

Young Men's Experiences and Views of Sex Education in Bangladesh: A Foucauldian Discourse
Analysis

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Abstract

This study has sought to shed light on the dearth of research on sex education in Bangladesh bringing forward young men's experiences, views, narratives, recollections, and perceptions around sex education. Using social constructionism and poststructuralism, this study addresses the research questions: How did Bangladeshi young men receive sex education during adolescence? How did they interpret their experiences? How did their narratives reproduce and/or disrupt dominant discourses related to sex education, including discourses around sexuality, teenagerhood, masculinity, and manhood? Based on the qualitative data collected from nine in-depth Skype interviews with young men in Bangladesh, nine themes emerged. These themes illustrate - how participants received sex education with the help of peers, pornography, the Internet, media, parents, schools, and religion. This study also reveals that what they learned about sex and sexuality from these sources was often gendered (e.g., reproduced hegemonic masculinity), sexist (e.g., undermined the need for girls' consent), and naturalized the idea of sex and sexuality as dangerous (e.g., through a focus on sexually infected disease prevention). This study identified dominant discourses around sex education, which are intertwined with social institutions, such as the school; it also illustrates instances which reproduced and disrupted these dominant discourses. Some participants embraced dominant discourses while others disrupted them, and some contradicted themselves. Participants also proposed mixed ways of improving sex education in Bangladesh, especially through designing sex education curriculum. The study draws the attention of the parents, curriculum designers, teachers, policymakers, service providers to young people, and scholars from the Global South to consider these innovations as food for thought to ensure young people's right to sex education. **Keywords:** sex education, Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA), sexuality, masculinity, Bangladesh, boyhood.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Globally, those in the pedagogical domain are struggling over social, cultural, political, and ethical meanings of sexuality, drawing on various perspectives and paradigms. Similarly, teachers, parents, and policymakers have long been encountering challenges regarding how young people can be educated about the nature of sex and sexuality for the sake of healthy sexual lives. However, in a culturally conservative society, such as Bangladesh, social norms and values discourage and even deny talking about sexuality publicly (Ahmed & Khan, 2012). Providing sex education is still highly controversial because childhood and youth are seen through the lens of innocence, leaving an historically awkward ‘culture of silence’ in curriculum, family, and other influential social institutions related to socialization.

Bangladesh is one of the rising countries in the developing world in terms of socio-economic development. A growing number of people are young, accounting for 23% of the total population ranging age between 10-19 years (Rashid, 2000). Like other South Asian countries, however, Bangladesh is a culturally conservative country; conventional (e.g., patriarchal) and religious (e.g., Islamist, Hindu, Christian, and Buddhist) values have profound impact on people’s life styles. As a culturally repressive society, public talk about sexuality is taboo in Bangladesh. In terms of gender, sex, and sexuality, mounting double standards are documented in people’s everyday practices. For example, even though sex outside of marriage including premarital and extramarital is socially, culturally, and legally prohibited, the presence of sexual relations out of marriage is historically well documented in Bangladesh (Aziz & Maloney, 1985; Caldwell & Pieris, 1999; cited in Ahmed & Khan, 2012). Surprisingly, while these relations are

not tolerated for women, they are flexible for men (Caldwell & Pieris, 1999; cited in Ahmed & Khan, 2012). Around half of all young men in rural areas have premarital sexual experiences even though it is lower for women because of social control (Aziz & Maloney, 185; Caldwell & Pieris, 1999; cited in Rashid, 2000). Consequently, Bangladesh has encountered several challenges and risks due to potential epidemics of HIV/AIDS and STIs, as well as other issues, such as teenage pregnancy, abortion, child marriage, child prostitutions, sexual harassment, violence against women, homophobia, sexual abuse, child labour, sex trafficking, and many more social issues for young people. For instance, whereas five million young people are living with HIV/AIDS and STIs, and this number is increasing globally, in the case of Bangladesh, it is estimated that the number of people affected by sexually transmitted diseases will be as high as 2% of the total adult population in 2012 and 8% by 2025 (UNICEF, 2009).

As a signatory member of different international bodies (e.g., Millennium Development Goals/Sustainable Development Goals), Bangladesh is committed to establishing adolescents' right to sex education for their health and development to participate meaningfully in the society. Yet in Bangladesh, because most people have a low level of education, young people have remarkable socio-cultural misconceptions regarding their bodies and sexual behavior, including puberty, reproductive and sexual health, menstruation, wet dreams, and masturbation (Rashid, 2000). Girls are, for instance, introduced to menstruation as *sharirkharap* (physical illness/sickness) and dirty (House, Mahon & Cavill, 2012). Likewise, wet dreams and masturbation are misrepresented to boys as diseases, bad practices, and even sins (Khatoun, 2016). In terms of sexual and reproductive health and help-seeking behaviour in Bangladesh, traditionally adolescent girls can get help from their mothers, grandmothers, elder sisters, elder brothers' wives, and female teachers, while boys have less access to this information (Cash et al.,

2001 b; Khatoon, 2016; Rashid, 2000). However, these sources are not beyond question, as the information provided to girls is often selective and not always accurate. In Western contexts, girls may similarly be educated toward passivity, while boys do not learn about certain aspects of sexual and reproductive health at all (van Vliet & Raby, 2008), which “denies their rights to such education, and implies that girls have greater responsibility for sexual health and reproduction” (van Vliet & Raby, 2008, p. 252). Even though few young people are provided with formal sex education in Bangladesh, some government and non-government-sponsored family planning programs provide young people with awareness about HIV/AIDS, STIs, pregnancy, abortion, and contraception, but this is not universal or systematic.

Young people today face risks and challenges in terms of sex and sexuality that are different and unique due to the advancement of science and technology, creating a gulf of differences between today's young generation and the generation of a few decades ago all over the world (Larson, 2002; Mortimer, 2002; Greenwood & Guner, 2010). Societies around the world are undergoing rapid transformations, altering the behavior of adolescents and youth across societies. Experiences and perceptions regarding sex and sexuality, for instance, have been changed by the invention of various forms of contraception, as well as the sexual revolution that was ignited by the pill. Likewise, the media young people usually consume are transforming the meaning of sex and sexuality (e.g., satellite TV, Internet, and social media). Though I concede that young people are now the heaviest consumers of media/Internet as a form of sex education, I am still inquisitive to know about how both formal social institutions (e.g., school, family) and informal institutions (e.g., peers, media) can play significant roles in providing sex education to current adolescents and youth.

Globally, a growing amount of research on sex education has perpetuated and added to these debates, which revolve around the effectiveness of different sources of sex education (Izugbara, 2004; Bhatasara, Chevo, & Changadeya, 2013; Dilorio, Pluhar, & Belcher, 2003; Baldwin & Baranoski, 1990). Many researchers argue that family and parents are by far the most influential sources of sex education (Izugbara, 2004; Bhatasara, Chevo, & Changadeya, 2013; Dilorio, Pluhar, & Belcher, 2003; Martin, Luke, & Verduzco-Baker, 2007, & Baldwin & Baranoski, 1990). However, some argue that peers, school, media, TV, movies, videos, books, popular music, and many other emerging sources are consumed by children and adolescents to explore sexuality, surpassing family influence (Johnson, 2014; Martin, Luke, & Verduzco-Baker, 2007; Lue et al., 2006; Strouse & Fabes, 1985). Surprisingly, very little sex education research underscores what children and adolescents, and especially boys, say about the sex, sexuality, and their experiences (Bhatasara, Chevo, & Changadeya, 2013; Izugbara, 2004). For these reasons, in this thesis I will explore the recollections of undergraduate male students regarding how they navigated or experienced sex and sexuality during their adolescence.

In addition, there is a growing global debate about whether schools are compelling sex education providers. Mounting Western research argues that school-based sex education is providing limited and incomplete knowledge on sex and sexuality (e.g., Luksik & Markova, 2010; Bay-Cheng, 2003; Holzner & Oetomo, 2004). In the case of Bangladesh, even though the government has been providing sex education through different compulsory school textbooks (e.g. biology, general science, and physical education), this education is also limited, partial, and incomplete (Khan, 2017). This partially-delivered form of sex education seems incapable of offering enough information to young people on good physical and sexual health, causing young people to grow up in a way that does not encourage them to show equitable, non-violent, and

respectful attitude towards their peers' sex, sexuality, sexual diversities (Bhuiyan, 2014; Khatoon, 2016; Khan, 2017). For example, recently the number of incidence of sexual harassment and rape is growing alarmingly in Bangladesh, accounting for 4,896 incidences of violence against females in 2016 (Hasan, 2017). Against the backdrop of the challenges and risks experienced by youth, sex education in Bangladesh needs to be broader than simply a focus on biology. It needs a view to developing adolescents' independence with skills, such as communication, decision making, and effective negotiation.

In a sexually repressive society, such as Bangladesh, it is well established that girls are vulnerable in terms of gender equity, sexual violence, sexual harassment, rape, domestic violence, diseases (e.g., STIs), abortion related risks due to unwanted pregnancies, access to knowledge regarding sex, sexuality, sexual and reproductive health, and rights to make their decisions (e.g., Rashid & Michaud, 2000; Khan, Townsend, & D' Costa, 2002; Rashid, 2000). By contrast, it is taken for granted that boys enjoy freedom from the challenges girls face. Pragmatically speaking, however, Bangladeshi adolescent boys are also vulnerable in navigating sexual and reproductive health, but their vulnerabilities and suffering are unique and different in nature. While women's vulnerabilities are well documented, we know very little about boys' vulnerabilities. I am especially concerned about the limited forms of sex education that boys receive. For instance, boys have more access to pornography as a form of informal sex education; it is often permitted for boys by parents, but strictly prohibited for girls (Rashid, 2000). However, pornography is not generally recognized as a positive source of sex education, including in Bangladesh, and it is very limited (and often problematic) in terms of what it teaches. This study seeks to fill the lacuna of missing information about adolescent boys' experiences of vulnerabilities in navigating sex and sexuality due to a lack of education.

Because of the absence of formal and family provided sex education discussed above, in my view, the silence surrounding sex education in Bangladesh is not an empty silence – it is a silence full of information about what a Bangladeshi society values and does not, and how it feels about its youth. This silence is also contradicted by the animated discussion on sexuality that is common among students. Adolescent boys typically look for different sources and components of information, often relying on peers and sexually explicit magazines or the Internet, rather than on parents, teachers, and other traditional sources (Cash et al., 2001a; Cash et al., 2001 b; Khatoon, 2016; Rashid, 2000). Even though several studies argue that such sources are very popular sources of effective sex education for today’s young people (e.g., Lou et al., 2006; Adams, Oye & Parker, 2003; Simon & Daneback, 2013), some researchers complain that these sources are not reliable, often providing contradictory information (Albury, 2014; Jones & Biddlecom, 2011). These can be “sources of misinformation” (van Vliet & Raby, 2008, p. 251). However, on-line sources are a reality today. In this case, how young men are privileged with access to online resources can be well illustrated with the statistics on Facebook users, which demonstrate that 78.7 % are male, while 21.1% are female (“Women’s Inclusion in Digital Bangladesh,” 2017). Therefore, young men have more access to these sources of knowledge for learning about sex and sexuality. Although the issue regarding boys’ disproportionate access to on-line information may seem trivial, it is, in fact, crucial in terms of today’s concern over what type of information on sex and sexuality they are accessing. This is one of the uncharted avenues I will explore in interviews with young men from my study.

Under these circumstances, the purpose of my study is to document today’s Bangladeshi young men’s recollections and narratives about how they received sex education during their adolescence. Given these objectives, I pursued the following research questions with my

participants: How did Bangladeshi young men receive sex education during adolescence? How did Bangladeshi young men experience and navigate sex and sexuality during their adolescence? How do they interpret their experiences, and how do their experiences reproduce and/or disrupt dominant discourse around adolescence, masculinity, sexuality, and sex education? In the following chapters, I will shed light on the theoretical perspectives I am using to address the research question, social constructionism and Foucauldian discourse analysis, which will be followed by a review of the literature. I will then narrate how this study was conducted, including the selection of study site, the participant's recruitment processes, and other methodological and ethical issues. Finally, I will shed light on the emerging themes obtained through the interviews, providing concluding thoughts, and limitations and strengths of this research.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Framework

A theoretical perspective is employed in research to stimulate thinking about theories, research questions, approaches, data, and their relationships. In other words, a theoretical framework is utilized as a lens through which the study will be approached, viewed, analyzed, and written about. In terms of the origin of theoretical thinking, the theoretical framework within qualitative research is primarily derived from two aspects: 1) research questions, which are guided by theoretical frameworks and/or guide the theoretical frameworks; and 2) the nature of data, which are then linked to a particular theory. In this study, I employ Berger and Luckmann's (1966) social constructionist theory, and Foucauldian discourse analysis, in order to study sex education. Berger and Luckmann (1966) shed light on our understanding of reality as fabricated through meaning-making processes of social interaction in a given social context or system. In Foucault's (1978) view, the reality or truth we see is also a construction produced through the discursive process, in which power and resistance are embedded.

Social Constructionist Theory and Sex Education

Seeking to understand young men's experiences, views, and narratives of sexuality during their adolescence, this study utilizes social constructionist theory, to explore how boys participate in the creation of a perceived reality, such as that of sexuality. Social constructionist theory asserts that, what we mean by social reality or truth is really constructed through a system of socio-cultural and interpersonal interactions in our everyday life (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Thus, according to this theory, sexuality is a social construction.

Social constructionist approaches to sexuality can examine a wide range of boys' behavior, beliefs, and subjective meanings among groups, and how boys perceive the body, sensations, pleasure, desire, and functions that are mediated by their culture in which they live and grow. This lens of social constructionism is an effective framework for analyzing adolescent and young men's orientation towards sexuality, as "they learned about sexual behaviors and how to interpret sexual behavior within a social context" (Bhatasara, Chevo, & Changadeya, 2013, p. 2). It underscores location (e.g., social institutions, such as families, religious institutions, and schools) within a social structure (e.g., a particular culture comprising norms, values, beliefs, systems, and rituals), which greatly influences the social construction of reality such as conceptions, experiences, and learning processes of sexuality. This approach also urges us to question the individual's experiences and learning processes of sexuality because their experiences and narratives are shaped by the discourses in which they are immersed (Flanagan, 2011). In a nutshell, social constructionist theory recognizes an evolving set of meanings of the reality that is continuously created and recreated by people's interactions in different contexts (Bhatasara, Chevo, & Changadeya, 2013). In the case of collective meaning making processes, it "gives meaning to collective sexual experiences through a construction of sexual identity, definitions, ideologies, and regulations" (Vance, 1991, p.878).

Foucauldian Discourse and Sex Education

This study also applies poststructuralist insights based on a Foucauldian discourse analysis to address the research questions. Social constructionism is intimately connected to the deconstructionism of poststructuralism because both theoretical perspectives shed light on meaning-making processes in discourse construction in a given context. The combination of the social constructionism and poststructural deconstructionism helps me to understand how young

men construct their experiences and views around sex, sexuality, and sex education, and the way they interpreted these in terms of multiple meanings and open-ended possibilities in the context of power-relations. Before analysing Foucauldian discourse, I will provide some insights on poststructuralism. Poststructuralism is an intellectual movement that emerged out of France in the 1960s, which challenges the legacy of celebrated schools of thought, such as structuralism, to instead understand the world through a lens of deconstruction. According to Weiner (1994, p.101), “[i]t seeks to *deconstruct*, to analyse the operations of difference and the way in which meanings are made to work. It also offers the possibility for the production of a *counter discourse* (or reverse discourse) which challenges the meaning and power.” This approach derives from the rejection of structuralist reductionism. There are some social movements and historical incidences in the West and beyond, such as a historical student movement at the Sorbonne in Paris (May 1968), the historical second wave of feminism, the Vietnam war, and the civil rights movement in the U.S. that influenced the emergence of post-structural thinking (Mann, 1994; Norris, 2002). This transition - from structuralism to poststructuralism - had a profound influence on social thought, as it both reflected and produced a counter-arguments against key aspects humanism and the Enlightenment legacy (Harvey, 1990; Agger, 2006). In the next section, I will focus on the salient features of structuralism and poststructuralism followed by a broader focus on Foucauldian analytical method : archeology and genealogy.

Influenced by the two prominent and leading scholars, linguist Ferdinand de Saussure and anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss, structuralism examines cultural phenomena according to an underlying formal structural system said to be based on the idea that language and culture follow the same structural relation between subject and object (Mann, 1994; Han, 2013). This is a scientific view of language and culture, which suggests a ‘centre’ or underlying system that

organizes and sustains a whole structure. Structuralism sees overarching systems of structure organised around laws, rules, principles, individuals' behavior and practices (Norris, 2002). Thus, every system, such as culture, language, psychology, development, and sexuality, has a structure governed by consistent rules and determining elements of the whole. From a structuralist perspective, structure are real things that lie beneath appearances that undergird and shape meaning. Epistemologically, structuralism demonstrates the truth 'behind' or 'within' a text. In contrast, poststructuralism underlines the contextual interaction between a reader and a text as productive, signifying that a text is not passive, but rather that it is active in the production of meaning. Roland Barthes' (1967) famous expression, "the death of author" is meant to suggest that, a text is able to produce different meaning in terms of different readers' interpretations (Han, 2013). This meaning may vary from time to time, place to place, and reader to reader (Agger, 2006). Thus, poststructuralism produces critiques of the classical Cartesian conception of the unitary subject with mastery and control over language and meaning (Agger, 2006).

Through the ideas of deconstruction, one of the pioneers of poststructuralism, Jacques Derrida disagreed with the concept of structure as a stable system. His approach was not only a critique of structuralism, it was also a methodological shift. He defied to explain something in terms of a single origin, binary-opposition, and fixed or closed signification (Smith, 2010; Agger, 2006). He argued that language is radically unstable, and meaning is always postponed. There is no closure, final point of reference, or perfection (Smith, 2010). Additionally, Derrida's theory of 'differance' proposed that meaning is inherently unstable due to the play of signs within language because a signifier and signified exist within language, which provides the meaning of the word or phrase (Han, 2013; Norris, 2002). How a reader interprets the word (signifier), will

depend on a reader's experiences. These experiences may vary because different individuals experience meaning differently derived from their own knowledge.

Through deconstruction, Derrida challenges the idea that one can determine the definite meaning of a text because the consequent absences of meaning of a text undermines the claim of a generalised and absolute conclusion. Derrida did not think that we could reach an end point of interpretations, or a truth. To Derrida (1997), all texts exhibit difference; they allow multiple interpretations, and meaning is diffused, not settled. Textuality always gives us a surplus of possibilities. However, we cannot stand outside of textuality to find objectivity because there is no "outside of the text" (Derrida, 1997, p. 158). According to Derrida, by 'deference' (binary opposite), any text includes (text) and simultaneously excludes other texts: there is no presence without absence (Han, 2013; Sondergaard, 2002). Therefore, deconstruction questions everything (e.g., everything that is superficial, loosely attached to some concepts but not really proven). It reveals the structures behind the structures, it explains hidden mechanisms behind a system to create transparency for creating a sharpened awareness and deeper understanding for certain processes.

To sum up, the poststructuralists view language as unstable and contextual as it separates word from meaning and places the meaning within social, historical, and cultural contexts. While structuralism stresses human 'subjectivity' or 'self' as coherent, centred, and singular, a poststructuralist view of subjectivity is incoherent, disunified, decentred, and denaturalized (Baxter, 2002). In analyzing text or cultural practices, poststructuralism stresses that the author is destabilized or decentred, and the interpreters or readers are the focal point. Philosophically, it rejects the totalising (e.g., will of God), essentialist (e.g., there is reality or truth), and foundationalist (e.g., stable system) ideas. Poststructuralism holds that subjects (people, such as

men) are culturally and discursively created and structured. In other words, “subjects emerge through and within power” (Sondergaard, 2002, p.189). Poststructuralists perceive reality as fragmented, diverse, multiple, tenuous, and culturally-specific. Before detailing how poststructuralism is linked to Foucauldian discourse, in the next part, I would like to focus on postmodernism briefly, and how it is merged with poststructuralism.

