assesses the pedagogical competency among teachers in Rohingya learning centers in Bangladesh. It focuses on the teaching strategies adopted by the teachers, their lesson delivery, and curriculum understanding with respect to refugee education in informal learning centres. The study highlights that the limitations provided by displacement settings, like resource shortages, policy restrictions, and lack of training have a greater impact on the classroom practices adopted by teachers. The findings of the review state that even though teachers try to maintain pedagogical resilience, and adaptive, learner-focused learning, the challenges of curriculum ambiguity, lack of formal recognition, varied learner groups, and systemic limitations make their teaching practice more survival-based, focusing on just foundational literacy. This review acknowledges the tension between pedagogical competency and humanitarian demands and suggests changes to be made on the institutional and systemic level in addition to individual teacher level to bring positive change in the educational outcomes of refugee children.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The escape of Rohingya refugees from Myanmar and their settlement in Bangladesh is considered to be one of the most historical, severe, and continued crises of humanity. This started in 2017, when mass violence and genocide by military, mostly of Rohingya muslims, took place in the Rakhine State of Myanmar (UNHCR, 2026). This caused a large population of Rohingya people to run away from Myanmar and face dangerous challenges while crossing the border and arriving in Bangladesh, and settling in Cox Bazaar. This mass immigration of Rohingya caused the refugee population to increase to as high as 1.1 million in Bangladesh (UNHCR, 2026). It is noted that a majority of the Rohingya population in Bangladesh, over 60 percent are children and at least 50 percent of the population is young people under the age of 25 (Karin et al. 2020). These children and adolescents face many challenges, including but not limited to malnutrition, trauma, and lack of access to education and proper healthcare. Access and availability of formal education in Rohingya camps is limited, difficult and fragmented for these children (Hossain, 2023). It is often noted that a large number of Rohingya children do not get a chance to have structured learning. In addition, the informal learning centres that exist in the camps are most of the time suspended because of operational limitations, political issues, lack of funding, and changes in policy. This exposes the Rohingya children to turn into a "lost generation" with no or limited future prospects.

In addition to this, the struggles in educational access are increased because of structural barriers. There are policies in place that do not allow the adoption of language and curriculum of the host culture (Monir, 2024). Moreover, the adoption of the curriculum of Myanmar is also contentious and there is significant delay in the recognition of curriculum. All of these factors cause both students and educators to operate in a greatly restricted pedagogical setting. This has led to the adoption of informal learning centers that make use of the Learning Competency Framework and Approach (LCFA) (Monir, 2024). This helps in preventing the total educational exclusion of Rohingya children by providing limited certification, but also raises questions about the clarity and efficacy of education and curriculum understanding.

Considering this, it has become highly important to understand the role played by teachers, especially their practices of lesson delivery, teaching strategies, and understanding of curriculum. These factors directly impact the students' quality of learning in an already restricted and informal educational environment (Chakma, 2022). In this regard, it has been observed that there is high variation in pedagogical strategies adopted by teachers in the Rohingya camps (Prodip & Garnett, 2019). Moreover, lack of or limited teacher training, multilingual classrooms, and inadequate resources present further difficulties in emergency education environments. Since it immediately affects children's educational results, knowing the pedagogical competence of teachers, their teaching approaches and grasp of the curriculum becomes absolutely vital. This review therefore reviews the pedagogical skills of teachers in Rohingya refugee camps and compiles the body of knowledge available to show the actual state of affairs and obstacles encountered in this setting.