Even though poststructuralism (deconstructionism) is merged with postmodernism in terms of philosophy and epistemology, they are different in terms of origin because postmodernism originated in America in the 1950s (Mann, 1994). Like structuralism, modernism argues that modern thought and Western humanism/philosophy is built upon reason, objectivity, and a single point of reference in terms of truth or reality. However, postmodernists assert that there is no a point of reference, no single truth, and no ultimate reality (Agger, 2006). Postmodern thinkers also asserted that truth is subjective, relative, and is a creation of human minds (Agger, 2006). It is said that poststructuralism and postmodernism were merged into a single domain, when French philosopher Jean François Lyotard (1979) used the term in his book, entitled ‘The postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge’ (Agger, 2006). So, a postmodern worldview comprises many poststructuralist arguments even though Barthes, Derrida, Foucault, and many more poststructuralists have not claimed themselves as proponents of postmodernism. Of these poststructuralist thinkers, I will focus on how Michel Foucault’s work reflects poststructuralist traditions in terms of social thought.

Foucault was concerned with the analysis of systems (Macey, 1994, as cited in Mills, 2003). Of importance, the socio-political changes in Europe in the 1960s and 1970s, diverted his thinking, creating a significant transformation from philosophical and psychological analysis (before 1960s) to historical analysis (after 1960s). After that, he was concerned with analyses of

the production of knowledge and discourse, such as ‘the Archeology of Knowledge,’ which is called Foucauldian archeological analysis. According to Mills (2003), “archeology can be regarded as the analysis of the system of unwritten rules which produces, organises, and distributes the ‘statements’ (that is the authorised utterances)” (p.24), and as it occurs in the archive as “the general system of the formation and transformation of statements” (Foucault, as cited in Mills, 2003, p.24). This type of analysis is concerned with examining, based on history, the relations between different statements, the ways these systems are grouped together, and the conditions under which they emerge. Therefore, archeological analysis does not offer an explanation of what happens in the past, it looks at the discursive conditions in which it happens. Foucault’s archeology of knowledge is important to understand to see how it is different from his later method of analysis: genealogy.

After the 1960s, Foucault shed light on analysis of the internal structure of knowledge and discourses, linking these processes to power-relations, and their impact on individuals. One example of these work is *The History of Sexuality* (1978), which is called Foucault’s genealogical analysis. It is more concerned with functions of power and describing the ‘history of the present,’ linking the history of past to the present (Mills, 2003). Through genealogical analysis, Foucault is not interested in focusing on the analytics of ‘truth,’ he is rather interested in analyzing the processes through which a truth is formed, and the conditions under which some utterances and propositions come to be seen as truth. Accordingly, this truth-making process is a discursive process which is embedded in power relations and through which an individual engages in constructing his/her subjectivity (Waitt, 2005). Foucault sheds light on the ‘ontology of ourselves,’ which brings “analytic gaze to the condition under which we, as individuals, exist and what causes us to exist in the way that we do” (Foucault, 1988a, as cited in Mills, 2003, p.

25). This analytic gaze of self-construction is a historical product in terms of ethical, political and cultural values. According to Brock (2012),

Foucault developed his genealogical method as he mapped the emergence of different forms of knowledge and power. He explored how knowledge and power are themselves historically produced and effective of the ethical and political values of their time ...[he] presented history as fractured, discontinuous, and contingent on a broad array of circumstances and possibilities. (p.18)

In fact, through the transition of archeology to genealogy, Foucault tried to combine historical analysis with psychological and philosophical analysis. Instead of treating the past as an isolated component, he examines disciplinary knowledge in terms of its historicity. Thus, Foucault moves from a structuralist to poststructuralist approach.

To sum up, discourse analysis is a means to examine the way we use language to represent our understanding of life. This study intends to deconstruct what ‘actually happened’ looking not merely at pathways to an ‘objective reality,’ but at the meanings given to events and the ways in which discourses on sex education are constructed. This is a social constructionist approach, in that I will use the lens of Foucauldian discourse to see “the reality as socially constructed, based on varying aspects of race, gender, culture, socioeconomic status, ability, and education (Winges-Yanez, 2014, p.487). In making this comment, poststructuralist discourse analysis urges us to think about young people’s sexuality based on constructed meaning in terms of their particular social contexts. In this research, I employ discourse analysis to examine how meanings of sex and sexuality are contextualized, linked to power relations, contradiction, and resistance. The aim of this framework is to “deconstruct, and therefore denaturalize and critique,

what constitutes a particular social reality, forcing us to question it as truth” (Graham, 2011; Garrit, 2010; cited in Wings-Yanez, 2014, p. 487).

According to Foucault, both disciplinary power (e.g., via school, religion) and bio-power (e.g. via the subjugated physical body) breed ‘discursive practices’ or ‘discursive knowledge’ in which individuals are expected to behave in certain ways undergirded by common sense truths (Foucault, 1978). Consequently, an individual is judged by how closely he/she fits expected norms. In other words, they are subjected to processes of normalization. Discourse is central to these processes. The essence of Foucauldian discourse derives from a number of ways he defined ‘discourse’ in his different works (Mills, 2003). First, discourse is defined as the general domain of all statements covering all utterances and statements which have been fabricated to give a meaning, and which have some effect. Second, discourse is defined as an individualizable set of statements encompassing all statements and utterances which seem to form a grouping (e.g., sexuality, child sexuality, asexuality, and heterosexuality). Finally, sometimes discourse is defined as a regulated practice that accounts for a number of statements, implying the unwritten rules, regulations, cultural and value structure which produce particular utterances and statements (e.g., socially and culturally prescribed rules for sexual relations, accessibility to knowledge on sexuality).

My own view is that discourse is best understood through some mutually supplementary ideas, such as power, resistance, knowledge, normalization, and truth. According to Foucault, power is everywhere. Unlike traditional views, power is not something people use to coerce individuals or force individuals to do something (e.g., through instruments such as the military). Power is circulated, diffused, and embedded in discourse, knowledge, and regimes of truth. In Foucault’s (1978) view, power is not something to be owned or held by individuals, but it is a

relation. However, power is exercised from innumerable and multiple points in terms of the linkage of non-egalitarian and mobile relations (Foucault, 1978). Power is also productive (Foucault, 1978), in that it produces the way we construct ourselves and each other in society. In other words, through the codified knowledge/discourse (power), in which power is embedded, we construct ourselves and each other. Power is what makes us what we are through the processes of normalization. Through normalization, according to Foucault (1978), we assess ourselves, we do not need to be suppressed by other direct and external power or institutions.

Part of Foucault's point is that there is tension between power and resistance as it is embedded in discourse. As power is dispersed and pervasive, power comes from anywhere, with resistance also a constant building block of power relations (Foucault, 1978). Thus, against the backdrop of this power-knowledge-truth cycle, "[d]iscourses are not once and for all subservient to power or raised up against it... a discourse can be an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy... [it] transmits and produces power; it reinforces it but also undermines and exposes it... (Foucault, 1978, p. 100)." In the case of an analysis of discourse on sexuality and sex education, power is one of the salient features because discourses on sexuality multiply in different areas in which power and resistance operate (Foucault, 1978). In the case of Bangladesh, for example, discourses of sexuality normalize sex within marriage and produce sex outside of marriage as offensive. However, the presence and prevalence of premarital sexuality is historically evident and has recently been rising astronomically. What is the important Foucauldian lesson here? Even though premarital sexuality is being strictly controlled in Bangladesh, it is propagating significantly.

Foucault shows how sex is embedded in discourse. Rejecting the alleged repressive hypothesis, he asserts that talking about sex is everywhere. Even when sex talk has been restricted or repressed, Foucault noted that it is still all around us (1978). The ‘institutional incitements’ from the institutions of power, such as schools, construct discourse as their own common-sense truth about sex (Foucault, 1978). Therefore, there is a ‘discursive explosion’ around sex. Sex is the most talked about topic in Western and other societies, and not repressed as is generally thought. However, this is talk about sexuality (against strict control) sometimes represses some realities while reproducing other realities. For example, even though some parents today talk about sexuality with their children, they reproduce the conventional gendered ideas about sexuality indicating their boys not to interact frequently with their girl-friends or vice-versa. Importantly, such as Bangladesh, if other explanations (or truths) about sex (e.g., subordinated/marginalized discourses on sexuality, such as homosexuality and child sexuality) are not allowed into discourse, the ‘official’ (the dominant or mainstream discourse on sexuality, such as heterosexuality and ‘only sex for adult’) ones are normalized. Child sexuality is denied (not simply silenced) vis-à-vis new regimes of power that seek to maintain childhood innocence (Foucault, 1978). Furthermore, it is dominant institutions, such as schools and religion, that provide prescriptions and guidance for children about what is appropriate and inappropriate action and thought regarding sex, and/or which is normal, and which is perversion about sex- thus exercising power over inclusion and exclusion in discourse.

Through a Foucauldian discursive lens, this study explores how social institutions (e.g., schools, parents, and media) construct sex education and sexuality through discursive/disciplinary knowledge. How are students, as subjugated bodies, constructing their subjectivities regarding sex and sexuality within current discourses and practices around sex

education? It is also significant to raise this question in response to existing sexuality discourses in which young men's sexual lives are fabricated. Flanagan (2011) observes that "[d]iscourses of children's sexuality are sustained when stories are 'told' and 'retold' by adults...the ways we currently speak and write about childhood sexuality...childhood identity is largely fashioned out of ideas of 'normalcy' and 'perversion' ... (p.72)." Thus, children's sexual identity and experiences are shaped and reshaped through a number of dominant discourses of sexuality.

Chapter 3

Review of Literature

How young boys navigate sexuality during their adolescence depends on the social institutions in which they learn essential social skills. Institutions, such as family, peers, schools, and media/Internet, play significant roles in teaching about sex and sexuality, and all thus contribute towards constructing young people's sexuality. This section defines the key terms of this research. After defining the key concepts, I present an overview of the perceived necessity of sex education by youth and parents in the South Asian context, especially Bangladesh, and in the Western context. Available literature has been categorized into these two compartments: the South Asian countries and the Western countries. After key concepts have been explained, this section will shed light on South Asian countries, including Bangladesh, in terms of how young men are provided sex education through family, peers, schools, and media/the Internet. The subsequent part of this section will discuss Western scholarships in the field of sex education, in terms of how family, peers, school, media/the Internet educate the young men about their sex and sexuality. This part also shows how the Western scholarship on sex education facilitates an understanding of the context of Bangladesh. Finally, I will look for the gaps in the reviewed literature to trace the unexplored questions in the field.

Key Terms: Child, Adolescent, Youth

This study will explore Bangladeshi young men's recollections on sources of information about sex and sexuality that they had during their adolescence. The terms child, adolescent, and youth need to be defined before further discussion, however, because these terms are subject to the socio-cultural context and legal framework of a given country. I will consider the context of

Bangladesh in defining child, adolescent, and youth. In Bangladesh, biological age is predominately and categorically deemed to distinguish child, adolescent, and youth. The national youth policy of Bangladesh (2003) declared that the people who belong to the age group of 18-35 years old are youth. However, this policy identifies those people belonging to the age group of 15-19 years old as adolescent. Conspicuously, these definitions of adolescent and youth therefore recognize those people who are below 15 years as children. By contrast, the national children policy of the Bangladesh government defines those males and female who belong to the age group of 14 to 18 years old as adolescent, while the people who are under 18 years old are considered children, which is consistent to the definition of United Nations (UN). In terms of the definition of youth, I would prefer something more than a biological determiner. I would say, “[y]outh as a stage in life that begins at the moment of transition from childhood, marked by the first signs of oncoming sexual maturity, and ends with entry into adulthood, with its attendant rights and duties” (Khan, 2005, p. 119). In this research, I will use the term youth to refer to a life category of the group of people, not simply as an age category. My study will explore young people’s experiences during their adolescence, as remembered during their youth.

Perceived Necessity of Sex Education: Bangladesh Context

In this section, I will focus on how the silence surrounding sex education has been eroded, and to what extent parents and youth feel the need for sex education for their well being. Then, I will present the available research, which focused on sex education. However, the purpose of this information is to figure out how these studies overlooked the sex education issues of boys or overtly pay their attention in some particular issues related to reproductive health.

In terms of perceived susceptibility or necessity, like the South Asian parents, Bangladeshi parents today tend to believe that today's youth are at high risk due to sexual violence, reproductive tract infections, unwanted premarital/teenage pregnancy, late term abortion for girls, the epidemic of HIV/AIDS and STIs. As a consequence, currently, both young people and parents have sought the introduction of sex education in either school or family in Bangladesh. For instance, in a study conducted in a rural area of Bangladesh, Cash et al. (2001) found that some young men conform to social traditions and have rejected the need for sex education. However, this study also acknowledges that a group of men felt a need for sex education by a person who can be trusted and obeyed by everyone including trusted friends, sisters-in-law, grandmothers, or village people. Despite these mutually - contradictory views, a significant and final conclusion can be drawn from the findings of Cash et al. (2001) that young men insist on the importance of sex education so that the education can lead young people to know how to have intercourse and to gain pleasure from it. This study, furthermore, proposed a learning center in villages for those who are not attending school (Cash et al., 2001). This suggestion is an important idea because a sober analysis of the matter reveals that relying on school-based sex education may overlook tens of thousands of young people who are either out of school or have dropped out. Anyone familiar with the school enrolment rate of developing societies should agree that sex education should be provided regardless of whether they are at school or out of school.

Like the Western and South Asian countries in which the institutionalization of formal sex education has already been set out, providing sex education in Bangladesh remains controversial regarding a number of unresolved issues that are typical when people are discussing and debating sex education: "when should a child receive sexual health education and

how is this decision linked to his or her competence, maturity, and understanding? What must be included in sexual health education, and what ages? What are the best interests of the child in terms of sexual health education, and who determines these? How do determinations of children versus parents' (and state's) rights either reproduce or challenge the traditional hierarchy between parents and young people? How or when do children's rights become complicated by cultural or religious traditions?" (van Vliet & Raby, 2008, p. 254). However, in Bangladesh the most predominant question is around who should be providing sex education. A study conducted among Bangladeshi parents found that 48.3% parents in Bangladesh agreed to provide sex education to their children within a limited scope (Bhuiyan, 2014). This study also demonstrated that 35% of parents agreed to provide knowledge on reproductive organs and their functions. In making comments on the findings of the study, I would say a significant number of parents are still not in favor of sex education.

In terms of research on sex education in Bangladesh, a few research projects have been conducted focusing on sex education. Most of the research conducted in Bangladesh is primarily focused on some particular issues related to reproductive and sexual health (e.g., Cash et al., 2001a, 2001 b; Rashid, 2000;Nahar et al., 1999; House, Mahon, & Cavill, 2012), general adolescent reproductive health (Barakat & Majid, 2003), reproductive health specific to girls (e.g., Uddin & Choudhury, 2008; Rashid & Michaud, 2000), adolescent reproductive health management services and policy(e.g., Dixon – Muller, 1988; Dixon – Muller, 1993; Nashid & Olsson, 2007), women's sexual behaviour (e.g., Khan, Townsend, & D' Costa, 2002), general sexual behaviour, young people's sexuality, fertility (Aziz & Maloney, 1985; Ahmed & Khan , 2012;Caldwell & Pieris, 1999), and assessing parents' attitude towards sex education (e.g., Bhuiyan, 2014). In addition to ignored boys' sexual and reproductive health, there is a dearth of

research on how young people are educated about sex and sexuality. Against this backdrop, I will review, in the next section, the studies from the South Asian countries, especially neighbouring and geographically close countries (e.g., India, Pakistan, and Nepal), because these countries have some commonalities in terms of providing sex education to children, adolescents, and young people, and related to attitudes, perceptions, beliefs, rituals, and practices around sex and sexuality.

Sex Education in the South Asia

Most of the South Asian countries have already made several attempts to provide sex education to young people. Regarding these attempts to provide sex education, they have a couple of common traits such as family-based sex education, in which parents and other senior family members are primary sources of sex education for young people (Rashid, 2000). Traditionally, for example in Bangladesh, peers are prominent sources of sex education for young people even though this is one of the controversial sources (Khatoon, 2016). Moreover, schools, as well as curriculum, are also providing sex education to a small extent, directly or indirectly, having underlined some particular aspects (e.g., disease preventive perspectives including HIV/AIDS and STIs, and focused on reproductive health (e.g., avoiding unwanted teenage pregnancy) (Khan, 2017). In terms of indirect sex education, some community service agencies provide (e.g., via ministry of family planning of Bangladesh government and NGOs) information on family planning, safe sex, and reproductive and sexual health (Cash et al., 2001a, 2001 b; House, Mahon, & Cavill, 2012; Barakat & Majid, 2003; Dixon-Muller, 1988; Dixon - Muller, 1993). In addition to the traditional sources, mentioned above, various media including social media such as online TV, blogs, YouTube, and many more Internet-based online sources

have recently been a popular way to get knowledge and information about sex and sexuality in this region (Hennink, Rana, & Iqbal, 2005; Rashid & Akram, 2014).

Like Bangladesh, in India, a significant number of parents are still not in favor of sex education. In terms of readiness to acceptance of sex education by the youth, studies reveal a substantial gap between the proportion of youth who perceived sex education to be important and those who actually receive it (Tripathi & Sekher, 2013). Of the South Asian countries, even though the debate on sexuality and the necessity of sex education in India are old, they initiated to provide formal sex education a couple of decades ago. The debates on sex education in India remain predominantly based on the ideas that Indian people do not need sex education because they have rich tradition and culture; and that in contrast it is necessary for Western society. It is assumed that sex education will have an adverse impact on Indian youth (Motihar, 2008). The advocates of the negative perceptions about sex education believe that sex education is only for married couples. By contrast, the opponents of these views, who see a need for sex education, have a firm belief that the current generations are badly in need of sex education because the current Indian generations are heavily exposed to the internet, and television, through which they are exposed to pornography, and casual sex or sex out of marriage are no longer presented as taboo in India (Motihar, 2008). The Indian young people are growing up in a fast-changing world with rapid changes in attitudes and expectations. This group of people does not deny that sex education is necessary to protect today's youth from risks of infectious diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, STIs, unwanted abortion, and teenage abortion. Even, within the indigenous community of India, Khasi, which is known for openness and public discussion on sexuality, War and Albert (2013) found that silence is omnipresent in the case of sexuality; young people get very little knowledge on sexuality from parents, schools, church, peers or media. Lambert

and Wood (2005) also argue that direct parent-child discussion on sex is absent, and considered inappropriate, evidence of showing unwillingness to discuss sexual matters with those who are sexually inexperienced. I will now examine each of these dimensions in more detail, looking at Bangladesh and the broader South Asian area, in terms of specific areas of focus.

Family

When sex education comes into the discussion, most of us will readily agree that family is an ancient and influential social institution in providing sex education to young people. Within South Asia, a number of studies have recently suggested that parent-children communication and sibling communication remain the building blocks of learning processes of sex and sexuality, in which adolescents and young people are attached to (Izugbara, 2004; Bhatasara, Chevo, & Changadeya, 2013; Dilorio, Pluhar, & Belcher, 2003; Martin, Luke, & Verduzco-Baker, 2007). I am of two minds about their claims that child-parent interaction is a dominating factor today. On the one hand, I agree that young people stay most of the time at home; they have still greater attachment to their parents than school and peers. On the other hand, I am not sure how young people can be sufficiently provided with knowledge about sex and sexuality by their parents. It is because parents as successful sex educators depend on successful communication with their children. Successful communication is subject to the extent of their interaction, how they are friendly or open minded to each other in sharing or receiving information about sex and sexuality. Consequently, whereas some are convinced that parents are effective educators to provide sex education to their adolescent and young children, others maintain that parent-children communication is not pleasant everywhere (e.g., South Asian countries), depending on a society's cultural background, and one's family background (Cash et al., 2001; Chakravarti, 2011; Motihar, 2008; Rashid, 2000). In addition, in this section, I will review the available

research articles to show how the South Asian families provide knowledge or information to young men about sex and sexuality.