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2.0 BACKGROUND OF ROHINGYA EDUCATION IN BANGLADESH

2.1 Structure and Governance of Learning Centres

In the refugee camps of Cox Bazaar in Bangladesh, the education of Rohingya children is dependent on non-formal and Temporary Learning Centres (TLCs) (Habib, Chowdhury & Uldanov, 2024). These educational centres are organised by humanitarian organisations, local and international NGOs, and government bodies. There is a strict surveillance of the Bangladeshi government and under this, students are taught from Myanmar curriculum till grade 5. The classes are multishift and have the capacity of about 30-40 children (HRW, 2025). Even though there is a lack of formal education, there are many key agencies such as, UNICEF, UNHCR, both local and international NGOs, for example, Save the Children, BRAC, YPSA, DAM, and Community Development Center (CODEC) that maintain the offering of basic education to Rohingya children (Khan, 2024). These institutions provide support to many TLCs who provide a safe learning atmosphere and work under the Learning Competency Framework and Approach (LCFA). LCFA helps in sorting the educational priorities and provides a basic curriculum for informal education (Shohel et al. 2023). The TLCs are made with makeshift resources and are vulnerable to natural disasters and calamities. Teaching volunteers, who are mostly refugees themselves, run such learning centres. The humanitarian organisations and NGOs provide basic materials and funds for tents and solar-powered tools. On the other hand, the Bangladeshi government regulates such programs but also does not provide certifications and accreditation to community-led schools and informal learning centres. In addition, some structured learning programs are being promoted, for instance, Myanmar Curriculum Pilot, to provide a more formal curriculum to Rohingya children (Nilsen et al. 2023).

2.2 Role of Teachers in Emergency and Displacement Contexts

In the informal learning centres of Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh, appointment of teachers is done from both the host community people and the Rohingya refugee volunteers. Mostly the refugee teachers are selected because of their ties with the community and culture and basic educational qualifications (Shohel, 2022). Only a few of such refugee teachers have higher education, while a majority of them only possess basic literacy. On the other hand, Bangladeshi teachers are also appointed, mainly for teaching English, but most of them have never had proper classroom experience (Henderson, 2025). Teachers in the refugee camps are provided basic training in pedagogy, classroom management, and the LCFA curriculum by the humanitarian bodies. The teaching responsibilities include managing multishift and mixed-age classes, overcrowded classrooms, teaching in Rohingya dialect, and ensuring activity-based learning. In addition to this, teachers are also expected in emergency education settings to play adaptive roles and manage with fewer resources and inadequate materials (Maire, 2024). They have to deal with traumatised children, in addition to their own trauma, and are also considered the front-line mental support systems for children (Maire, 2024). They are also expected to include stability and life skills in their teaching. Even though the teachers work relentlessly and with dedication, they are given very less compensation, no training, and are often under high stress.

3.0 CONCEPTUALISING PEDAGOGICAL COMPETENCY IN REFUGEE EDUCATION

3.1 Defining Pedagogical Competency in Emergency Education

According to existing literature, pedagogical competency is defined as the practices, skills, and knowledge of the teacher that helps in effectively implementing a curriculum, improves the engagement of learners, and enhances the effectiveness of instruction (Sudargini & Purwanto, 2020). It sheds light on the abilities of a teacher to go beyond just plainly transmitting content and create and implement different strategies of teaching that can promote critical thinking and active learning, and also improve learner engagement. The main successful strategies that are highlighted by a teacher's pedagogical competency ensure that based on the context and needs of the learners, the teaching is adapted while making sure that meaningful engagement takes place (Soghomonyan & Karapetyan, 2023). Competency is not just defined by the thorough knowledge of the subject. It also includes the skill to bring clarity to instruction, be more coherent in communicating and explaining concepts, ensure understanding throughout lessons, and maintain a logical sequence of learning activities (Amaliah, Clorion & Pasaribu, 2024). Curriculum understanding is considered to be a key factor influencing pedagogical competency. It sheds light on the capacity of teachers to effectively understand the curriculum and integrate it into their teaching in a way that is pedagogically sound and sensitive to the context (Robandi, Setiawardani & Apriyanto, 2025). Overall, pedagogical competency determines the quality of teaching and learning outcomes of students.