Like in Western societies, parent-child communication is also an important source of sex education in the South Asia. Parents and young people are active participants in meaning making process around sexuality. These meanings, of course, are reflected in young men's experiences regarding how they navigate sex and sexuality. The essence of this notion is that the South Asian young people construct their meanings about sexuality in terms of their particular socio-cultural context of society (Bhatasara, Chevo, & Changadeya, 2013). In a rural area of Bangladesh, Cash et al. (2001a) found that both men and women learn about sex from their family members. However, the question is whether this sex education communication between parents and children is sufficient. Moreover, rural adolescent boys and girls learn about sex and sexuality from family members other than their parents (Cash et al., 2001a). Adolescent girls usually get help from elder sisters, sisters-in-law, and aunties, for instance. Though some parents said that they talk to their children about sexuality, it was only to tell them not to have sex until marriage, and to forbid girls mixing with boys. Their knowledge is not reliable because their talks are full of warning and fears for girls. For example, young girls are advised that if they mix with boys, it will bring pregnancy, and ultimately huge social cost for their family. Also, in terms of girls' menstruation, Rashid (2000) observes that young adolescent girls and their mothers do not usually share their experiences and knowledge about their menstruation due to social taboos. A sober analysis of the matter clearly reveals how adolescent girls are vulnerable in Bangladesh. Cash et al. (2001a) illustrated that adolescent girls are very vulnerable in managing their sex, sexuality, and sexual health as they are not provided with enough information and knowledge about sex and sexuality in their immediate family, and that help from other, extended family

members are not enough to minimize their vulnerabilities. In addition, pleasant and successful parent-children communication cannot guarantee a reduction young people's vulnerability as long as their parents are not knowledgeable about sex and sexuality. Rather, traditional and inaccurate ideas about sex and sexuality misguide their children. However, in terms of the study by Cash et al. (2001) and Rashid (2000), the issues faced by adolescent boys are still unexplored in terms of how they learn about sex and sexuality in the family, and to who they go in their family. Both authors indicate that boys may be left with even less educational guidance from than families than girls.

In contrast, in Pakistan, Hennink, Rana, and Iqbal (2005) argue that compared to young women, young men have a wide range of sources, including family (e.g., parents, senior members, siblings, uncle, cousins) regarding information about physical process such as wet dreams, acne, bodily hair, masturbation, and personal hygiene in religious practices. Subsequently, young men know about pre-marriage preparations and wedding or wedding night related intimacy and sexual behavior from married family members (e.g., cousin, uncle, brother). In the case of India, young people get very little knowledge from parents, direct parents-children talk about sexuality is considered inappropriate or absent (War & Albert, 2013; Lambert & Wood, 2005). In making a comment on other South Asian countries, mentioned above, they do not show significant differences about how young people are provided sex education under the shadow of family.

Peers, Relatives, and Community People

Peers are always great sources of sex education for adolescents and young people regardless of culture, gender, and socio-economic class. Traditionally, peers are influential for

learning about sex and sexuality among South Asian young people (e.g., Bangladesh, Pakistan), especially since the other sources (such as schools and family) are restricted by socio-cultural values.

In this part, I will provide insight from research articles from the South Asian perspectives including Bangladesh about how peers are influential as sex education providers. A study conducted in a rural area of Bangladesh found that both men and women learn about sex and sexuality from their peers (Cash et al., 2001). Generally, it is a very common practice for Bangladeshi adolescent boys and girls to have help from friends, older cousin, brothers, and sisters, even though these information providers might be ignorant in the case sexual and reproductive health (Rashid, 2000; Cash et al., 2001). Surprisingly, for boys, one of the dominant sources of education is to have premarital sexual relations with someone who is their senior though not usually a commercial sex worker, but someone whose husband is away (Cash et al., 2001).

According to the findings of the qualitative study conducted by Gazi et al. (2009), peers are the most influential motivators for buying sex. The percentage of young men less than 18 years old who visit commercial sex workers is between 46% to 48% of the total clients of commercial sex workers in Bangladesh (Gazi, et al., 2009). Thus, not surprisingly, visiting commercial sex workers is another source of sex education for young men in Bangladesh. To the question, “Why do you purchase sex from commercial sex workers,” a substantial number of participants replied, “to prove masculinity” (Gazi et al., 2009, p. 167). In addition, since Bangladeshi young people become very curious about sex and sexuality since their adolescence, they use commercial sex workers as a source of knowledge and lessons.

In a study based on impact assessment of a sex education programme entitled ‘Adolescent Reproductive Health Education’ (ARHE) led by a non-government organization (NGOs), Rashid (2000) argues that friends are one of the main sources of information about sex and sexuality for adolescents. She notes, however, that peers are not reliable and effective sources; they often encourage adolescents engage in risky behavior. Instead, she stresses the value of school-based textbooks and curricula. By shedding light on institutional discourses, I would argue, Rashid (2010) overlooks the deeper problems and debates on sex education because there is ample evidence globally that school-based sex education produces narrow medical discourses, encourages silences, and neglects desire and pleasure, as I will discuss in the next section.

Like in Bangladesh, Hennink, Rana, and Iqbal (2005) argue that peers and friends are influential sources of sex education to young people in Pakistan. Young people talk with their peers about puberty (e.g., physical processes such as wet dreams, acne, bodily hair, masturbation, personal hygiene in religious practices) and sexual development (e.g., sex techniques and pleasure, pregnancy, sexual hygiene in religious practices). However, Hennink, Rana, and Iqbal (2005) are concerned about the gap between age and gender, in which young men (also women) are left to independently make decisions regarding sexuality since these sources may lead to a haphazard and fragmented knowledge of personal and sexual development at the time of marriage (Hennik, Rana, & Iqbal, 2005). It is often said that vulnerabilities induced by age and gender, due to the lack of knowledge and skills, lead young adolescents (both boys and girls) to become victim of physical and sexual abuse (Qazi, 2017). In the context of Pakistan, Qazi (2017) states that “adolescents ... often lack knowledge about sexuality and reproduction and are unprepared for physical and emotional changes...during what is already a vulnerable time of

transition, many young people experience physical and sexual abuse” (p. 80). In a nutshell, peers have had historical value as informal sex education providers within traditional and conservative societies even though they are not reliable because peers usually belong to the same position in terms of knowledge and expertise about sex and sexuality.

School

Most South Asian countries have no formal school curriculum on sex education. However, as noted above, Bangladesh, for example, has been providing some content for sex education through different school textbooks and education programs run by government and non-government organizations (e.g., general sciences, social sciences, biology, and home sciences). In this part of the review of literature, I will provide an overview of how the textbooks educate young people about sex and sexuality, with a focus on Bangladesh’s new compulsory secondary school textbook, entitled ‘Physical Education, Health Science and Sports’ for grades six to ten, in which there is a chapter on puberty and reproductive health (Muhammad & Haque, 2012). I conducted a review study (2017) based on the chapter of the book for grades 9-10, which delves into contents, structure, and pedagogy of sex education in the book chapter. I raise concerns that the book chapter shows the tendency to reproduce models of sex education, which are constructed based on traditional sexuality discourses called the “preventive perspective” (Garcia-Cabeza & Sanchez-Bello, 2013, p.1750) of sex education. In terms of pedagogy, it treats students as passive participants disregarding their critical, reflexive and decision-making capacities. In terms of content, there is little domain for making sound sexual health decisions for the young people who are missing essential issues relating to gender identity, self-identity and self-assessment, emotional, and socio-affective relationships, as well as sexual behaviour (Garcia-Cabeza & Sanchez-Bello, 2013; Khan, 2017). Even though a number of important topics

are described in the chapter, it is too brief and mostly reflecting stereotypical practices, emotions, myths, cultural and rituals practices of sexual health, sexual rights, and sexual abuse (Garcia-Cabeza & Sanchez-Bello, 2013; Khan, 2017). In addition to perspectives, pedagogy and content, the book chapter overemphasises some issues, such as bodily identity (e.g., the physical and psychological changes occurring during adolescence), fertility, reproduction, pregnancy, abortion, contraceptive, and STDs (Garcia-Cabeza & Sanchez-Bello, 2013; Khan, 2017). I also argue that the whole content is overtly based on a medical discourse of puberty, reproductive health and sexuality, omitting the issues of lived experiences and the social constructions of practices, illness, and diseases (Khan, 2017). Even though the chapter is confined to discuss puberty and reproductive health, it does focus beyond the body by highlighting the profound physical, physiological, emotional, and psychological changes during puberty (Khan, 2017). However, it fabricates “the human body as a neutral conglomeration of physical processes, symptoms, and infections, which is seen as a burden rather than source of vitality. Adolescent sexuality is presented as a problem that must be managed within the bounds of moral decency” (Ckharavarti, 2011, p.392). More importantly, this book chapter shows reluctance to use the term sex even though one of the main objectives of the chapter is to teach students about puberty and reproductive health. The chapter provides somewhat confusing, contradictory, and vague ideas about reproduction and puberty. The contents are very shallow, tricky and ambiguous, in which some of the content has been just introduced without any detailed explanation of processes such as reproductive organs, nocturnal emissions, and ejaculations (Khan, 2017). Further, puberty and reproductive health are presented based on danger and fear as a chemical function of body or hormone avoiding exploring socio-cultural constructions and need for desire and pleasure in sexuality (Tulloch & Lupton, 1995; Harrison & Hillier, 1999; Britzman, Allen, & Carmody,

2012; Khan, 2017). This rhetoric can be silencing and scare-mongering, leading children and young people to learn about many aspects of sexuality by relying on informal sources.

Similarly, West Bengal, a state of India neighboring to Bangladesh, introduced a compulsory secondary school textbook, entitled 'Life Style Education' (2005), which provides sex education to adolescents in terms of puberty, reproductive and sexual health, safe sex, HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (Chakravarti, 2011). Even though this sex education textbook is welcome, with a different cover and title, by the people of the West Bengal, around 11 states in India banned this textbook claiming that it contradicted their religious, nationalist, social and cultural values (Chakravarti, 2011), which became a political flashpoint (Motihar, 2008). Yet, when Takhur and Kumar (2000) conducted an impact assessment study on Indian school-based sex education programs, they found that these programs have a positive impact on youth's attitude, perceptions, practices, knowledge towards sex and sexuality, and STIs even though they prefer doctor as their first choice for information.

In Nepal, sex education is provided to the students at the higher secondary level in a chapter of a book indirectly entitled 'Health, Population, and Environment.' My view is that they too are using strategy to maintain silence, which can be called 'sex education under the carpet' (Chakravarti, 2011). Their chapter is structured in similar ways to the one in Bangladesh. While the aim of the curriculum is to provide sexuality education for young people, the language of the book is vague, confusing, and marginalises people who do not conform to the societal stereotype of sex, gender, and ability (Das, 2014). To sum up, the South Asian counties (e.g., Bangladesh, India, and Nepal) have some commonalities of the nature and amount of sex education in terms of school-based sex education, and this education is far from comprehensive.

Media/Internet

Debates on the effectiveness of various sources of the sex education still remain unresolved. These debates get advanced with the advent of newly emerging media and Internet. Though I believe that family is a suitable place, in which parents are more trusted, expert, and honored in providing sex education, in this age of globalization, I am persuaded by those who advocate for the Internet as a potentially effective way to educate young people about sex and sexuality, although the role of the media also raises concerns. I would say the roles of formal social institutions such as family and school as sex educator are waning because today's youth of the South Asian countries are flooded with a number of traditional media and newly emerging social media such as satellite TV, Internet-based online TV, blogs, YouTube and many more online sources. Currently, in my own view, young people prefer these media to seeking help from peers because of confidentiality, privacy, and accessibility. Now, I will shed light on studies that show how youth are consuming these media for sex and sexuality education. In so doing, here, I focus on how the media, and especially the Internet, are influencing today's Bangladeshi young people in terms of sexual behavior, including especially watching pornography.

A recent survey conducted in Bangladesh by a non-government organization (NGO), *Manuser Jonno Foundation* (2016), which claimed that 77% (n=500) of school-going children in Dhaka watch pornography. In a study conducted in a peri-urban area of Bangladesh by Ahmed and Khan (2012), they found that 54.1% people watch pornography and 32% watch pornography every day. This study also found that 41% of unmarried respondents have had experiences of sex, suggesting watching pornography and sexuality out of marriage are connected in Bangladesh. Against this backdrop, it is highly likely that youth are currently relying on

knowledge and information about sex and sexuality from pornography they are seeing on the Internet. These arguments are consistently borne out by Rashid and Akram (2014), who argue that electronic medium such as Internet and video pornography are the great sources of knowledge and information for sex, sexuality, and sexual relations.

The findings of Rashid and Akram (2010) are also consistent with a study's findings from Pakistan, which show that pornography, or sexually explicit pornographic media, is also a strong source of knowledge, which Pakistani young men are using to know about their personal and sexual development (Hennik, Rana, & Iqbal, 2005). They also argue that, compared to young women, young males have a wide range of sources to acquire knowledge about puberty from Internet sites, video, cable TV, Hakeem (a traditional healer), and gym clubs. Subsequently, young people know about pre-marriage preparations and wedding or wedding night related intimacy and sexual behavior from video and books. However, they are concerned about the gap between age and gender, in which young people are left to make decisions regarding sexuality and the sources may lead to a haphazard and fragmented knowledge of personal and sexual development at the time of marriage (Hennik, Rana, & Iqbal, 2005). The studies, mentioned above, reveal that the Internet and related social media are popular forms of sex education for South Asian young people even though it is still unknown how young people are using the Internet to know about sex and sexuality

Sex Education in the Western Societies

Our common sense seems to dictate that Western societies, economically developed or industrialized societies, are in favor of providing sex education to young people. My whole life I have heard it said that in the Western young people are very fortunate as their parents are

communicative in providing sex education, and schools are well prepared to provide sex education and life skills for a healthy future life. What is important to realize, however, is that, the debate regarding which sources of sex education are the most preferred for young people is still in progress in the Western world. Controversy is also perpetuated regarding how and what content of sex education should be provided. In this section, I will review the literature to show how Western adolescents and, especially young men are provided with sex education through family, schools, peers, and media/Internet. Understanding the Western young people's experiences regarding sex and sexuality will help to figure out the Bangladeshi young people's experiences in local a context by providing insights on the current status of the sex education in a global context.

Family. In the case of Western societies, a welcome growth of literature sheds light on parent-child communication as well as the family more broadly as an important source of sex education. However, researchers have shown dissenting views regarding the nature of parents-children communication in terms of dyad communication (e.g., mother-daughter interaction, father-son communication) and triad communication (e.g., mother-daughter-son, parents-daughter, and parents-son). This part of the literature review will show how the Western family is playing roles in educating their young people about sex and sexuality.

American researchers, Dilorio, Pluhar, and Belcher (2003), argue that parents are more willing to talk about sexuality with their daughters, but while American fathers usually help their boys in this regard, this help is not sufficient. American mothers are more approachable to discuss sexuality for both sons and daughters because they are often viewed as more emotionally expressive (King & Lorusso, 1997). However, such communication is still more comfortable with their daughters. Overall, mothers are more active by playing the role of a sex educator

whereas fathers show a more passive role in most of the cases (Dilorio, Pluhar, and Belcher, 2003), leading boys to receive less information. This research resonates with what may be happening in South Asian societies.

Regarding the content of talk between children and parents, Dilorio, Pluhar, and Belcher (2003) provide comprehensive findings based on a review study available from 1980 to 2002 in the field. According to American parents' reports, the most frequently discussed topics are menstruation, reproduction, pregnancy, birth, HIV/AIDS, and sexual values, while wet dreams, erections, masturbation, and abortion are less frequent discussed topics. As per the reports of American children, on the other hand, menstruation and dating relationship are frequently discussed topics, whilst wet dreams and masturbation are seldom discussed. According to American parents, furthermore, the roadblocks to sexual communication include embarrassment, and unwillingness to acknowledge and accept adolescents' sexuality (Dilorio, Pluhar, and Belcher, 2003).

Tolman (2002), argues that parents are providing 'double standards' about gender, sex, and sexuality to adolescents and young people in terms of desire, pleasure, and sexual orientations. For example, adolescent boys and young men are taught by their parents that girls are object of boys' desire, with the implication that they have no desire of their own. American parents also provide their children with very contradictory and unrealistic discourses about sex and sexuality (Elliott, 2010). American parents perceive their own teenagers as asexual and sexually innocent (Elliott, 2010). Interestingly, however, they see other teenagers as hypersexual (Elliott, 2010). This 'binary thinking' (e.g., my children versus your children) of parents constructs young peoples' sex and sexuality as classist and racist (Elliott, 2010). In fact, how parents navigate their children's sex and sexuality, depends on parents' cultural and family

values, and where they live. Hence, perceptions and practices regarding young people's sex and sexuality vary extensively even within the Western societies. Schalet (2011) illustrates how American and Dutch parents differ in understanding and navigating young people's sex and sexuality, for instance. She argues that historically Dutch family values have developed in a substantially different direction from their counterpart in the United States, even though they have similar historical (e.g., experience of sex revolution) and socio-cultural background (e.g., both western values) (Schalet, 2011). This study illustrated, on the one hand, that adolescent sexual development is viewed negatively by American parents; they also believe that open dialogue about sex and sexuality with children is taboo. In turn, American children feel generally unhappy about their sexual experiences; they are not properly prepared for sex because they are not informed enough, nor provided them with tools to have sex, necessary skills to responsibly make the decision (Schalet, 2011). On the other hand, Dutch parents are welcoming, liberal, frank and cordial in their dialogue about sex education to their children. They embrace children's sexual development as a natural process of adolescence, they do not try to delay their children's sexual activity (Schalet, 2011).

In summary, Western family-based sex education is still in controversy, changing and not homogenous. Western parents are still in doubt about the efficacy of different sources of sex education as well. In terms of relative merits of family and school-based sex education, for example, in the context of Canadian society, Canadian (e.g., New Brunswick) parents are of mixed minds. Weaver et al. (2002) found that 94% of parents agreed that sex education should be provided at school, while 95% parents thought that both school and family should jointly provide sex education.

Peers. In addition to the contribution of a family or parents in providing sex education, a growing amount of literature argues that children have relied heavily on peers for sex education (King & Lorusso, 1997). The claims of Strouse & Richard (1985) that peers are convenient and well-communicated sources for sex education, rest upon questionable assumptions because peers are risky informal sources, which can provide the most misconceptions regarding sex, sexuality, and sexual health to the young people. Although I disagree with their arguments, I fully endorse the social reality that young people still feel more comfortable sharing their personal issues with their peers regardless of the society they live in. Further, the research by Strouse & Richard (1985) may be obsolete, and the current situation may be different. Surprisingly, a study conducted in the UK by Stephenson et al. (2008) found no significant connection between peer-led sex education (e.g., formal and informal private chatting among peers) and change in teenage pregnancy or abortions. This study suggests that this method of sex education was popular among students and led to fewer teenage births.

Of concern, peer connections can also be linked to potential sexual abuse. It is taken for granted that girls have to encounter sexual abuse in dealing sexual and reproductive health, but boys are vulnerable too. Regardless of gender, as per Alaggia (2005), it is estimated that between 30% and 40% of victims do not disclose their childhood sexual abuse before adulthood. Stoltenborgh et al. (2011) illustrated, based on a meta-analysis of 217 globally published research articles (1980-2008), that the overall data represent more girl victims (180/1000) of sexual abuse than boys (76/1000). However, some argue that boys also become victims of sexual abuse, but these cases are underreported, underrecognized, and undertreated (Holmes & Slap, 1998; Alaggia, 2005; Larsson & Svedin, 2002; Mathews et al., 2017). For instance, the report on sexual abuse of American boys underlines the adolescent period of boys, in which some boys

become victims of sexual abuse (Garnefski and Arends, 1998). Perpetrators can include both women and men (Risin & Koss, 1987; Alaggia, 2005; Holmes & Slap, 1998; Larson & Syedin, 2002), although we know that boys usually become a victim of sexual abuse when they seek information from same-aged or slightly elder peers (Risin & Koss, 1987). Specific to perpetrators, several researchers reveal that trusted family members, friends, and acquaintances are common in the case of boys like girl victims (Larsson & Svedin, 2002; Holmes & Slap, 1998). Regarding boy's victimization, "the predominate experience was that of being abused by older males in childhood or early adolescence" (Alaggia, 2005, p. 461). Several studies assert that reporting sexual abuse is more prevalent among girls than boys (Alaggia, 2005). Regarding disclosure, boys or males cannot unveil their victimization because of society's constructed masculinity, homophobia as well as fear of being stigmatized as homosexual and associated maltreatment (Alaggia, 2005). This abuse can have severe negative impacts in adulthood in terms of internalized homophobia, shame, and losing emotions in sexuality (Risin & Koss, 1987; Alaggia, 2005; Garnefski and Arends, 1998; Marcell, Wibbelsman, & Seigel, 2011). The studies, discussed above, suggest that we cannot disregard that young men also have history of sexual abuse, which is connected to the lack knowledge and skills regarding sex and sexuality. In the light of attempts of investigation with a view to understanding how adolescent boys navigate puberty induced-vulnerabilities, little is known about how boys become victim of sexual abuse in search of sex education from their peers.

Schools. Other than informal sources of sex education, school-based sex education is globally recognized as an avenue of sex education for young people. The discussions, mentioned in the previous sections, tell us a great deal about the contributions of family and peers as sex educators to young people. The contributions of formal social institutions (e.g., school,

curriculum, and textbooks) in providing sex education also need to be examined. In this part, I will demonstrate with current literature how schools are providing sex education to Western young people, especially in the United States.

Since the inception of formal school-based sex education, providing sex education through textbooks has also seemed complicated in Western countries, much like in South Asian countries. In terms of independent textbooks, for instances, sex education as a separate subject is taught in very few Western countries. A significant number of western and industrially developed countries such as Spain, the Netherlands, France, Japan, and the UK provide sex education as a part of subjects such as natural sciences, biology, home economics, home sciences, and physical education (Garcia-Cabeza & Sanchez-Bello, 2013). In reality, this curriculum tends to be silent on desire and pleasure, ignorant of diversity of sexual identity, and therefore incomplete. It is also biased by medical or biological perspectives, and shaped by the assumptions about gender, race, sex and class (Luksik and Markova, 2010; Tolman, 2002; Schalet, 2011a; Schalet, 2011b; Schalet, 2010; Pascoe, 2007; Whitten & Sethna, 2014).

Numerous research articles have a consensus that sex education knowledge, like all other knowledge, is constructed within a discursive formation, which operates beyond the conscious level of individual subjects (Luksik & Markova, 2010). This discursive knowledge reflects and reproduces power relations, and it is enacted by some social institutions (e.g., school, religion) with tools such as morality, rights, silence, and reliance on biological perspectives (Luksik & Markova, 2010). The ultimate goal of these institutions is to exercise power through sex education. The schools and textbooks also enjoy the in-built authority to exercise power to shape adolescent behavior (e.g., sexual behavior) with a variety of strategies and instruments of power (e.g., rights, silence, cultural values or morality). What is communicated in the textbooks is

intimately connected more to “what is omitted than to what is actually expressed” (Garcia-Cabeza & Sanchez-Bello, 2013, p.1750). Another way to look at school based sex education is in terms of how both ‘scientia sexualise’ (scientific aspects of human sexuality: the inhumane aspect of sex like the reproduction role of animals) and ‘ars erotica’ (a matter of individuals’ feelings: something we enjoy, something we desire, and something that brings pleasure) are used to underpin institutional control over individuals (Foucault, 1978). The former one is embedded in Western sex education curriculum, which suppresses young people’s creativity, freedom of thinking and inner potentials (Iverson, 2007; Luksik & Markova, 2010; Garcia-Cabeza and Sanchez-Bello, 2013). Therefore, power is circulated and dispersed through the instruments (e.g., ‘scientia sexualise’: discursive knowledge) of what is included (e.g., fertility, pregnancy, reproduction techniques, contraceptive method, and STDs)-and /excluded (e.g., pleasure, desire, and different sexualities) having legitimized preventive perspective (Garcia-Cabeza& Sanchez-Bello, 2013).

In the case of school-based sex education discourses, it is not silence that is at play, it is rather the production of intentional silence which propagates other rival or alternative discourses to come into existence, such as those focused on the centrality of love, shame, family values, and/or reputations (Luksik & Markova, 2010). These cultural values may conceal adolescents’ right to know, and right to make decisions independently, which may result in keeping adolescents away from knowledge about sex and sexuality education, making them incompetent to navigate their sex and sexuality. Therefore, through silencing, schools show their positive intention (e.g., what I would say ‘intentional silencing’) even though it is illusion. The arguments of Luksik and Markova (2010) further underpin the views that school-based sex education is contaminated with ambiguity, pretensions and double standards (e.g., chastity is for girls, not

boys) (see also Tolman, 2002). At this point, I am two minds about the politics of school-led sex education. On the one hand, I concede that school is providing sex education. On the other hand, in the name of sex education, they are providing such forms of sex education which are limited and partial, and dominated by medical discourses (Luksik & Markova, 2010), as well as gendered, classist, sexist, and racist perspectives. The subsequent section focuses on how Western, school-based sex education provides such judgemental knowledge about sex and sexuality to young people.

Several recent Western studies have complained that the Western school-based sex education is gendered, classist, sexist, and racist. For example, in American schools, it is taught that girls are the objects of boy's sexual desire or girls do not have their own sexual desire (Tolman, 2002). Keeping chastity is underlined for girls; boys are considered sexual predators (Schalet, 2011a; Schalet, 2011b). In terms of cultural beliefs and processes in shaping the American young people's negotiation of heterosexuality, Schalet (2010) notes that American girls are at greater risk of the stigma of 'slut' compared to their Dutch counterparts. Pascoe (2007) also explores how American high schools provide gendered ideas about sex and sexuality that produce hegemonic masculinity. She argues that schools provide (through lessons) the essential instruments to boys to confirm 'hetero-masculine' selfhood and teaches them to deny everything which does not conform to it. She also found that sex is presented in a very negative way, against desire and pleasure, while mastering and conquering a girl's body is overemphasised instead. In Canadian sex education curriculum, as Whiteten & Sethna (2014) observe, the discussion on anti-racist sex education is absent in school materials even though they sometimes include information about sexual diversity and queer identities. In these ways, we see how sex education can reproduce bias in terms of gender and race.

In addition to biases in terms of sex, gender, race, and class, Western school-based sex education employs the notion of morality, basic needs, and rights to exercise power through sex education discourses. For example, Luksik and Markova (2010) illustrate how schools overestimate abortion-related risks and the advantage of contraception, raising moral questions regarding reproduction and the body. Thus, students are subjugated through the discourse of morality-induced power. Similarly, basic needs and related rights/legal framework are underscored in school-based sex education to exercise power over individuals as they suggest ‘correct cultural values of sexuality’ (Luksik & Markova, 2010, p.17). The essence of this argument is that students are compelled to fit with their constructed system or structure through the normalization processes. In fact, raising questions of right to life, body, health, and happiness is a political answer to all the new procedures of power (Luksik & Markova, 2010). This ambivalent character of discourses, in which adolescent sexuality is tolerated, even acted on but only when it is subject to rights and responsibilities (as connected to health care), are entertained in the textbooks (Holzner & Oetomo, 2004). As a result, textbook-based sex education discourse is often full of mystery which is a strategy to control adolescent sexual behaviors, bodies and, health, as Luksik and Markova (2010), Bay-Cheng (2003), and Holzner and Oetomo (2004) all agree. A Slovakian textbook, for instance, refers to kissing for adolescents even though the processes are unexplored (Luksik and Markova, 2010). In terms of abstinence only sex education (e.g., the focus of the American school-based sex education), it ignores the right of young people to know because it underlines control and prevention, not desire (van Vliet & Raby, 2008). It also violates young people’s rights to knowledge about disapproving contraception, masturbation, and diversities in sexual orientations, and premarital sexual relations (van Vliet & Raby, 2008). The western school-based sex education also denies the rights of boys by providing

limited information to them. These rights violations impose extra responsibilities for girls, implying that reproduction and reproductive health are only girls' responsibilities (Levesque, as cited in van Vliet & Raby, 2008). Through these kinds of restrictions and raising the issues of morality and rights, mentioned above, alongside broader focus on abstinence and risk, schools and educators exercise power over young people and problematically limit what they learn about sex (Luksik & Markova, 2010; Harrison & Hillier, 1999).

Silencing desire and pleasure is another dominant feature of Western school-based sex education, by which Western schools provide biased, partial, incomplete, and gendered sex education to young people. Most of the materials on sex education in Western countries are based on medical discourses focusing on cognitive and rational approaches, which exclude or deny desiring bodies. Fine (1988), Harrison and Hillier (1999), Bridges and Hauser (2014), and Cameron-Lewis and Allen (2013) assert in reviewing sex education's curriculum that sex education discourses are missing desire and pleasures. Interestingly, female desires are mostly absent in sexuality discourse, even though all pleasure for a male is not missing. Fine (1992) complains that "the naming of desire, pleasure, or sexual entitlement, particularly for females, barely exist in the formal agenda of public schooling on sexuality" (cited in Harrison & Hillier, 1999, p. 281). This suppression of discourses on female sexual desires is also constructed through the normalization of female subjectivity. Harrison and Hillier's (1999) claim that female sexual desire is most often mediated by a sense of relationships, feeling of belongingness, love, sex and as an investment for relationships. Unlike Harrison & Hillier's (1999), Cameron-Lewis and Allen (2013) argue that separation of the 'discourse on pleasure' from 'discourse on danger' in curriculum design is problematic to make sense clearly the ideas of consent, an art of

negations, relevance and recognition of pleasure, danger and ambivalence, sexual intimacy, complexities of sexualities.

As mentioned earlier, resistance is embedded in power relations (Foucault, 1978), and this relation is not linear between sex educators and students. Young people express resistance in different ways. For instance, even though school may maintain restrictions on talking about certain aspects of sex and sexuality, a number of informal or animated discussions are taking place among students either on and off campus (Gordon, 2010). In addition, restricting talk about sex and sexuality may multiply talk about sexuality. For example, Irvine (2000) espoused that imposing restrictions on sex and sexuality through movements (e.g., Christian rights movement) may “backfire” (p. 76) because it may open the space for resistance instead of promoting shame and fear. Additionally, Harrison & Hillier (1999) argue that silencing is not always meant to be an exercise of teachers’ power; rather, students can try to show their power (e.g., through resistance) by asking embarrassing personal questions because there is a concern among teachers in terms of insulting, rumors, causing embarrassment for themselves or school (Harrison & Hillier, 1999). The rising gap, mentioned above, between students’ lived experiences of sexuality and sexual relations, and adult methods/ mechanisms to control these experiences are problematic for healthy adulthood (Luksik and Markova, 2010). In making this comment, they urge us to rethink the exercise of power through the non-conventional bottom-up approach as well as seeing power from any point (Foucault (1978). In a nutshell, the Western school-based sex education is still full of questionable and controversial methods.

Media/the Internet. It is a taken for granted assumption that most young people in Western countries have more privileged access to the latest technology and communication devices compared to developing countries (e.g., South Asian countries). Western young people

are comfortable with media and Internet-based sources, which are influencing profoundly every sphere of their lives. As young people are the heaviest consumers of this technology, it is imperative to examine how they are using these technologies to learn about sex and sexuality. In this age of global technologies, many people assume that the roles of school, family, and peers as providers of sex education are waning day by day because of accessibility to and feasibility of the Internet. In this part, I will provide scholarly works to show how Western young people are using the Internet (e.g., YouTube, blogs, websites) for sex education.

In a study conducted in Sweden, Daneback et al. (2012) found that almost half of their sample (n=1913) got help from the Internet to learn about sexuality. Although the internet plays a significant educational roles, however, an American study observed that even though American adolescents browse the Internet regularly, they still rely more on the traditional sources of information such as school, family, and friends because they do not trust the sources and contents of sexual health from the online websites (Jones & Biddlecom, 2011). Their concern about the trustworthiness of Internet sources for sex education is extremely useful because it sheds insight into the unreliability of many Internet sources because anyone can upload any information. Thus, young people are very often consuming inaccurate, contradictory information, socially stereotyped knowledge, and misconceptions regarding sex, sexuality, and relationship during independent on-line learning. In this context, Simon and Daneback (2013), in another study conducted in Sweden illustrate a tension. On the one hand, they argue that internet-based sex education intervention increases young people's knowledge regarding sex and sexuality. On the other hand, online information on sex education lacks quality. They disagree with Jones and Biddlecom (2011) that young people can evaluate the sources.

In terms of pornography as a sex educator, Albury (2014) has reviewed the research from four developed countries (The UK, America, Australia, and the North America). He is of a mixed mind about whether pornography may be effective sex education pedagogy for someone (e.g., same sex young people, heterosexual adults), but perhaps not for heterosexual young people. Pornography is a great source of explicit information and provides significant supports for sexual confidence for same sex attracted people (Waugh, 1996; Ruddock & Kain, 2006; Hillier & Harrison, 2007; Albury, 2014). However, pornography may bring negative repercussions for heterosexual young people as it often eroticises gender inequality (Crabbe & Corlett, 2010; Albury, 2014). In terms of heterosexual adults, pornography may be positive sources of sexuality education because of their maturity whereas it brings about negative impacts to young heterosexual men (Watson & Smith, 2012; Flood, 2009, Johnson, 2012; Albury, 2014).

Looking at the salient facts/lessons from the literature

In the following part of the review of literature, I will show how Western studies on sex education help to inform the context of Bangladesh about young people's sex education. Finally, I will draw attention on the gaps of the existing literature (the south Asian and the western perspectives) to show what questions in this field still remain to be answered.

The Western research on sex education is important for my research because Bangladesh does not have enough scholarly evidence aimed at exploring young people's experiences of navigating sex and sexuality. Many people assume that biological experiences of childhood, adolescence, and young people are universal. Though I concede that people's biological constructions are the same regardless of their society, consistent with social constructionist perspectives, I insist that biological components or actions also flourish in a particular socio-

cultural context, which is a variable from society to society or group to group. However, even though there is a significant gap between Western societies and non-Western, such as Bangladesh, in terms of cultural practices, it has become common today to dismiss the differences between these two parts of the planet because of globalization processes. Nowadays, the people of any corner of the world are influencing each other through information and communication technology in every sphere of their lives. Also, my view is that the people from non-western societies are heavily influenced by the culture of western society. For these reasons, understanding Western young men's experiences of navigating sex and sexuality will help me to understand how Bangladeshi young men navigate their experiences about sex and sexuality.

As I have outlined, in the case of other parts of South Asia, as well as Bangladesh, research on sex education is dominated by investigating the attitude of parents and perceptions towards education on sex and sexuality, exploring the sources and contents of sex education in terms of family, school, and peers as sex education providers (Cash et al., 2001; Chakravarti, 2011; Motihar, 2008; Rashid, 2010; Hennik, Rana, & Iqbal, 2005; War & Albert, 2013; Lambert & Wood, 2005; Khan, 2017). Several Western studies (Adams, Oye & Parker, 2003; Simon & Daneback, 2013) also suggest that young people are using the Internet and watching pornography to learn about sex and sexuality. The growing use of the Internet, and especially the use of pornography both online and off-line for sex education has also influenced non-Western societies such as Bangladesh. Yet, many people assume that the role of the traditional sources of sex education, such as family, schools, and peers, are waning. Moreover, several studies place Internet-based sex education in a very significant position for today's young people (e.g., Lou et al., 2006; Adams, Oye & Parker, 2003; Simon & Daneback, 2013). A significant part of young men's experiences regarding how they navigate their experiences about sex and sexuality during

their adolescence with the help of Internet-based media, remains unexplored. My study thus focusses on this gap in the existing research addressing how today's young people use Internet-based media in search of sex education.

Regarding of access to Internet-based media, pornography consumptions, and sexual experiences out of marriage, it is well established that adolescent young men are in a more privileged position compared to their adolescent young women (Ahmed & Khan, 2012; Rashid, 2000; Cash et al., 2001a; Aziz & Maloney, 1985; Caldwell & Pieris, 1999). Interestingly, currently people (parents, teachers, and policy makers) are concerned about the boys' privileged positions leaving some imperative questions: what type of education are adolescent boys receiving, especially from Internet based sources, and are these sources providing them with more opportunities or making them more vulnerable? This is one of the unexplored avenues I will try to explore through interviewing with young men in this thesis. In my view, these questions are significant in the context of Bangladesh because a good number of scholars complain that these sources are not reliable and provide contradictory information (Albur, 2014; Jones & Biddlecom, 2011).

As I have previously mentioned, Bangladeshi adolescent girls, as well as women, are vulnerable and victims of discrimination due to the patriarchal social structure with special reference to sex, sexuality, sexual and reproductive health (e.g., Rashid & Michaud, 2000; Khan, Townsend, & D' Costa, 2002; Rashid, 2000; Nahar et al., 1999; Uddin & Choudhury, 2008; House, Mahon, & Cavill, 2012). However, Bangladeshi adolescent boys are also vulnerable in navigating sexual and reproductive health, but their vulnerabilities and sufferings are unique and different in nature. In addition, much of global and local Bangladeshi research acknowledges that boys' traditional or hegemonic masculinity make them vulnerable by encouraging risky

behaviour, including risky sexual behaviour (e.g., Kabir, 2015; Sanatana, Raj, Decker, La Marche, & Sileverman, 2006), harmful health behavior (Mahalik, Lagan, & Morrison, 2006; Courtenay, 2000), suicide, and alcohol or drug abuse (Moller-Leinmkuhler, 2003). In addition, boys also face vulnerabilities in terms of maladaptive coping strategies including inexpressiveness and, reluctance to seek help (Moller-Leinmkuhler, 2003). For example, boys encounter difficulties in having close relations with other boys; boys have fewer close friendships and lower levels of intimacy with their friends compared to girls (Belle, as cited in Chu, 2005). Overall, we know very little about how adolescent boys navigate sources of knowledge about sex and sexuality, and related challenges/vulnerabilities. This study focuses on this gap about how adolescent boys experience vulnerabilities in navigating sex and sexuality.

Chapter 4

Methodology

Research Method and Paradigm

This study explores the recollections and narratives of young men in terms of how they navigated and experienced sexuality as well as sex education during their adolescence. This study also identifies the formal and informal sources of information about sex and sexuality they sought. In so doing, I analyze their narratives as well as their experiences regarding what they learned through interacting with different social institutions such as family, peers, school, media/the Internet.

Choosing a methodology for a study is a significant component of a whole research endeavor, which signifies how a researcher investigates the research problem in a scientific/systematic way. A methodology of a study in social sciences depends on the nature of the study, what is being studied, the research questions, how the research questions are addressed, and the theoretical paradigm being used. As I wanted to delve into young men's narratives, including those addressing personal experiences, perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, and practices regarding sex education, this study employed a qualitative approach, rather than aiming to show inferences from numerical data, causal relationships, and predictions. Based on the interpretative paradigm, I tried to understand the subjective, as well as the socio-culturally constructed, meaning of the participants' experiences regarding sex education during their adolescence. Qualitative research involves studying meaning-making processes of a social reality, and as Gibson & Brown (2009) states, is aimed at "discerning how human beings understand, experience, interpret, and produce the social world" (as cited in Bhatasara, Chevo, &

Changadeya, 2013, p. 4). In other words, this approach is pragmatic, interpretative, and grounded in the living experiences of people, which helps to understand how social experiences are created and given meaning (Yilmaz, 2013; Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Consistent with the social constructionist theoretical perspective of this study, this approach also permits me to elucidate the processes by which my participants come to describe, explain, and otherwise account for the world in which they live (Bhatasara, Chevo, & Changadeya, 2013).

Consistent with qualitative data analysis and inspired by “post-structural social constructionism” (Burr, 1995, p. 33), I used Foucauldian power/knowledge chronotypes/lenses to guide this study, including analyzing data. The process of identifying discourses is central to this data analysis, wherein “[discourses] have their origin not in the person’s private experience, but in the discursive culture that those people inhabit” (Burr, 1995, p.33). Thus, discourses are socially constructed in a society, and qualitative research approaches were adopted to understand the processes and meaning of these discursive constructions. Accordingly, I conducted in-depth, qualitative interviews to investigate how young people navigated the social institutions, such as, schools, family, technology, and media, in terms of soliciting, producing, supporting, sorting, and applying productive knowledge to address issues around sex education, including sexuality, adolescence, masculinity, and heteronormativity of young people. Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) was then used to analyze their narratives and experiences, focusing how they reproduce and/or disrupt the dominant discourses around sex education.

Participants

Having considered the research questions and theoretical insights, I conducted nine in-depth interviews (each around 1.20 hours long) with self-identified male students from different

universities in Bangladesh using an interview schedule (see Appendix A) via Skype video calls. I will focus on the interview procedures more in the following section. I chose young men between the ages of 19-24 years old (see Appendix E), because they are able to express their own views independently regarding how they experienced and learned about sex and sexuality. This age cohort is a better fit than teenagers to understand the meanings, experiences, and processes around their various experiences of sex education because it is the age where young men can reflect on their experiences and practices around adolescence, but these memories may also be quite recent. In terms of reflections on adolescence, they were given the opportunity to share their personal accounts as well as narratives in their own words. They gave me detailed opinions using their judgements regarding which elements of sex education they received, how they had been prevented from getting sex education, and their current realization about what could be better provided.