3.2 Pedagogical Competency in Refugee and Crisis Contexts

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Pedagogical competency, when it comes to displacement settings, are often influenced by a range of factors such as policy frameworks, trauma, lack of resources, and linguistic diversity (Yilmaz, 2024). It is seen that often teachers with refugee backgrounds have their own past of incomplete education and mental trauma. This fact highlights the importance of trauma-informed methods that focus on relational support and emotional safety in teaching practices (Özçürümez, Tursun & Tunç, 2025). This also sheds light on the fact that trust, participation, and concentration in classrooms is hindered and inhibited because of unresolved trauma and it cannot be overcome until and unless teachers themself create learning environments that are psychologically safe. In addition, linguistic diversity is another key factor that impacts refugee education. It is frequently noted that refugee children speak many languages or dialects that are most of the time not recognised by host nations (Reddick & Chopra, 2023). In such cases, in refugee settings, there are strict restrictions on language regimes and often monolingual education is favored. This causes the teachers to instruct in languages that are unfamiliar to students or adapt different curriculum in refugee language, which risks linguistic marginalisation and cultural exclusion. An example of this is teaching Burmese curriculum in Rohingya dialect or enforcing English curriculum and restricting the use of Bangla in Rohingya camps in Bangladesh (Islam & Islam, 2023).

Moreover, pedagogical competency in displacement settings also deals with a shortage of resources and strict policies. Teachers are forced to make improvisations with limited materials,adapt continuously to meet the different needs of learners, and focus on survival-based classes (Pherali et al. 2025). Teaching practices are thus significantly reshaped because of linguistic diversity, trauma, and limited resources. These conditions also lead to pedagogies being more context-sensitive, adaptive, and inclusive providing both emotional and social support along with academic learning.

4.0 TEACHING STRATEGIES IN ROHINGYA LEARNING CENTRES

4.1 Learner-Centred and Participatory Approaches

Participatory and learner-focused teaching approaches are widely promoted in the context of emergency education in order to ensure inclusion and engagement. However, there are various context-specific challenges in this due to lack of resources, political issues, and policy restrictions. In the learning centres of Rohingya refugee camps, while navigating the challenges of displacement, learner engagement is promoted by means of activity-based learning (Mariam, Ahmad & Sarah Sarwar, 2021). To build basic numeracy and literacy, the LCFA is noted to promote thematic teaching with the help of group discussions, storybooks, and play materials (Nilsen et al. 2023). This helps in guaranteeing inclusion by using varied methods and adapting approaches based on trauma-defined attention spans of children. In addition, there are also participatory teaching approaches used in Rohingya camps such as collaborative, community-driven teaching or peer tutoring. This helps in maintaining cultural relevance and also enhances psychosocial safety (Maire, 2024). Dialogic sessions by Rohingya youth in community-led classrooms help in imparting life skills effectively and also improve motivation of students. However, these teaching practices also face challenges due to shortage of resources. Overcrowded, multishift classrooms, bamboo tents without electricity or proper materials, lead to teachers using group-based, kinesthetic methods, which include sticks, mats, and rote memorization (Esveld, 2023). This inhibits interactive and inclusive learning. Moreover, lack of formal recognition and proper curriculum causes the teaching to be more survival-focused than proper formal education.

4.2 Adaptive and Context-Responsive Teaching Practices

When considering refugee and displacement contexts, a key pedagogical competency is making the teaching practices more flexible and context-responsive, especially under resource limitations (Dhungana et al. 2021). This includes managing with minimum resources and doing improvisations to adapt the diverse needs of learners and also ensure effective engagement and participation. When there is a shortage of textbooks, it has been noted that teachers in Rohingya refugee camps make use of kinesthetic methods utilising oral narratives, mats, and sticks to provide basic literacy and math lessons to children (Lyu, 2025). The adaptive teaching approaches are highlighted in managing multishift classes, adjusting the length of classes for fatigued learners, and maintaining discipline through group chants during overcrowded sessions (Lyu, 2025). In addition, a culturally responsive pedagogy is also ensured by including Islamic values and teachings along with Rohingya folktales to both maintain engagement and honor the Rohingya culture. For this, help is taken from the community (Kasimi, 2025). It is also seen that such improvisation helps in improving trauma response and emotional expression of students through play-acting. However, policy restrictions, lack of teacher training, and resource constraints limit such practices.