As one of the goals of this study was to propose potential contents of sex education for the future in Bangladesh, these young men provided insightful and operational ideas from their own living experiences. In other words, these participants were selected because they had particular recent experiences, which would help me to get “detailed exploration and understanding of the central puzzles of the study” (Bhatasara, Chevo, & Changadadeya, 2013, p. 4). In addition, I also considered the issues of accessibility and ethics. Therefore, I decided not to recruit younger participants, otherwise I would need the consent of parents-guardians to conduct research with anyone under the age of 18, as my study is being conducted through an Ontario university. In my study, it would be bit difficult to contact children and parents to convince them simultaneously, via Skype, and within my timeline. I also believe, as I mentioned earlier, that it

is important to understand how today's young people reflect on their adolescent experiences from their current understanding.

Sampling and Recruitment

Bangladeshi self-identified young men were the participants in this study. They were recruited from the different universities of Bangladesh, currently studying at the undergraduate and graduate level, and between 19-24 years old (see Appendix E). In terms of recruitment of participants, I implemented three strategies. First, as I have a very large number of acquaintances on Facebook, I posted 'the invitation letter' on my Facebook wall to explain what the research was about and why they were being asked to take part (see Appendix B). Having read the letter, interested people contacted me through e-mail. Then, I sent out 'an informed consent letter' to the interested people and asked to schedule an interview and for them to provide their Skype interview ID. I did not need to have a signed informed consent letter returned to me because I offered them oral consent before beginning the interview.

Regarding confidentiality, on Facebook, I was connected to around 2000 people in December 2017. I knew very few of them well very as family friends or friends. Also, my target group is far younger than my friendship group. I do not think that everybody knows each other and belongs to same networks because these people come from so many diverse backgrounds in terms of geographical locations and educational institutions. No participants know who else was a participant of this study as I was committed to maintaining privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity. I used pseudonyms for the participants, and their institutions' names and any other identifying information in presenting the study data. I declared and explained very well their rights, freedoms, and potential risks and benefits as a participant, partially in the primary

invitation letter and then comprehensively in the letter of ‘informed consent’. In addition to my own Facebook wall, I also requested to the administrators of the Facebook groups of different universities in Bangladesh to post ‘the letter of invitation’ on their Facebook walls. Most of them replied positively and approved my post on their Facebook groups. Through whichever Facebook channel, once a participant confirmed their interest with me, we fixed a date and time that worked for both of us. I also informed them that it might take 1 to 1.30 hours and booked a 1.30 hours interview with each participant.

The participants of this study were recruited from different public and private universities of Bangladesh through purposive sampling (see Appendix E). This sampling technique was selected because it enabled me to get participants who would provide sufficient data to meet my research objectives. My ultimate aim was to understand young men’s experiences rather than to test a hypothesis; hence, my sample was heterogeneous rather than representative. Around 15 participants showed their interest in an interview (five participants from my own Facebook post, and ten participants from the different universities’ Facebook groups/pages). Finally, I had planned to contact the deans of the faculties of various universities, and request if they would hang the letter of invitation on notice boards of the departments. This was a last option, if I did not get the desired number of participants through the previous Facebook-supported efforts. However, I did not need to do this because I had enough participants from the first two approaches.

I ended up interviewing nine participants from the 15-interested people. I could not interview the remaining people for various reasonable causes. Two people I had been very interested in talking to since they were just 19 years old, did not participate for personal reasons. It would have been interesting if I could have talked to them to understand the recent changes in

the informal sources of sex education due to technological developments, such as significantly increased access to the Internet in recent years. Because the average age of my participants was 23 years old, boys around four years younger might have provided information on more recent experiences. In terms of the other three people, I was not interested in talking to them because they had similar socio-economic, demographic, and schooling backgrounds to those I had already interviewed. I was more interested to find a participant who was still studying at Madrasha, an Islamic religion-focused education. It was important to show a comparison in terms of their views and experiences with mainstream or English medium/version schooling even though this is not my primary study purpose (see Appendix E).

However, I did manage to interview a participant who studied in Madrasha until grade-10, who shared very significant and distinctive views and experiences. Other than the mainstream general education system in Bangladesh, English medium schooling is another setting providing comprehensive sex education. I interviewed one participant who is from a USA curriculum-run school providing comprehensive sex education, which provided very distinctive views and experiences. Of my nine participants, even though seven were from the general-mainstream education system, they had diverse backgrounds in terms of class, type of current university, location of university, and nature of upbringing. Unfortunately, despite my efforts to recruit diverse participants, I could not recruit homosexual young people and people who have a religious identity other than Islam.

Study Sites

The participants were selected from different public and private universities of Bangladesh, representing different socio-economic classes concerning where they grew up, the

geographical location of their university, where they are now studying, and a variety of disciplinary backgrounds. In Bangladesh, it is assumed that those who come from the economically well-off family study in a private university and are self-funded. By contrast, the government-funded university, called public university, is competitive, and students get admission only by dint of merit. I considered this distinction because it influences students' perceptions, attitudes, and practices towards sex education. In fact, how today's young men perceive the sources of knowledge on sex and sexuality during their adolescence, depends on how they grew up, especially in terms of their access to socio-cultural resources. In my sample, four participants were from different public universities while the remaining five participants were from private universities.

Interview Procedures

As this study involves soliciting young men's personal experiences and relates to culturally sensitive issues (e.g., sexuality, sexual and reproductive health, and their sources of information), the in-depth interview as a technique of data collection was selected to "provide the scope to seek internal corroboration of participants' accounts" (Wight, 1994, p. 704). The in-depth interview for this qualitative study was selected to conduct intensive individual interviews with a small number of participants to explore their particular ideas, co-creating meaning by reconstructing perceptions and experiences about what they encountered regarding knowledge on sex and sexuality during their adolescence.

As it was a semi-structured in-depth interview, I had a series of open-ended questions to ask, but it also permitted me to modify and change questions based on the participants' responses during interview to dig deeper. As Creswell (2007) notes, "questions change during the process

of research to reflect an increased understanding of the problem” (p. 43). The semi-structured, in-depth interview also enabled my participants to keep the flow of conversation and helped them to express their views openly with their own voices, which underpinned the credibility of their information and unveiled the underlying issues around sex education because publicly talk about sexuality is still taboo in Bangladesh. I wanted to give them an opportunity to share their stories and narratives, and it was evident that they utilized this opportunity because they were highly excited to talk with me.

In this part, before detailing how I conducted the Skype interviews, I would like to shed light on Skype interviews, in terms of introducing a means of effective qualitative interviewing. Skype is an Internet-based video communication tool introduced in 2003 and has been used in terms of job interviews and other forms of long distance communication since that time (Winzenburg, 2012). In terms of functions, it transmits communication through a webcam, on a computer or through a smartphone, which is a free-of-cost software application (Seitz, 2016), providing more affordable and faster communication than organising a face-to-face interview. It really has compressed time-space distance to reach participants more safely, regardless of geographical locations (Hanna, 2012; Oates, 2015). Thus, researchers may have easy-access to those participants who are difficult to reach, as researchers and participants can choose their time and space that is most convenient to them, which allows no invasion of personal space, only participants sharing their virtual spaces (Deakin & Wakefield, 2013; Oates, 2015; Hanna, 2012). As we talked about culturally sensitive issues, such as sexual knowledge, learning processes and sources of sex education, sexual experiences, and sexual abuse, the Skype interviews gave participants a private space and room to share their personal experiences. I acknowledge that

through using Skype, I did not have extensive field notes about participants' physical presence, rage, emotions, expressions, gesture and posture.

However, I tried to feel and capture my participants' emotions through their laughing, rage, tone of voice, and repetitions of words. As my participants were young and university-going students, I was privileged because all my participants were tech-savvy. All participants had access to the Internet with their personal computer/laptop or smart phone. Hence, they welcomed using Skype as their means of communication. It is noteworthy that currently young people use Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp, and many free Internet-based applications for communication, but some of my participants installed Skype only for my interview. Moreover, technology did not disrupt our communication, even though the Internet-based video technology has several challenges, such as pauses, inaudible segments, abrupt call drops, vague body language, nonverbal cues, and paucity of intimacy. Despite these challenges, I applied several useful and effective strategies to keep our conversations on the right track, such as making sure there was a stable internet connection on the both sides, that we were each in quiet and undisrupted rooms, that we were speaking slowly and giving space to each other to start and finish questions and responses, repeating and clarifying questions, observing facial expressions, nodding and asking follow-up questions, and listening to the tone of participants.

I conducted the interviews in Bengali from the end of November 2017 until the end of December 2017. The interviews lasted for around 1.20 hours. As the mother language of the participants and myself is Bengali, the interviews were conducted in Bengali, maintaining the 'lingua-franca' type conversation using an open-ended interview schedule. I used a digital voice-recorder to record our conversations, and then the recordings were stored in my personal computer with a password using pseudonyms. Overall, the data collection stage was fast. It took

only two weeks to announce the project, find interested participants, and hear about their schedules. The most challenging task was to match our time-schedules because it is opposite in terms of day-night between Canada and Bangladesh. I repeat, I was so impressed at the enthusiasm of the participants to participate in my study! Alongside the challenges navigating the time difference between day and night, as they preferred night for the interview and as some of my participants share their bedrooms with their younger and older brothers, they had to use their friends' or relatives' house or room for noise-free and privacy. In addition, I did not offer money to buy Internet data for those participants who talked at their relatives' or friends' house because of privacy and instead, they spent their own money for this purpose. Another difficulty I encountered is that I usually had to stop the interview because all participants wanted to talk, suggesting the great desire the participants had to talk about these issues.

I used a semi-structured interview schedule to solicit how they received sex education during their adolescence, how they interpret their views and experiences around sex education, and how they affirmed and/or resisted dominant discourses around adolescence, teenagerhood, masculinity, and sex education. After asking about socio-economic and demographic information, I tried to have an ice-breaker, asking about their childhood memories, and how and when they understood that they were male. I asked this question to build rapport with my participants. They were also given to an opportunity to refresh their memories because for a significant number of issues I would ask about their recollections. This strategy worked effectively because they used this interview as an opportunity to share many untold experiences, stories, and narratives, which is a very rare opportunity with someone beyond peers. During the interviews, participants not only narrated stories and experiences themselves but also narrated the experiences of their friends, siblings, and cousins, and community people who navigated and

encountered similar or different experiences related to sex education. In fact, the participants seemed to feel comfortable telling me their experiences and views. In qualitative research, quality data depends on the rapport between researchers and participants (DiCicco – Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). In terms of reinforcing the rapport with my participants, I sometimes shared my own experiences as I grew up in a similar society, which seemed to give them more confidence and feeling of comfort.

Data Analysis

As I am studying Bangladeshi young men's narratives and recollections in terms of experiences and views around sex education, including sources of education, masculinity, teenagerhood, and sexuality in this study, I must contextualize what they say and how they say it within broader discourses, including those around gender, age, and sex education. I did this by employing discourse analysis to deconstruct issues related to sex education in Bangladesh. Discourse analysis helps me to understand how my participants think, what they know and how they speak about the world around us, and how their knowledge is culturally embedded (Raby, 2002, p. 30). It also helps us to understand how a version of things, events or people is constructed/produced, as "privileging one set of representations over another, [because] discourse tends to claim the status of truth" (Raby, 2002, p. 30). I was thus interested in analyzing how my participants' experiences and views around sex education are socially and discursively constructed. Even though there is a range of ways to define discourse, in my study, I employed Foucauldian discourse (1972, 1978), which is defined as a circulating body of knowledge in which power and resistance are embedded. Like the multiple notions and definitions of the term 'discourse', there are a couple of types of discourse analyses, but I used Foucauldian discourse analysis to understand how my participants interpreted their views and

experiences regarding sex education, and how they reproduced and/or resisted dominant discourses around sexuality, masculinity, teenagerhood, and heterosexuality.

I would, however, like to distinguish Foucauldian discourse analysis from critical discourse analysis because these two methods produce confusions. When discourse analysis refers to an analytical understanding of the use of language, it is called critical discourse analysis (Brown & Yule, 1983). In terms of Foucauldian discourse analysis, a discourse analysis is also an analytical investigation into how a certain body of knowledge comes to be accepted as ‘truth’ or ‘common sense truth’ and uses a more social constructionist interpretation. Thus, Foucault underlines the importance of studying the processes of discursive construction of reality or truth and its effects, rather than focusing on how/why it was produced (Mchoul & Grace, 2015).

According to Fairclough (1993):

from a Foucauldian perspective, discursive language is instrumental in how meaning is constructed, revealing an active relation to knowledge and perceived reality. As power-relations are implicit in discourses, the [Foucauldian discourse] analysis [in our study] focused on what the participants said and how they formulated their views to explore and identify patterns across their statements, how their voices resonated in unison, and the social consequences of various discursive representations of reality (as cited in Hamed, Ahlberg, & Trenholm, 2017, p. 1831).

In addition to analyzing how my participants interpreted their experiences, this study also analyzes how participants framed their experiences in terms of dominant discourses or common-sense truth of the society around sex education. As a Foucauldian approach to discourse analysis is a deconstructive discourse analysis (Macleod, 2002), the focus of this analysis is on “the social

and power/knowledge effects of discourse” (Macleod, 2002, p. 18). As he further notes, “discourse analysis implies undermining the revelation of essence, destabilising meaning a presence, and disrupting dominant, taken-for-granted notions of a subject” (Macleod, 2002, p. 18).

I will now outline how I conducted my analysis of the interviews. I have already mentioned that the interviews were conducted in Bengali. I had a plan to transcribe and translate into English simultaneously. I did two interviews in this way. However, it was taking much time and I found it was difficult to do the two jobs simultaneously. Then I decided to transcribe in Bengali first and then translate into English, which was less tiring and more efficient. As language does matter significantly in discourse analysis, and translations seemed to be sensitive in this case; I decided to proceed with the transcriptions and translation separately for the remaining interviews.

I used an open-coding system to analyze my transcripts. According to Esterberg (2002), the open coding system involves a two-tiered process of qualitative data management and analysis. Following Esterberg (2002), I analyzed each transcribed interviews line by line, highlighting any categories/topics that emerged from each sentence or line. I performed this process of open coding on the transcripts. I wrote the open coding on the right sides of pages. These open codes helped me to reflect on the overall patterns of my data, including identifying the repeated and common themes. Thus, the analysis started with reading and re-reading the transcripts carefully having first coded the transcripts openly, then codes were re-examined and reviewed. “At this stage, the text was analyzed very closely, that is, in a more descriptive manner, and was read and reread line by line and word for word” (Hamed, Ahlberg, & Trenholm, 2017, p. 1832).

After open coding the transcripts, I started again to review the open codes and wrote a focused code on the left side of a page. A focused code is a pattern or category which groups together a couple of open codes. At this stage, I used some separate notebooks in which I wrote a paragraph for each focused code to remind me how I was thinking about each code, and to see how the focused codes were interconnected. In the meantime, I also highlighted with a yellow highlighter the potential quotable sentences from each transcript. In addition, I used a blue highlighter to indicate the text, words, and sentences where a participant contradicted himself. At this stage, I felt familiar with my data overall, and in my imagination, I got a canvas to draw a larger picture with narratives and experiences of Bangladeshi young men around sex education. Esterberg (2002) acknowledges that this familiarity prepares a researcher for analyzing data: “as you become more familiar with your data, you will naturally begin to see patterns and commonalities and develop a focus” (p. 158).

Thus, from the tons of open codes, I found some focused codes through which my major themes emerged. At this stage I made a word document with the computer comprising the major themes from all the transcripts. Again, I used the word document to find more analytical and dominant themes through several reviews and re-reviews of the long-list of themes. At this stage, I discussed with my supervisor and cohorts how to refine my thoughts with a view to developing more analytical themes. This transition from ample descriptive themes to fewer analytical themes was done through cutting and pasting in the word document. Meanwhile, I also provided relevant quotations under each analytical theme. Here, I digitally accomplished what Esterberg (2002) suggests: “some researchers literally cut up a copy of the interview transcripts or their field notes into pieces ... then they sort the slips into piles, often multiple times, to see what themes seem to emerge” (P. 161). These processes helped me to identify the discursive constructions related to

the participants' experiences and views. Hereafter, the discursive constructions were analyzed, revisited, reviewed, and re-reviewed for identifying what Foucault refers to as discourses or the dominant discourses, and I applied my insights from the reviewed literature, theoretical lenses, and my own ontological experiences as a Bangladeshi man in these processes. Thus, I found nine themes around sex education in Bangladesh. Once I had my themes in hand, I asked myself – 'who cares?'. In terms of discourses, these themes were then interpreted to explain the meaning of the discourses and how they work, which facilitated "a higher level of abstraction and theorizing the meaning of the discourses and the function they serve. The analytical process was not conducted in a straightforward fashion, but in a more back-and-forth approach and adjustments were hence suitably made" (Hamed, Ahlberg, & Trenholm, 2017, p. 1832).

Reflexivity: Dealing with Challenges

My position, in terms of gender, sexuality, race, nationality, age, and occupation in Bangladesh, as well as my current status in Canada, was relevant to how I obtained access to the participants and analyzed the interviews. I am of the same gender as the participants, and I think that this assisted with gaining access to interviewees. As I mentioned elsewhere, Bangladesh is a culturally conservative and sexually repressive country, wherein public talk about sexuality is taboo. I hope that having the same national background as the participants strategically positions me as a researcher that can be trusted. Moreover, as I was previously teaching at a well-known public university in Bangladesh as an assistant professor, I was wondering how my occupational positionality would affect rapport building with my participants. Generally, people see university teachers with a respectful lens, and my participants were university students. I was concerned about whether my participants would talk openly with me. In terms of minimizing ethical concerns related to power imbalances, initially I was interested to introduce myself as only a

graduate researcher instead of a university faculty member, but I could not maintain this because they knew about me through Facebook. However, this identity gave me the privilege to collect their recollections and narratives because they recognized me as an enlightened, progressive, and liberal person and overall a researcher, so they seemed comfortable to talk to me with enthusiasm. They shared some narratives for the first time with me, even though they had never disclosed these stories with their peers.

Despite my occupational positionality, they likely found me as their close or almost contemporary in terms of age. In this case, I believe, studying and researching in Canada might also helped them believe that I would keep the details of the interview confidential and not use the contents of the interview to implicate them in any way, particularly because I ought to have their interests at heart. Many participants repeatedly mentioned a warning during talking about their own or other people's relevant confidential sexuality issue, "as you are a researcher or for the sake of research, otherwise, I would not share", then they would share their stories.

One of the issues that as many as three participants raised was that they did not talk or seek knowledge about sex and sexuality during their adolescence due to concern about family reputation and self-reputation as an alleged good student or good boy. As society treats those young people, who show interest into knowing about sexuality as bad, they tried to keep themselves silent and away from this stuff. In this regard, I understood their feelings and emotions of that time, and their current assessment of their boyhood feelings because I experienced exactly the same circumstances during my boyhood. I was always a so-called good student and a good boy, being a first boy in classes by dint of merit and came from a rural, respected family. When they raised and shared the issues and indicated that their identity as a good boy was a barrier to know or explore sexuality, I also shared my stories. This matching

made them feel comfortable to talk more and helped me to understand my participants' expressions well. In terms of analysing their expressions, I tried to keep myself in a position so that their experiences and views could not be shaped much by my influences.

As a Bangladeshi heterosexual young man, I witnessed and experienced some of the issues around heterosexuality, masculinity, and an embodiment of sexuality that my participants experienced throughout their adolescence. Hence, I sometimes provided some clues/probes to refine their ideas during interviews. As a qualitative social researcher, I myself was engaged and attached to the whole process of research, including data collection and analysis. In terms of data analysis, even though I sometimes applied my insights, I was conscious so that participants' experiences and views could not be overtly influenced by my presence. However, as we had similar gender, sexual and cultural background, it was challenging to disconnect myself in every phases of this project. In my view, for example, I don't believe masculinity means something show-off through physicality, conduct, and expectations. I still believe that overtly showing off masculinity costs lots of risky and dangerous behavior, such as unsafe sexual behavior, addiction, injury (e.g., road accident), peer or intimate violence, bullying, and much more socially inappropriate behavior. Personally, my impression of personality does not co-exist with this behaviour. Hence, even though I disagreed with some of the components of masculinity that my participants talked about, I tried to let them have space to talk rather than trying to influence them. So, I prioritized the differences of views and experiences whatever I, myself, believe and practice.