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5.0 LESSON DELIVERY AND CLASSROOM PRACTICES

5.1 Instructional Clarity and Classroom Interaction

Studies on classroom interaction and lesson clarity in settings like Rohingya or other similar refugee camps state that the quality of learning faces particular challenges with respect to teacher-student interaction and instructional clarity (Chowdhury, 2023). One of the main issues that impact the ability of students to understand lesson content and meaningfully interact is language barriers. In Rohingya camps, this usually happens because of lessons delivered in non-native languages such as English or Burmese without proper support for translation (Rahman & Husain, 2022). Teachers usually do not have formal training and are also not proficient in the languages used by students. They additionally struggle to create lessons that are understandable, accessible, and clear to students. This results in a fragmented learning environment and difficulties for students to follow lessons properly. Teachers also have to rely on gestures and drawings to explain to students. The ability of teachers to explain is also constrained because of limited materials and lack of resources and this causes them to adopt teacher-centred and rote learning methods, thus, limiting student participation (Rahman & Husain, 2022). However, it is seen that these challenges are partially alleviated by communal or group activities and peer learning (Sangeeta, 2025). But, these methods also depend on the facilitation skills of teachers that are not well developed in emergency education settings.

5.2 Classroom Management in Resource-Constrained Settings

In Rohingya refugee camps, classrooms are often observed to be overcrowded with about 30-40 students cramped up in makeshift tents which limits movement and causes disruptions in learning (Abid, 2025). Due to this individualised attention is also not given to learners. Due to the high population of students and a greater teacher to student ratio the lessons are shortened and teachers have to take multiple shifts in a day along with dealing with multi-age classrooms. This disrupts and interferes with the proper learning of students and also causes learner fatigue and impacts the quality of education they get (Karim, 2024). The complexity of teaching tasks is also increased because of the different ages and schooling experiences of students. This is because teachers have to deal with different developmental levels in the same classroom. The language and literacy hurdles in refugee camps make classroom management more difficult, especially in settings where training for teachers is not present and there are no adequate resources to assist them in providing quality education and meet the needs of individual learners effectively (Karim, 2024).

6.0 CURRICULUM UNDERSTANDING AND ALIGNMENT

6.1 Awareness of Curriculum Goals and Learning Outcomes

There is an uneven understanding and awareness of curriculum goals among the teachers in Rohingya refugee camps. The implementation and structural challenges of the curriculum exacerbate this issue. The primary curriculum which the informal learning centres follow is the LCFA that defines the desired learning outcomes and competency levels (Shohel et al. 2023). However, there is an inconsistent uptake, understanding and practical interpretation of this curriculum because of cultural disconnect, resource limitations, and language barriers. Moreover, beyond the basic numeracy and literacy skills, the volunteer teachers are not exposed to training or higher education competency (Chakma, 2022). Because of the LCFA curriculum lacking in guidance for teachers to adapt the learning goals and practices based on linguistic or cultural contexts, there is an additional gap in the understanding and implementation of curriculum and learning goals by the teachers. There have been some improvements made, for example with the introduction of Myanmar Curriculum pilot, which helps in aligning the cultural and linguistic heritage of learners (Chowdhury, 2023). But, implementation still faces challenges because of a lack of training on the content of curriculum, shortage of skilled teachers, and policy constraints.

6.2 Curriculum Adaptation and Informal Assessment Practices

In order to sustain learning in restricted environments, teachers are expected to regularly adapt, interpret, and selectively apply curriculum to ensure that learning is relevant. In the learning centres in Rohingya refugee camps, the curriculum is often interpreted based on the situational context and the focus of the teachers is mostly seen to be on providing foundational learning to students (Shohel, 2022). Beyond basic literacy and life skills, the curriculum is restricted to grade 5 of the Myanmar curriculum because of resource limitations and policy restrictions. Thus, advanced topics are more often than not omitted by the teachers in Rohingya learning centres. In terms of curriculum adaptation, teachers often teach abstract concepts by means of daily examples, storytelling, or Rohingya folktales (Hossain, 2023). Even without formal authorization, teachers try to keep the learning relevant by fusing LCFA competency with cultural life skills. In addition, learning also happens through community groups that incorporate cultural and Islamic teachings in addition to the adopted curriculum (Nilsen et al. 2023). When considering informal assessment practices in the learning

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centres, mostly homework is reviewed, observation checklists are used, and oral quizzes are taken. The process of tracking progress of multi-age groups of learners, through these methods, is inconsistent but these are the only means of providing real-time feedback to students.

7.0 DISCUSSION

The review has shed light on the importance of comprehending the pedagogical competency of teachers in Rohingya refugee camps. This is significant with respect to the broader refugee education context because education is a major factor which influences the humanitarian response and long-term developmental goals. The studies have highlighted how the curriculum practices, teaching strategies, and lesson delivery are greatly influenced by the particular situations and limitations provided by the displacement setting. Displacement-related contexts influence these factors more than the traditional norms of education quality. These insights state that in situations of crisis, it becomes difficult to assess pedagogy without considering key influencing factors such as policy limitations, scarcity of resources and materials, lack of training, and the refugee education system's transient nature. Pedagogical clarity and understanding in Bangladesh, with respect to Rohingya refugee settings, is highly impacted by systemic limitations. One of the key limitations identified is the restrictions of policy that do not allow formal integration into the nation's educational system. Along with this there is uncertainty regarding the recognition of curriculum connected to Myanmar.

The depth of curriculum engagement of teachers, their motivation, and quality of instructional planning are all affected due to the limited certification value and non-formal nature of education provided to Rohingya students. The ability of teachers to effectively translate the goals of curriculum and provide better classroom interaction, for example of LCFA, is influenced because of policy uncertainties and a lack of training provided to them. The tension that exists between the quality of education and humanitarian needs is more clearly seen at the level of pedagogy. In emergency education settings, often priority is given to immediate education access, psychosocial support, and safety of students. On the other hand, strong instructional design, continuous professional development, and the clarity of assessment practices is sacrificed in such contexts. Teachers are expected to take on adaptive roles and be able to maintain classroom stability, inclusion, and also provide emotional support to traumatised learners, overlooking curriculum precision. Even though pedagogical resilience is promoted through such measures, there is also a risk of normalising a low standard of instruction for refugee learners.

8.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, the review finds that the pedagogical competency of teachers in the Rohingya learning centres of Bangladesh is greatly influenced by the conditions of displacement, policy environments, resource constraints, and the non-formal nature of education. In contrast to pedagogical choice, contextual circumstances and demands have been identified as the main factors that shape the curriculum engagement, lesson delivery, and teaching strategies. In the informal learning centres, teachers have to deal with an overcrowded classroom, multishift teaching, varied age groups of learners, trauma, shortened teaching times, and a curriculum framework that does not have official recognition. As a result of this, teachers' pedagogical practice is driven by inclusion, emotional stability, and adaptability rather than teaching precision and curriculum depth. In addition, the ability of teachers to adequately understand the curriculum and implement it properly is hindered by systemic limitations. Overall, it has been found that to improve the pedagogical competency of teachers in Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh, it is necessary to go beyond individual teacher level and consider institutional, structural, and policy factors that highly impact the classroom practices. The recommendations are as follows:

- There should be ongoing professional development of teachers based on context and focus should be on teacher's curriculum literacy, pedagogy, and student-centred teaching strategies.
- A clear and consistent curriculum needs to be established for the better understanding of learning outcomes and goals by the teachers.
- Teacher training programs should be regularly implemented with psychosocial and trauma-informed pedagogy being central to this.
- The teaching practices should be more linguistically and culturally aligned to the needs of the learners.
- The conditions of classrooms need to be improved for better classroom management by addressing instructional time, overcrowding, and resource limitations.

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