In order to prioritize participants' views, I employed a systematic process of data analysis. At the outset, I used an open-coding system to analyze my transcripts, and I analyzed each transcribed interview line by line, highlighting any categories/topics that emerged from

each sentence or line. These open codes helped me to reflect on the overall patterns of my data, including identifying the repeated and common themes. After that, I started again to review the open codes and wrote a focused code (A focused code is a pattern or category which groups together a couple of open codes). Thus, from the tons of open codes, I found some focused codes through which my major themes emerged. Again, I used a word document to find more analytical and dominant themes through several reviews and re-reviews of the long-list of themes. At this stage, my presence was important, as I wondered whether my views should get prioritize, as it was challenging to separate myself from my participants. Then I compared my thoughts with my participants through consulting/cross-checking with my supervisor and cohorts and refined my thoughts with a view to developing more analytical themes. These processes helped me to identify the discursive constructions related to the participants' experiences and views, that is, in terms of what they said and how they talked about issues related to my research questions. Of course, I applied my insights from the reviewed literature, theoretical lenses, and my own ontological experiences as a Bangladeshi heterosexual and masculine man in these processes. So, in terms of analyzing data, I was cautious about my own understanding around the themes or dominant discourses of sex education, as I was immersed in these dominant discourses as well as obtained nine themes.

As a Bangladeshi young man, since my teenagerhood, I have been encountering the research question that I have tried to explore in this research: how boys come to know about sexuality, is it natural or social learning? I also used to think about the situations for girls, as I realized that they receive only a little bit of guidance from female senior family members. In my case, however, I received no guidance from any formal and informal sources, but only from peers, which sometimes provided misinformation and misconceptions about sex and sexuality. In

addition, in 2010, I conducted a survey-based study in a peri-urban area of Bangladesh to understand how communication technology (e.g., cell phone, the Internet) influences people's sexual behavior, and I came to know how young men and women watch pornography, learn sexuality, and apply it in their own lives. These issues made me conscious and concerned to know how young people know about sexuality. I often think about how, when I embarked on adolescence, I used to catch a headache when the sun was rising. Later, I understood it was because of physical changes, even though I was sent to a traditional and religious healer for treatment. His treatment made me more scared, since he said that it was the influences of a ghost. As an adolescent boy, his diagnosis was terrible for me. I have reflected on my personal experiences because I have been concerned since my adolescence how young people learn about sex education in Bangladesh, and personally I would go for school-based formal sex education.

Ethical Considerations

This study involves some personal and culturally sensitive issues related to sexuality, sexual and reproductive health of young men from a culturally repressive society (e.g., Bangladesh), in which public talk about sexuality is taboo. Hence, conducting the interviews with these young people and asking how they looked for knowledge on sex and sexuality during their adolescence was challenging in terms of ethics. According to Lie (2008) "approaching issues of sexuality and reproductive health involve careful consideration of how to address people, for instance, how to ensure that an individual's integrity is protected and how to show respect for existing social values and existing subcultural values" (Bhatasara, Chevo, & Changadeya, 2013, p. 5).

The participants had already read the written informed consent form (see Appendix C) before I began interview. Moreover, I explained the ins and outs related to informed consent verbally (see Appendix C: verbal script) to each participant prior to beginning the discussion, making sure that they understood their rights, including their right to participate and right to withdraw during interview without any penalty or anytime after interview. In a nutshell, the participants were briefed about the research topic and informed that they would not be compelled to continue the interview or to answer any questions that they felt uncomfortable with. In terms of privacy and confidentiality, I assured them that their any identifiers including name and institutions' name would not be used directly. In addition, I also told them not to use any specific names or identifiers of people or places during interviews. If a participant used any direct names, I used a pseudonym during transcriptions and translations. I also used pseudonyms for each participant. I tried to make sure to protect their anonymity so that they could feel comfortable and safe. Participants were also ensured about the confidentiality of the research and that the findings would be used for academic purposes only.

Even though I offered free counselling services provided by some organisations in the informed consent form (see Appendix C), I also made sure to verbally remind them of the free counselling services they could receive if they felt a need for supports at the end of interviews. Even though I anticipated a low likelihood of psychological risks for participants who might recall their vulnerabilities due to fear, confusions, difficult situations or misconceptions regarding sex and sexuality during their adolescence during or after interviews, I offered the supports in advance (see Appendix C).

In terms of direct benefits of this study to young people of Bangladesh, participants had the opportunity to narrate their concerns, challenges, misunderstanding, misconceptions, and

social reactions from their surrounding people (e.g., parents, peers, teachers and other community people) towards their physical and emotional changes during adolescence. This study provided an opportunity to narrate the experiences because young people are often silenced and talking about sexual issues publicly is still taboo in Bangladesh. Thus, this study might help the participants in their family lives, including caring for their own kids. Additionally, the findings of this research may assist policymakers to understand young people's current challenges in terms of a number of social issues/problems. Lastly, this research may directly assist in designing sex education in Bangladesh.

Chapter 5: Analysis and Discussion

Sex Education: Discursive Experiences and Views

I employed a qualitative methodology in my study, wherein I use Bangladeshi young men's experiences, views, narratives, and stories to address my research questions in terms of social construction theory and Foucauldian discourse analysis. I analyze the major identified themes and related discourses in this chapter, which are derived from analyzing the transcribed interviews of nine participants. Emerging themes (see appendix D) were : (i) "unreliable peer navigators" which depicts how Bangladeshi boys deal with their peer groups and community people to know about sexuality in terms of sharing and chatting about their experiences and resources; (ii) "porn: a depraved and corrupted mentor" which illustrates how boys perceive and experiences pornography (written, videos, nude picture) as a sex educator; (iii) "the poverty of school-based sex education" which demonstrates how schools seldom provided sex education; (iv) "silence in parental sex education" which shows how a culture of silence remains in the parent-children communication in terms of sex education; (v) "embodying learning sexuality", wherein I analyze how boys materialized the obtained knowledge through exploring - whatever the amount/nature of sex education (e.g., from peers, pornography, schools/textbooks, and parents in terms of their beliefs, practices, and internalization of sexuality) ; (vi) "adolescence and strong curiosity" which shows how boys experience and construct adolescence in terms of visible pubertal-physical changes and the society's reactions to these changes, attraction to girls, and curiosity to know about body, sex and sexuality; (vii) "growing up into masculinity and heterosexuality, missing teenagerhood", wherein I analyze how boys are becoming men within hegemonic masculinity and heterosexuality. In (viii) "intersectionality," I analyze other intersecting issues related to identity as they intersect with sex, sexuality, and sex education,

which are intertwined to the themes, and related discourses. Finally, (ix) “projected sex education: complicated views,” which I will discuss in the next chapter.

In terms of themes, as I have sorted out above, there are some truth statements or common-sense truths that are identified for each theme based on the existing literature, my participants’ subjective views and experiences, and society’s overall ideas. Hence, it is also important to analyze how my participants are embedded in these discourses. In doing so, I identify the dominant discourse and contradictory discourses (if they exist) to investigate how my participants reproduce and/or disrupt these discourses. In addition to identifying dominant discourses in terms of common sense truths (e.g., peers are not reliable sources), discourse is also interconnected with ‘power-relations,’ in that some people or institutions (e.g., schools, religion, physician, and parents) construct and reinforce these truths or reality (e.g., the discourse that peers are misleading). Holding a professional and authoritative position, these people and institutions they thus create disciplinary/expertise knowledge (e.g., that religion advocates for abstinence until marriage or medical science suggest that masturbation is alright) on certain subjects (e.g., sexuality or masturbation). In addition to the disciplinary power, patterns that we see in the data suggests bio-power. For instance, my participants’ subjugated bodies are produced through above-mentioned common-sense truths or normalization processes, such as the discourse of unreliable peers. Thus, through both disciplinary power and bio-power, participants become subjected to the discourses (i.e., normalization), and do not resist the dominant discourses even though they also sometimes problematize the dominant discourses (Foucault, 1978). So, in the following sections, I will analyze how my participants interpret their experiences, and how their experiences and views reproduce and/or disrupt dominant discourses, how these discourses have effects in terms of disciplinary and bio-power.

Unreliable Peer Navigators

To Bangladeshi adolescents and boys, friends or chatting among friends (peer groups) is a conventional source of knowledge about sex and sexuality. This is well echoed by one of the participants' responses. Nafiz (23 years old) said: "No, none helped me except my friends. Actually, every boy knows about sexuality from their friends' circles [peer groups], and it is the conventional way of the village area in [Bangladesh]". They become introduced to sexuality with the help of each other through pornography (videos, written, and nude picture), and sharing experiences of masturbation and wet dreams. Saibal (24 years old) explained this mutual or reciprocal learning processes: "Yes, I shared with my friends, they also shared with me their experiences about wet dreams. In terms of reactions, some friends were supportive, some showed panic, fright, and uncertainty."

In making these comments, Nafiz and Saibal's views and experiences around seeking information about sex and sexuality are reflected by other research conducted in South Asia as well, especially Bangladesh (e.g., Cash et al., 2001; Gazi et al., 2009; Rashid, 2010; Hennik, Rana, & Iqbal, 2005). Even though their help in terms of information is full of incomplete and inconsistent ideas, misconceptions and misguidances, their assistance is sometimes helpful and sufficient in that context, according to some participants. Of interest, even though the South Asian researchers agree that peers are very influential and a dominating source of sex education among young people, all of them agree that peers are not reliable. They argue that peers are ignorant about sexuality (Cash et al., 2001), encourage adolescents to engage in risky behaviour (Rashid, 2010), and lead them to become victims of physical and sexual abuse (Hennik, Rana, & Iqbal, 2005). Similarly, even though most of my participants acknowledged that they received the maximum information about sex and sexuality from their peers, most also embraced the

dominant discourse that peers are unreliable sex educators. Kaif (23 years old) argued, “I think information from my friends was not enough, even it was false. I learned many things wrong. They said black girls have more periods [frequency of menstruation in a month] than white girls do. I only heard it from this friend, not any one else.” Nayem (23 years old) also reaffirmed Kaif’s assertions: “[...] Basically, what I now realize [is] that my friends inspired me to do negative stuff about sex. These bad stuffs inspire me to tease girls, and much more stuff”. Similarly, Sipon (23 years old) reproduced the dominant discourse further when he said:

[...] that was not enough, sometimes wrong ideas [...] The information I got from them was not consistent. Different people presented the issues differently. Basically, I got the ideas having synthesized their ideas. Nobody gave a complete idea. For example, in our school (until grade-10), we came to know from a friend that if we sleep wearing a condom (on penis), then our penises will be enlarged. Then we tried at night several times [laugh]. Later, we laughed thinking this how we were a fool. On the other hand, in my university life, my friends used to advise for different medication so that I could have sex with my girlfriend for a long time.

Nafiz (23 years old) said that he got the wrong direction from his friend, including getting addicted to pornography and masturbation: “Truly speaking [...] this information took me to the wrong way of life. [probing] Actually, I got pornographic videos from them, and I was addicted to watching it, which results in addiction to masturbation, I did it constantly, I was destroying myself, I had to pay huge toll because of my friends’ bad influences.”

However, participants also disrupted this dominant discourse that peers are unreliable sex educators because some participants really relied on their peers as sex educators, and they reinforced their views that they got complete ideas about sexuality from their friends. I talked to Muhit (22 years old), who experienced his adolescence in a rural area and had straightforward assertions: “On that time, as I was curious to know about sexuality, the information I received from my friends was obviously helpful for that time, it is still helpful. Because if I didn’t know then, I might fall in trouble later.” Similarly, Sayhan (24 years old) seemed to be over the moon about what he received from his friends in terms of learning about sex and sexuality: “I think it was enough for me, I knew it [sexuality] in my own way by tackling social sides [he used the word ‘tackle social sides’ to mean eluding people by pretending that he is not interested in sexual issues, he is a so called ‘good boy’ or ‘innocent boy’]. Since I had no any problem with physical growth. How many problems I faced? [...] nothing [...] I think I have found enough help from my friends. I think it was abundant for me.” Another dominant discourse around peer groups as well as Bangladeshi society is that showing curiosity about sexuality is not a trait of a good boy, which is also consistent with a popular discourse around sex education and childhood that children are innocence. Therefore, Sayhan basically reproduced this dominant discourse because he pretended not to show curiosity about sexuality even though he was inquisitive, and he learned about sexuality somehow, but in a different way. His expression “tackling social sides” means that he felt and sought for information about sexuality but hid this from society. His statement is very vague implying that we do not need to think so much about sex education as he explained that he has grown up with no major physical problems related to sexuality.

In addition, I also observed while I was talking with Sayhan that initially he was not comfortable to utter the word ‘sex’ or ‘sexuality,’ and this tendency wholeheartedly endorsed the

dominant discourse that talking about sexuality publicly is dangerous. Similarly, some participants, such as Nafiz and Nayem, clearly affirmed the popular discourse of ‘good boy’ or ‘innocent boy’ saying that they had very positive impressions or reputations in society or amongst the community people because they were good students in their schools. They believed that their reputations would be affected negatively if they showed their interest about sex education openly to the community people or teachers. Thus, they did not problematize the normative views around asking about sexuality, they rather became subjugated to the discourse of silence, in which asking about sexuality is bad and a trait of deviant teenagers. Family reputation also sometimes worked in the similar way. For example, Nayem encountered his fathers’ reputation as a barrier to asking about sexuality, and he could not counter that asking about sexuality is necessary. Against this backdrop, their inquisitive mind/body became a site for the operational exercise of power by their family, schools, religion, media, and many social institutions (Hamed, Ahlberg, & Trenholm, 2017).

However, they sometimes valued the information received from their friends, disrupting the dominant discourse that peers-given information on sexuality is not authentic. One of my participants, Sazbin (21 years old), who received formal school-based sex education as he was student of a USA-focused curriculum school, also acclaimed the assistances he received from his friends: “I would say my friends and school. Basically, school taught me what is sex education, friends help me to know how to have sex or how to be with a girl. It's kind of related.” In making this comment, he shows how his peers were supportive to know about sexuality in detail and operationally instead of having just a short amount of information from school. In my view, through this comment, he problematized the dominant discourse that peers are not authentic in sex education.

Despite their confident and straightforward assertions about peers as reliable sex educators, some participants showed their uncertainties about receiving sex education from their peers at the same time. We can see this ambivalence in Muhit (22 years old) because he is of two minds about his peers' helpfulness. On the one hand, he claimed that peers are helpful sex educators, mentioned above. On the other hand, he countered that position: "[...] No, not fully. Sexual health topic is still not clear to me. [probing] We were not educated separately about sexuality [in family, peer groups or school]. Like we are in [the] dark about it." To Muhit, even though he received sex education from his peers, he still felt a lack of knowledge about sexuality. In my view, through this comment, he problematized the dominant discourse that peers are unreliable sources of sex education.

Similarly, Kaif (23 years old) showed even more ambivalence than Muhit. When I asked him to use the word 'help' in reference to his peers, he underlined the word saying: "I am confused about the word you are using HELP, I don't say like that, it's not actually help, what can I say, but they were helpful in this regard, my friends were great source to me. They were helpful sources." Having reviewed his tone of speeches, Kaif is interested in resisting the dominant discourse by asserting that peers are reliable sex educators. He is, personally, a self-declared atheist and, he is beyond conventional discomfort with sex talk. His arguments are important in the context of Bangladesh because they challenge the conventional and common religious assumptions around publicly-talking about sexuality. Against the backdrop, Kaif is likely to find his peers as useful sources even though he did not agree to refer the word - "help." In contrast, Muhit's views suggest a problematic double-standard because, in my view, he had to affirm the conventional and dominant discourse of unreliable peers even though he favors peers

as sources of sex education very slightly. In terms of peers as sex educators, Muhit and Kaif have opposite positions because of the influence of religion on Muhit.

In addition, there are some people, who are not exactly peers but community people including cousins, relatives, and neighbours, regardless of age and gender, who are involved in this process of informal sex education. In this study, my participant talked about these community people who are older than my participants. They are neighbour or community people, not peers. Like peers, participants consider these community people to be sources of sex education in Bangladesh because young people pass their leisure with these people, in addition to peers, in off school hours, as parents are not conventionally easy to talk to about sexuality (see the next theme). Siblings may come forward in this case, but not for sex education in the most traditional families. Instead, participants were more likely to turn to cousins. For instance, Sazbin (21) acknowledged his cousins' contribution to his learning about sexuality even though his comments shed more light on the issues intertwined with girls' affairs than about his own body and sexuality:

Yes, my cousins, I had a couple of cousins who were 7-8 years older than I. They discussed about their girl-friends, what they did with their girl-friends on that day. I also shared about my girl-friends. Then they taught me how to deal with girl-friends and much more kinds of stuff. [probing] they basically took it as normal because I could not share this stuff with my parents because it is embarrassing, right? So, I choose my cousins. ok? They said like these kinds of things can be happened. [probing] like more about girls, what girls can do, what girls like to do?

Despite the fact that Sazbin comes from the upper class of society in terms of family income, schooling (only he is the only participant privileged with formal, school-based sex education), and physician parents, he underlines the importance of talking to on peers and cousins, wherein he basically challenged the dominant discourse. These conclusions, which I come up with through looking at Sazbin's case, add no weight to the argument that class has an impact on disposition to receive sex education. Of interest, he did not feel comfortable to share about his sexual health with his parents even though his parents are highly educated (e.g., physician) and belonging to the upper class of the society. It is also noteworthy, however, that Sazbin played a significant role as a successful sex educator to one of his same age cousins, who was from the Bangla medium and Bangladeshi mainstream school system. His cousin was highly impressed with the suggestions, information, and assistance around physical, emotional, pubertal changes, wet dreams, and masturbation he received from Sazbin. Sazbin tried to normalize these things, giving examples from his life even though his cousin was surprised to learn that Sazbin knows so many things. When he asked about the sources of his information, Sazbin replied that he knew it from school. His cousin was convinced, an example that again disrupts the dominant discourse that peers (in this case a cousin) are unreliable:

My cousin said, "I need to know like" [...] then I understood. I said ok, tell me just what you need to know. Then he said, ok. These things happened to me. Then he said ... like his body was changing, hair was growing on his chest. Then I said take it easy, normal. Don't worry about it. then he was saying, some other kinds of stuff like pubic hair are growing underbody, armpit hair. It is big things for him, right? He did not know what to do? So, I was saying, ok don't worry about, its normal. Yes [...] then he asked me how I knew, I said I knew from school. Then he was really impressed with me. Then

he said, “can you help me”? I said, ok, don’t worry about it, don’t think too much about it. If you need help [...] If you do not feel comfortable with your parents, ask me. Yes, he asked me a lot [...] I tried to give him solution from my knowledge at my level. He could not share with his parents. It is rare in Bangladesh, you know. But if he is a girl, her parents would try to support him.

Similarly, Muhit (22) got very broad operational ideas about how to have sex from a neighbour of the same age same age, so he may be considered as a peer. In terms of this community person or peer, he basically also resisted the dominant discourse: “He said, guys see these stuffs, they see blue film in CD or DVD shop. He explained in detail that man and women’s physical relation happens in this way, liquid comes out, they eat it and this kind of things. I hardly believed and got amazed. I used to think about those a lot.” Thus, my participants reproduced and/or disrupted the dominant discourse that peers and other community members are unreliable sex educators. My study also found some sorts of ambivalence within and among participants in terms the way they reproduced and/or challenged this dominant discourse.

To sum up, my participants’ experiences and views around sex education related to this socially constructed dominant discourses of peer unreliability are both reproduced and disrupted (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Foucault, 1978). These are socially constructed as they are immersed in these everyday discourses, as they interact with their peers and other social institutions everyday. In turn, this discursive knowledge/disciplinary knowledge frames their views and experiences, which is why this dominant discourse is reproduced. But their practical experiences also disrupt this dominant discourse, and some participants are of mixed minds as they want to shift this discourse. For example, sometimes they think peers are reliable, they also

sometimes think that peers are unreliable. Through these shifting, they open the potentials of new emerging discourses.

Porn: A Depraved and Corrupted Mentor

It is undoubtedly acknowledged in the available literature that pornography (online and offline) and broader Internet material are dominant sources of information about sex and sexuality for today's children, teens, adolescents and young people regardless of gender in Bangladesh (e.g., Rashid & Akram, 2010; Ahmed & Khan, 2012). In my study, most of the participants experienced Internet-consumption in terms of pornography instead of Googling sex education. Of interest, no participants in my study named the Internet as a source of sex education, even though the lion's share of talk about sex and sexuality was intertwined with Internet-downloaded pornography. Here someone may ask why the internet is not acknowledged as a source of sex education when anyone familiar with the global literature on sex education should agree that the Internet does matter in educating sex and sexuality to young people regardless of gender (e.g., Albury, 2014; Chu, 2005; Daneback et al., 2012; Jones & Biddlecom, 2011; Hennik, Rana, & Iqbal, 2005; Rashid & Akram, 2010). What is important here to note is that my participants came of an age of exploration in terms of puberty (e.g., in approximately 2006) before the Internet was widely available in Bangladesh, as their current age is 23 years old. In fact, young people's accessibility to the Internet really started when smart-cell phones became available at a mass level in around 2012 including availability of the Internet data with WiFi.

Some of my participants did have some access to the Internet, but it was not nearly as ubiquitous as it is now. One participant, Sazbin (21 years old), said that he had access to the Internet with available WiFi data in his school computer lab since his grade-1/2 as he was from a

USA curriculum-focused school. Even though he had access to the Internet, and received formal sex education from school, he relied more on friends for information on sexuality. As he explained, “I mean school just gave me the formula, we just use this formula with the help from friends [...] we just knew about condom from school, but what is it, its size [...] we did not know from school, but from friends.” He did not seem to Google to know about sexuality. I am convinced by this because it is not easy to Google sexual issue while sitting in a school’s computer lab. Also, he did not seem to need to Google because he found pornography while in his early childhood with the help of his friends.

The participants of my study tended to be introduced to pornography before access to Internet. Watching pornography does not always require the Internet or much access to the Internet browsing because there are other sources of pornography including downloading porn videos with (limited) browsing on the Internet and exchanging or sharing porn videos to each other, watching in peer groups, sharing through CD, DVD, USB, and Bluetooth, and reading written pornography. Incidentally, only Nayem (23 years old) explicitly stated that he Googled information about sexuality when he got curious about the issues related to sexuality”. As Nayem acknowledged, “[T]hen in 2012, when I was in grade-12, I started my school in Narayonganj [a city]. At that time, we got available Internet, Google, Facebook, YouTube, blog, group page, online doctor page, and we knew about sexuality from these sources. In my case, I used to Google-up for my questions about sexuality.” Nayem was the exception, however. Overall, participants emphasised pornography far more than the broader information offered through the Internet.

According to my thesis’s focus, it is imperative to analyze what boys are learning about sex while watching pornography, and how pornography constructs their experiences and

understanding about sex and sexuality. Available local and international literature and participants' views reveal the dominant discourse around Internet-based sex education is that Internet as well as pornography provides questionable and contradictory ideas about sex and sexuality, such as sexist, misogynist, and racist ideas (e.g., Ahmed & Khan, 2012; Albury, 2014; Crabbe & Corlett, 2010; Rashid, 2000; Jones & Biddlecom, 2011; van Vliet & Raby, 2008; Hillier & Harrison, 2007).

The participants believed that young people watch pornography because of porn addiction, masturbation, and pleasure, not for education. As Nayem (23) states, “[...] their main purpose of using the Internet was to watch pornography and masturbate”. In terms of porn as a sex educator, even though Nafiz (23 years old) admits that is a form of sex education, he is not convinced to accept its overall influence on young people. As his tone of voice reflects: “Yes, it is the way of knowing what sex education is, but it is one kind of illusion and addiction. It allures a boy to watch and ultimately to masturbate.” In this regard, Nayem’s (23) views are more explicit and compelling than Nafiz, even though both reproduced the dominant discourse of porn as a depraved sex educator: “No, I have nothing to learn from pornography, it makes young people addicted to [masturbation, premarital sexuality] like drug addiction. It is destroying young people. If I had textbooks, I never watch pornography, for example.” He also repeated with his very cogent rationales why pornography is not an appropriate means for sex education: “not at all. But, I have to learn first from textbook, parents, then If I watch pornography, I can understand which is right or wrong. On the contrary, [if] I start my learning from pornography, it must be harmful, 100%”. In the same manner, Sipon (23 years old) echoed: “watching these videos, young people want immediate gratification and pleasure, their mental setting changes, do

masturbate, and even they have to take other illegal ways to have sex, such as sexual abuse, rape, and many more”.

Likewise, Sayhan (24), Saibal (24), and Sahid (21) also reproduced this dominant discourse, but “indirectly”, because they admitted that they watched pornography for pleasure, not in a quest for sex education. Sayhan refuted the claim that pornography may provide sex education to young people: “of course, for getting pleasure, not for learning.” But, Saibal (24), when asked if young people tend to learn sexuality through pornography warned: “not at all, it will bring severe and negative consequences for young students. They will be addicted in watching pornography if they watch pornography for sex education.” Similarly, Sahid (21) reminded us that “no, I think, not only me, [those] surrounding me are interested to watch pornography for pleasure more than having sex education”. Indeed, it is likely that, whether directly or indirectly, their views embraced this dominant discourse that pornography provides a corrupted form of sex education. In addition, Muhit (22) seemed to be more meticulous in this case, he said that pornography influences masturbation, which in turn puts negative impact on children and young people’s natural development as well as sound and healthy growth. According to Muhit, for example, wet dreams are part of adolescent development, which is ironically being lost because of pornography and masturbation:

In the past, I used to have natural wet dream that have recently changed. Now, if I face problem to fall asleep, I have to masturbate. Otherwise, I can’t sleep. It’s an effect of technology as well as pornography. It is an addiction which is centred on watching blue film. [...] Thus, natural wet dreams have been lost, replaced with masturbation now-a-days, I would say. If you ask today’s teen boys, they are not familiar with wet dream.

Even in our generation, just few years back, it was one of the signs of adolescence, and it was natural, sound, and healthy, I think.

In making this comment, Muhit urges us to redefine and reconceptualize adolescence against the backdrop of changing society due to technology/the Internet. Interestingly, he urges us confidently to talk with current adolescents to see if they know about wet dreams, which he sees as a natural process.

Albury (2014) reviewed the research on pornography as a form of sex education for young people from four Western developed countries and put doubt on pornography as an effective sex educator. He argued that unlike for same sex young people and heterosexual adults, pornography may bring negative repercussions for heterosexual young people since it often eroticises gender inequality. Indeed, it is likely that the views of my participants, such as Nayem, Nafiz, Muhit, and others, are consistent with Albury's (2014) findings, as both tend to reproduce the dominant discourse that pornography is a depraved and corrupted sex educator. Thus, my study wholeheartedly endorses Albury's arguments because most of the participants argue that pornography provides ideas about sexuality, which are gendered, sexist, and undermines the women's consent in sexual relations, and inspire forced sex and rape, which I will highlight in the subsequent portion. Only Sazbin (21 years old) resisted the dominant discourse that pornography is depraved and corrupted sex educator: "yes, I just knew about sex from school, but I watched porn to know about how I could do practically. I watched before doing my first sex with my girlfriend." The essence of his experiences is that he utilized his bookish sex education with the help of pornography in having first sex with his girl-friend, and thus he disrupted the conventional and dominant discourse of sex education in terms of pornography as a source.

Again, in terms of representation of women in pornography, my participants argued how watching/reading pornography brings negative impacts to young people instead of educating young people about sex and sexuality. In this case, firstly, they argued that available pornographies are full of contents which young people give ideas, such as gendered construction of sexuality, forced sex and rape to girls, ideas about sexuality which undermines the necessity of consent, which is also reflected in some research on sex education (e.g., Albury, 2014; Flood, 2009; Johnson, 2012; Watson & Smith, 2012). Nayem (23 years old) complains that pornography teaches negative notions of sexuality: “They had a general tendency to [show] how sexuality is something like brutal, brutally attacking a girl. A boy is always a hero in pornography, a female is subordinate. A woman is treated like an animal.” In this context, Nayem (23) also states that girls’ consent is undermined, and girls are presented in a negative way:

[M]ost of the Asian or Bangladeshi porn videos are made with hidden cameras, which are forced sex and rape. So, when young people watch these videos as a model of sexual relations, they learn negative stuff, tried to apply in their practical lives, which are not healthy sexual relations. They are learning that it is ok in sexual relation to force a girl in sexual relation, girls’ consent is not essential.

Similarly, Kaif (23) views warned:

[...] You know in Bangla cinema, when hero offers the heroine, then the heroine does not agree. Then hero forcibly does it by cutting hand and singing emotional song. Finally, heroine consents to do something. So, this system has already become the thought of boys that at first girls do not want to be consented, but they will agree within

a short time. Actually, boys have already learned through watching [...] porn videos that girls' negative reply means her positivity. They are accustomed to see that boys have to force for sex. This is the rules for sex between male and female. The fact is boys get this idea from their childhood by watching Bangla cinema.

The essence of the above-mentioned arguments is that the ideas about sexuality young people get from watching pornography are gendered, sexist, contradictory, misleading, and through these comments participants tended to reaffirm the dominant discourse of pornography as a provider of contaminated ideas about sexuality to young people.

In addition to critique on representations of girls, participants also criticized watching pornography videos because as pornography videos are mostly from Western societies, they bring a Western influence on young people in terms sexuality or sexual satisfaction. As Nayem (23) states: "The western porn videos are like film, it is creatively made by directors. These are not natural. [...] Their behavior and type of sexuality are different from us. It is not fair if Bangladeshi young people try to do something like western culture." Nafiz also agreed with Sayem saying, watching the Western pornography influences on young people negatively instead of educating about sexuality. Thus, they reproduced the dominant discourse of pornography as depraved sex educator.

Other than reproducing or disrupting dominant discourses of pornography, some participants' feelings on this dominant discourse are mixed. On the one hand, they do support the position that pornography is a corrupted sex educator. On the other hand, they are not sure if pornography brings a practical or operational sense of how to have sex and suggest that may be

sometimes it does. Kaif (23 years old) favors both sides of pornography as sources of sex education:

Actually, I cannot be sure about it whether it is helpful or not. Like, I can have an idea how to have sex without doing sex myself. It is like riding a bicycle. I cannot guess how to ride it by seeing it at first. How to paddle, grasping break and control I can learn by seeing it. But the negative side is if I feel I know how to ride a cycle just seeing video, though I have not tried. Before practicing when I imitate any rider I cannot ride it. It would be dangerous if I try. So, if I think through watching movies I have learned all it will be negative for me. So, from this perspective it has both positive and negative side.

Similarly, Nafiz (23 years old) maintained the same tone in this regard:

To say some particular good sides of pornography, I want to say both good and bad sides of it. To be honest, through watching it people can be sure about sexuality. What to do with a wife and how to do it. Besides a good side it has also bad side, like when someone gets addicted to watching it, it will bring severe harm on his health and mentality.

In another case, even though Kaif is in a bit of a dilemma, he ultimately disrupted this dominant discourse that 'pornography is a corrupted sex educator' saying: "Actually, I am in confusion. The real thing is that I am in favor of pornography."

To sum up, pornography as well as the Internet as sex educator is an unacceptable means. Most of my participants reproduced this dominant discourse of unacceptance of pornography as a source of sex education. My own view is that young people are provided with negative messages or lessons through pornography in terms of gender and sex. In this context, some social

institutions, such as family, religion, and schools, have disciplinary knowledge (e.g., warning young people to keep themselves away off the Internet because of inaccurate sources of sex education), which exercise power over young people through the processes of normalization. So young people take their warning as normal, instead of considering that the Internet may be a convenient way of gaining sex education. Two of my participants, Sazbin and Nayem, used to Google to answer their questions about sexuality. Also, a body of research emphasises the Internet as source of sex education (e.g., Albury, 2014; Chu, 2005; Daneback et al., 2012; Jones & Biddlecom, 2011; Hennik, Rana, & Iqbal, 2005; Rashid & Akram, 2010). Even though all participants rejected pornography or Internet as sex educators, they watched pornography and used pornography as a handy tool to be sexually active. They also said that they watched pornography in a quest of pleasure, not for learning. My participants repeatedly uttered ‘pleasure in sexuality’ in terms of watching pornography, even though they did not accept pornography. So, they rejected pornography as a sex educator, having excluded pleasure in sex education (Derrida, 1997). However, absence of pleasure in formal school-based sex education is another dominant discourse around sex education (e.g., Fine, 1992; Harrison & Hillier, 1999; Bridges & Hauser, 2014; Cameron-Lewis & Allen, 2013). As my participants repeatedly said that pornography is a source of learning pleasure in sexuality, in my view, pornography may be an alternative means of educating about sexual pleasure to young people. In this context, one of my participants, such as Saibal, indicated it is not porn videos, but some sex educative-videos can be made, and used to provide sex education. I whole-heartedly endorse his suggestion in this regard, it may then reduce the controversial ideas about sexuality in terms of gendered and sexism.

Overall, despite a few exceptions, participants’ perceptions against pornography are socially and discursively constructed, wherein they reflect broader ‘social and cultural values’

within Bangladesh. The discursive construction of these values is circulated through some social institutions, such as religion, schools, peers, and schools, with their own disciplinary knowledge/power; hence the participants think within the dominant discourse of pornography as corrupt, and they feel that pornography cannot be a comfortable sex educator.

The Poverty of School-based Sex Education

In Bangladesh, there is limited school-based formal sex education in the mainstream schools. Further, there is no separate text book for sex education, and few contents and chapters are traditionally included in the other textbooks, such as biology, social science, general science, home economics, religion studies, and short story in Bangla language and literature textbook, focusing on sexual disease prevention, reproductive health, and which are also partial, gendered, and sexist sex education, consistent with global sex education scenario (e.g., Chakravarti, 2011; Khan, 2017; Luksik & Markova, 2010; Pascoe, 2007; Tolman, 2002; Schalet, 2010; Whitten & Sethna, 2014). In Bangladesh, therefore, what schools provide to young people as sex education, both directly and indirectly, is basically ‘little and partial’ compared to what young people need for their sound sexual health and growth (e.g., Khan, 2017; Muhammad & Haque, 2012). Of importance, Bangladesh’s national textbook authority has recently introduced a compulsory textbook, for grade:6-10, entitled “Physical Education, Health Science and Sports”, wherein a chapter on puberty and reproductive health is included very briefly. All my participants except Sazbin (21 years old), who was highly privileged with very comprehensive sex education from early childhood due to being in an American curriculum-focused school, passed their schools with a paucity of school based formal sex education. Unlike today’s school boys and girls in Bangladesh, they did not have even a separate chapter or separate physical education textbook.

Now I will shed light on how my participants experienced a dominant discourse around school-based sex education. The available literature and my participants' views confirmed this discourse that schools should not provide sex education as it is people's personal and private issue. I will also focus on how the participants explain their experiences around this discourse. My eye-opening experiences talking to my participants suggest that schools provide a space, wherein students chat and talk about sexuality in their peer groups at least, even though it happened informally. Compared to parents and schools with no lessons on sex education, school is used as an effective space to talk about sexuality among peer groups. In fact, here, I have been inspired by Edwards (2016): "the school curriculum and advice given from parents is usually discussed in peer groups" (p. 268). For example, participants talked about sexuality during their break hour or in the classroom in the absence of their teachers, and they tried to know more about some issues around reproduction, condom use, and sexually infected diseases when their teachers tried to ignore even talking about the reproduction of a frog in biology class. Thus schools at least provide a space and opportunity for peers to discuss among themselves.

Accordingly, all my participants, but Sazbin (21 years old), reproduced the dominant pattern is that there is a paucity of school-based sex education. Kaif (23)'s experiences with school-based sex education echo this circumstance:

I knew nothing officially/formally. For example, in our social science text book, we came to know that AIDS is caused by unsafe sexual relation. Interestingly, we could not understand what sexual relation is. What it meant and how people do it. We were not concerned. Nobody told anything about in detail. That's why, we had vague ideas about the AIDS.

Additionally, Kaif (23) shared his experiences about how a teacher of biology provided incomplete and partial ideas about human organs: “I had computer science but not biology. So, I had nothing to know about sexuality. Sometimes my friends said that they had a chapter about human organs at the last part of the book. Teachers discussed about kidney or stomach, but they did not want to talk about human genital parts.” However, Sazbin (21), who had different background of schooling, disrupted this common pattern: “Oh, we already knew in our sex education class - what is a wet dream, what is masturbation, what is a period, what is puberty”. In making this comment, he urges us to criticize that school-based sex education is theoretical, not operational or practical. He explained this gap in terms of understanding wet dreams. For example, even though he was provided with ideas about wet dreams in grade-two, he did not understand when he first faced a wet dream: “I could not understand the wet dream well at the time while I experienced it first. I was thinking something else. I did not understand that this is called wet dreams.”

In fact, Sazbin (21) contradicted himself. On the one hand, he tended to disrupt the dominant pattern of the poverty of school-based sex education. On the other hand, he also reproduced the arguments that this education does not provide a complete education about sex and sexuality, which is echoed in his comments: “[...] like we knew everything, but we did not know why I need to have sex, I repeatedly asked myself if it is only for marriage or reproduction. We did not get the feelings and pleasure of having sex. They never say about pleasure and feelings. So, we got more curious from the incomplete information from school because we got more involved with girls at that time in grade-5”. As Sazbin experienced Western school-based sex education curriculum, his feelings, experiences, and views are consistent with the most

research in the Western countries (e.g., Harrison & Hillier, 1999; Holzner & Oetomo, 2004; Luksik & Markova, 2010).

Whatever the amount of sex education the schools are providing, the contents are biased in favour of biological perspectives (e.g., reproduction, pubertal-physical changes, disease prevention, what is AIDS, how can STIs be prevented, and overtly focused on only abstinence until marriage with the assumption that premarital sexuality means unsafe sex which is a risk for STIs), and a gendered, sexist, and sexual-double standard, which is also common dynamics in the Western countries in terms of contents of sex education (e.g., Chakravarti, 2011; Luksik & Markova, 2010; Pascoe, 2007; Tolman, 2002; Schalet, 2010; Whitten & Sethna, 2014).

Basically, my participants had almost nothing to say about the sex education received in schools because it is so limited. However, when they talked about potential sex education for Bangladesh, they discussed features they would like to see, which I will discuss in the final section of this chapter. Of importance, whatever the amount of sex education the participants received from school, teachers were not even interested in talking in the classroom on that little amount, they rather suggest to their students to read the content of their texts that refer to things like reproduction in their home by themselves. This happened, for instances, in the cases of the contents on unsafe sex and HIV/AIDS. So, in terms of student-teacher relationship perspectives, there is an uncomfortable atmosphere in schools; teachers are not interested in discussing these issues. According to Nayem (23 years old):

[...] we were studying a chapter [of a biology text] on the reproduction of the frog, I asked the teacher why a frog makes a sound [making toad sound to lure female frog]. [Teacher] sir suggested to me to study at my home alone. But, I insisted that he answer my question, I said it is part of our syllabus. Then I noticed that sir was intentionally

avoiding this topic. The sir repeatedly said to study at home alone. Against the backdrop, the teacher got angry with me, scolded me, and labeled me that I have been deviant.

Similarly, Nafiz (23 years old) said that “sometimes it had been seen that teacher suggested us, this topic was impossible to describe in the classroom, and hence suggested to meet him in his office room to answer”. One of the participants, Saibal (24 years old), who looked for the root of the circumstances, mentioned that the issue is embedded in society as a whole, not merely among teachers. As he states, “because people are not open minded in our country. People feel shy if we talk directly on sex. Reactions from different sectors of society come into existence when it is talked about schools. Most worrying things, people think that young students will get aggressive, crazy for sexual or physical relations if they are provided sex education in school, though students have already gone there.” Similarly, Sahid (21) warned about the consequences of introducing sex education in schools, since he believes that “if students of 6 or 7 grades are provided sex education through school textbooks, there will be more negative consequences than the positive one. Consequently, they will likely be at risk to be interested in forbidden kinds of stuff [illegal or casual sex].” In reflecting on comments by Sahid, Nafiz, and Saibal, they reproduced that dominant discourse around school-based sex education that schools should not provide sex education because it’s students’ private issue, and it will bring negative consequences to young people as long as they are provided sex education formally in schools.

Madrasha education, an Islamic religion-based education systems, is a system of schooling in Bangladesh, wherein students are provided with much more education about adolescence, reproductive health, puberty, physical relations between husband and wife,

sanctity/unholiness related to sexuality, processes of ablution of becoming sacred, and many more in the light of the shariah and Qur'anic rules around sex, sexuality, marriage and family life via two separate text book entitled, such as "Akaid" and "Usula Fikah". Though I concede that Madrasha education provides much more complete ideas about sexuality compared to the mainstream schooling system in Bangladesh, I still note that this education on sexuality is full of negativities, with sexuality as dangerous, the need for abstinence until marriage, and that sexuality out of marriage is sin. These observations are echoed in Nafiz (23)'s comments:

Yes. When I was in madrasa I was given much knowledge about sexuality. At first, I learned about girl's adolescent period. In the period, girls bleed three days in a month. Then I could laugh in the class, but a teacher had taught us very conspicuously. [probing] in terms of wet dreams. Actually, teachers gave a lecture about how to consecrate ourselves because we become profane by having a wet dream. They also taught us that we can sanctify our self by taking a bath and ozu[ablution]. Another important thing was that husband has to take a bath to be sacred after having sex with his wife. There was a condition, like sperm getting out or not if he enters his penis into vagina, it will be mandatory for him to take bath to be sacred. [probing]... In the time of masturbation if anyone feels that sperm has got out then he has to sanctify his body by bathing. It is fully prohibited boldly. They had taught us it as a sinful work. There was a title like a sin of doing masturbation is equivalent to the sin of raping a certain number of women. So, these were about wet dream and masturbation.

A sober analysis of the matter reveals that Madrasha provided sex education, overtly underscoring abstinence only until marriage, which is a very popular and dominant discourse around sex education globally. Therefore, the form of sex education provided by Madrasha in

Bangladesh is conspicuously reproducing the global discourse of sex education that is the need for abstinence only until marriage.

In addition, the way Nafiz explained his experiences of learning sex education under the shadow of religion challenges the dominant pattern of paucity of school-based sex education in my study. In terms of Nafiz' personal views, however, schools should provide detailed knowledge about sexuality because sexuality is interconnected with every sphere of human lives including love, intimacy, family, and many more. By this comment, Nafiz tended to disrupt the dominant discourse that schools are not suitable space to provide sex education to young people. It is noteworthy that there is a common discourse in Bangladesh that students from Madrasha background tend to disagree with advocacy for sex education. However, Nafiz disrupted this common discourse around sexuality and sex education. In a nutshell, Nafiz resisted the exercise of disciplinary power/ knowledge by some very powerful social institutions, such as religion and schools. Through this resistance, he rather exercised power from the bottom (Foucault, 1978).

Similarly, Saif (23 years old) showed reluctance to conform to the dominant discourses around sexuality. As I earlier mentioned, as a self-declared atheist, he always resists the religion-focused discourses. Therefore, he challenged the dominant discourses around sexuality and sex education, such as 'only abstinence until marriage.' He rather tended to reproduce the emerging discourse/subversive discourse is that a boy can have sexual relations based on their consent from both sides. He explained his views:

But [...] brother, I feel disgusting that you cannot have sex before marriage, it is a nonsense idea, I think, what's the problem if someone has sex before marriage based on their consent? However, religious people will think that sex before marriage is sinful

task for them. Anyway, what it is young people have to learn how to have sex safely or how to use condom.

Through these comments, Saif resisted the dominant discourse that school should not provide sex education and challenged the power of religion. It is important to note that he also challenged the dominant discourses of homophobia around sex education. Even though his position was not clear initially in this regard, I got a conspicuous idea when he replied against my probing question about homophobia: “It can be obviously. I've no problem with gay people. If two boys or girls, feels like to do it; then, sure, why not! It's all up to them now.” In this context, he challenged the authority of religion and a homophobic social structure, and he is the only participant who embraced the homosexuality. As an atheist, his beliefs might bring about his understanding related to sexuality.

Finally, some participants challenged the view that young people need school-based formal sex education at all. They rejected the necessity of school-based sex education because they believed that the issues around sexuality are not so broad and important that they need to be taught separately in schools. They rather underlined the value of being self-taught, self-learning, and self-help in terms of sex education. As many as four participants, Sayhan, Saibal, Sipon, and Sahid, talked about self-learning, being self-taught, and natural-learning in terms of providing sex education. The idea that “self-help is the best help”- is a confident way-out for young people, suggested by Saibal. Likewise, Sahid (21 years old) said that “in my opinion, there is no need to teach the basics of sex to a 10-grade student, they are supposed to learn naturally. [...] from my personal experiences, I can say, people can know about the basics stuffs naturally or without help from other.” Through these comments, they tried to undermine the role of school as sex educator, and also reproduced indirectly the dominant discourse that schools should not

provide sex education. Instead, they believe they can learn themselves, as it is their private issue. In this assertion, power and resistance co-exist.

Resistance is found to be pervasive in my study with special reference to the student-teacher sex education communication. In terms of class room-based learning about sex education, some of the participants (e.g., Kaif, Nayem, and Nafiz) insisted on discussing some of the relevant issues related to sex and sexuality. However, the teacher did not feel comfortable to discuss these issues, some teachers refused to talk, some teachers suggested that they read the information alone at home, and even in some cases teachers showed their rage towards those students who asked the questions. In fact, students exercised their power of resistance through insisting on the topic or challenging/breaking the silence (dominant school-based sex education discourse). Teachers exercise their power, depriving students of sex education, but they also exercise their power of resistance by ignoring the students who are asking for more information. Teachers, therefore, reproduced dominant discourse of silence in sex education that schools should not provide sex education, as it is a private issue and, students should learn by or at home alone.

Overall, in terms of school-based sex education, the dominant discourse connected to the paucity of school-based sex education is reproduced and disrupted by the participants simultaneously. Those people who embraced the discourse that schools should not provide sex education, wanted to impose silence or restrictions on sex education or get limited sex education. In fact, they tended to reproduce the popular discourse around school-based sex education, which is 'sex is taboo.' The effect of this discourse is 'silence.' But, silence is not empty silence, it is full of answers. For example, schools restrict talk about sexuality but that does not mean that students do not talk, in stead talking taking place among students either on or of campus (e.g.,

Gordon, 2010). Therefore, restricting talk about sexuality in classroom or schools through their discursive power/knowledge which suggest that sex is taboo cannot guarantee that schools / teachers will not face resistance because resistance is embedded in power-knowledge relations (Foucault, 1978), and power is circulated and dispersed through the discourses (e.g., sex is taboo) influencing the decisions of what is included (e.g., the need for abstinent only until marriage and the exclusion of attention to pleasure), consistent with Foucauldian repressive hypothesis(Foucault, 1978). Thus, this restriction may backfire because power is everywhere, or rhizomatic (Irvine, 2000). So, it is the discourse of sex talk as taboo, which is discussed and reproduced by the participants, propagates other rival or alternative discourses interconnected with love, shame, family values, and family reputations, for instance, the disclosure of sexual relations out of marriage is treated as scandal (e.g., Garcia – Cabeza & Sanchez – Bello, 2013; Luksik & Markova, 2010).

Silence in Parental Sex Education

As a primary institution of socialization, children and adolescents are attached to parents or family. One focus of my thesis is to analyze how Bangladeshi boys are influenced by their parents in terms of receiving sex education. Historically and conventionally, parents-children sex communication is not comfortable in Bangladesh, although girls are bit privileged as they receive some information and supports from their female family members and relatives, even though most of them are ignorant about sexuality and sexual health (e.g., Cash et al., 2001; Rashid, 2000). Cash et al.(2001a) assert that, in their research, parents talked about sexuality and sexual health with their children, but it was questionable whether it is sufficient. It is also not clear who they talk to - girls or/and boys. Researchers have suggested that compared to girls, boys are ironically relatively left with few supports in terms of communication from parents (e.g., Cash et

al., 2001 b; Khatoon, 2016; Rashid. 2000; Dilorio, Pluhar , & Belcher , 2003). It is imperative to analyze how Bangladeshi children communicate with their parents and vice - versa to share sex education information. Overall, in terms of the South Asia as whole, they do not exhibit a remarkable variation about how young people are provided with little sex education under the shadow of family (e.g., Chakravarti, 2011; Motihar, 2008; War & Albert, 2013; Cash et al., 2001 b; Khatoon, 2016; Rashid. 2000).

According to participants, their parents reproduced the old and dominant discourse of sex talk as taboo. In this case Kaif's (23) parents treatment of their children can be well illustrated. They maintained a silence and uncomfortable atmosphere when sexual issues appeared:

We, parents, sister, and parents, felt so shy when the advertisement of condom appeared on the TV screen. In this case, on the one hand, still I and my sister keep using our cell phones feigning that we cannot see what is going on the television. On the other hand, mother pretends that nothing is happened, and my father changes the channel abruptly with remote. We feel embarrassment, but we four members of my family knew what it is, what is the usage of condom. Because we are adult, right.

What is important here is that, Kaif's parents clearly embrace the dominant discourse of sex talk as taboo in terms of sex education, but he is interested in breaking the taboo, and disrupting this dominant discourse. Nayem (23) holds a similar position: "I don't really know why my parent as a teacher could not understand that I should have been provided sex education in a right way".

This silence is basically embedded in cultural practices because Sazbin's (21) parents are physicians, but he did not feel comfortable talking with them: "They cannot come out from their

traditional values even though they are modern educated. So that was not enough what I received from them because they thought that I was not matured enough in that time to handle this, it was too early. So, they thought, no need to discuss this issue with me.”

Those parents who talked about sexuality to educate their boys, in this study, also reproduced dominant gendered discourses with regards to ideas about sexuality. In the case of Sazbin (21), his educated mother only warned about girls, but she never talked about sexuality or sexual health. As he states, “basically, my mom more underlined on suggesting not to mix so closely with girls, not to hang out much with girls, not to stay at a friend’s house at night in that time, she always warned me that, friends are friends, not to do much more”. In making this comment, his mother urges him abstinence only until marriage, producing gendered ideas and reproducing silence around sex education. Sazbin’s views about his parents are consistent with Cash et al.’s (2001a) findings that some parents talk about sexuality and sexual health, but their parents only advised for abstinence until marriage and not to mix with the opposite sex. In my view, his mother also provided some sorts of classist ideas saying- “not stay in friend’s house at night, she always warned me that, friends are friends, not to do much more.”

A sober analysis of his mother’s warning seems classist in that if he interacts much with his friends, he will likely to be attracted to girls or sexuality influenced by other bad “boys”, as his mother might have thought. Here, his mother refers to other friends who are boys. Even though she did not label them as bad boys directly, my assumption based on the expression of Sazbin is that his mother warned him about his friends because, as his mother thought, he might be likely to be negatively influenced by other boys in terms taking risks, such as watching pornography, doing drugs, and taking other sex related risks. In this regard, the way his mother treated him is the common and established treatment of parents in Bangladesh regardless of

parents' socio-economic class and level of education. I would like to refer here to an American sex education researcher, Elliot (2010), who said that American parents perceive their own teens as asexual and sexually innocent. However, they see other teenagers as hypersexual. To sum up, Sazbin comes from a very well-off and urban background while the participants of Cash et al.(2001a) come from rural areas of Bangladesh. Despite the differences of background, parents' treatment of their children in terms of sex education remains same. Therefore, parent-child sex communication is a taboo, which is a dominant discourse in Bangladesh, which is reproduced in Bangladesh regardless of socio-economic and geographical background. In terms of parents' socio-economic background and treatment to children's sexuality issues including sex education, however, the findings from Bangladesh – in my current study and Cash et al.'s (2001) - is not consistent with the rigor of Western research. Comparing American and Dutch parents' views and understandings about young people's sex and sexuality, for instance, Schalet (2010) found a wide gap in terms of how they perceive and navigate their children's sexual issues including whether they value and encourage sex education.

In addition, my participants also received a typical gendered idea about sexuality education because their parents think that boys do not need sex education because they can learn naturally, while girls need sex education. So, boys believe that girls get supports from family, but boys do not. Muhit (22) acknowledged that “[for boys] they don't feel necessary that these things also need to be learnt and known. They think we will learn it automatically.” Of interest, like school-based sex education, the idea that “self help is the best” was raised again when I talked about parents' role in sex education. Some participants prefer self-learning or natural learning to talking with parents. As Sayhan said, “[...] it is to me like I was not free with my parents, I know how much I should have been free with my parents. I learned everything myself. I think it is a

great way.” Through this comment, Sayhan basically reproduced the dominant discourse that sex talk is taboo and shameful. By contrast, Sipon (23) advocated for parental sex education to be more evident and effective. He insisted on breaking the barrier in parent-child communication when it comes to educating sexuality to young people: “I think, parents should be frank and friendly to their children. Particularly, the father will be for son, the mother is for girls. Parents should be friendly discussing these sexual issues with their children, it will be more effective.”

To sum up, silence in terms of sex talk as taboo and shame is a remarkable feature in parental sex education in Bangladesh, which is reproduced by my participants. This silence within social institutions such as the family is a way of exercising disciplinary power over young people to control their sexual behaviour and reproduce some discourses, such as the need for abstinence only until marriage, that sex is dangerous, that sex talk is shameful, and gendered, classist, and sexist ideas about sexuality through the game of inclusion and exclusion (e.g., Derrida, 1997, Foucault, 1978).

Embodying Learning Sexuality

Whatever young men in Bangladesh know about sex and sexuality from peers, pornography, textbooks, and parents, according to my participants, they begin to examine their learning around sexual issues through masturbation, which can be called their first experiment to understand about sexuality or sexual life. In this section, I will highlight how their knowledge about sexuality from different sources, including peers, pornography, books, witnessing physical relations, experiencing physical relations, and being a victim of sexual abuse, has been concretized in experience and practice. It is important to understand how they experienced sex, sexuality, and sex education, which is intertwined with how they produce, reproduce, and disrupt

the dominant, subversive, and emerging discourses around sex education, and how these discourses perpetuate power relations.

In my study, masturbation is found to be an influential and dominant means to learn about sexuality. Sipon (23 years old) and Muhit (22 years old), for instance, concede that for them masturbation was primary experiment of initial curiosity about sexuality, application of primary knowledge on sexuality obtained from peers and pornography, and a transition from the imaginary world to the real world. When they become curious or interested to know and explore sexuality, they seek information about masturbation at the outset of teenagerhood. This- ‘embodying sexuality through masturbation’- is a dominant pattern around sex education in Bangladesh, which is basically reproduced in my study. According to Kaif (23):

I knew nothing about masturbation until grade-eight. One day one of my friends told me that there is a good feeling by jerking penis off, and something emits from penis. You can do it in your home. [...] So for the first time I had known about it and one day I tried to see what happen. Now I can remember that day. I stopped jerking before its emission of sperm. When it was about to emit I was in hesitation that something is coming from the inside of penis. Now what I will do, I will pee on the bed or not then I gave up for that night. [On another day], having come back from school, I took preparation to do it again. I closed the door and I took a piece of cloth [traditional towels] to clean if something emits. I had jerked my penis, but how I was expecting, it was not like that.

Kaif’s point is that he reproduced the common pattern around learning sexuality that through the influence of peers he then embodied his sexuality through masturbation. Similarly, Sazbin (21

years old) and his friends embodied their sexual experiences together, and they applied what they watched in pornography:

To be honest, my friends talked about it [masturbation], like ...but I felt disgusting, but one day, somehow, I got some excitement for some reasons[...] my everything changed in that time , I got mature[...] it was grade 6/7, I learned about masturbation, sex and many more stuffs [...] we got more curious about pornography. We had a huge question about why the girl in pornography is crying. If it is painful, why they are keeping continue? We kept our research continuing, then on the day we four friends including our girl classmates masturbated ourselves using our hands and fingers, then we got it about pleasure in sex.

The essence of the above comments is that the participants concretized their ideas about sexuality through masturbation, and these obtained ideas about sex and sexuality are intertwined with peers and media /the Internet or pornography.

My thesis also highlights how boys defined masturbation, how they perceived masturbation, and how they navigated masturbation as a form of sexuality. Their perceptions and beliefs about masturbation as a form of sexuality are socio-culturally constructed, embedded in the meanings that society permits or prohibits (e.g., through religion and laws). Thus, alongside participants' exploration of masturbation, it is also relevant to signify how society and social institutions construct masturbation. The meaning of masturbation is co-constructed by the forces in society, including religion, medicine, and participants related personal value systems, which are also intertwined with participants' interpersonal interactions in everyday life (e.g., Berger & Luckmann, 1966). However, in my view, this is a discursive process of construction intertwined

with power/knowledge (Foucault, 1978). Thus, adolescents develop their ‘discursive imagination’ (e.g., they hear stories and they also see, how a man and woman have sex in pornography), then they go forward to concretize their imagination into practices/experiences, and in this process, masturbation is a mediator. This is a discursive process, it is also an embodied process however, because masturbation is given a meaning, which is socio-culturally constructed. Meanings associated with masturbation are then discursively reproduced and/or disrupted by adolescents. In this discursive construction, the prescriptions of social institutions (e.g., religion, family, school, medical systems) are resources, in which power/disciplinary knowledge is deployed with a view to controlling adolescent sexual practices (Foucault, 1978).

Some participants reproduced religious discourses that masturbation is a sin. Other participants, by contrast, reproduced the medical discourses that masturbation is alright. As my research’s focus, it is important to know what the dominant discourse around masturbation is, and how participants challenged or favored this discourse. For instance, religious institutions, through scripts and speeches, construct masturbation in a negative way, which is that “masturbation is a sin.” Some of my participants were taught and believed that masturbation is a sin and prohibited. They also believed that masturbation has a negative impact on physical health, including eye-sight. As Sipon (23 years old) stated:

after my grade-10 final exam, I went to *tablig* [tour and travel for the sake of inviting people to Islam and learning fundamental rules and norms of Islam in terms of scripts staying at mosque for some days]. During that time, the group leader [senior to us] described how to abstain from sexuality, why we need to abstain from sexuality, how to keep holiness, also about masturbation, wet dreams. He also explained which foods are responsible for wet dreams (probing) they said, masturbating is not the right thing,

abstain from doing this, when you feel so, remember God. Regarding wet dreams, they advised us not to think about bad stuff, they said it happens because of bad thinking.

The essence of the Sipon's comments is that he reproduced the dominant discourse around masturbation as a sin. Given the authority of religion in Bangladesh, the idea that – 'masturbation is sin' - can be considered a dominant discourse; it is one that is reproduced, in my study, even though all participants became sexually active through masturbation. Likewise, Nafiz (23 years old), who had a background of religious schooling until grade-10, firmly believed and reaffirmed the dominant discourse that masturbation is a sin. He was also taught that there is no difference between masturbation and having sex with women or raping a woman: "It is completely prohibited boldly. They had taught us it as a sinful work. There was a title like a sin of doing masturbation is equivalent to the sin of raping a certain number of women." He reaffirmed this reproduction of discourses because I also asked him if he still believed that masturbation is sin. He replied with confidence, "yes I do." He also reproduced the dominant medical discourses regarding masturbation having negative impacts on physical and mental health. When he asked about the contents of sex education for boys, he also reproduced this discourse that students should be provided with knowledge that masturbation is a sinful action, and it has a negative impact on health.

However, valuing masturbation as a way to control sexual urges is also a dominant discourse in Bangladesh society, which is also reproduced in my study, illustrating how two opposing discourses may circulate in a society at one time. Ultimately what is evident here is that, even though many of the participants believed that masturbation is not approved, they are becoming sexually active through masturbation, and they reproduced an emerging discourse around sexuality that masturbation is a legitimate and acceptable form of sexual activity. This is

linked with sex education because arguably masturbation should be included in the content of sex education curriculum as it is form of sexuality.

In addition to masturbation, in my study, participants also embody sexuality through feeling an erection or ejaculating, experiencing wet dreams, witnessing another's physical relations, having sex with girlfriends, and being a victim of sexual abuse. Muhit (22 years old) explained how he recalled a story on boys' adolescence which he read as a child, and this recollection helped him to understand his ejaculation. As he stated:

In grade-nine, I had crush on a girl for the first time, I was always keeping thinking about her in almost whole day. I used to stick to my reading table for study and was thinking about her. [...] One day, I was thinking about her, and my pant got wet. I saw something was coming out. Basically, ejaculation took place. Then, I got tensed and scared. Then I recalled what I came to know reading a story in my grade-four from a story book [a book that includes stories on adolescent boys in term of wet dreams].

This example again illustrates links between learning about the physical, sexual body indirectly and directly.

Sipon (23 years old) acknowledged that witnessing other people's physical relations helped him understand his own sexuality. He indicated several incidences of witnessing. Referring to an incidence, he explained: "[...] I found both of them nude, they were having sex even though I could not understand what they were doing. Then the boy explained to me what sex is. This is the first time I got curious to know more about sexuality [...] then Internet [porn videos] helped me to know more later." Alongside witnessing, having sexual relations with a girl friend is another way of embodying sexuality. As Sipon (23 years old) said, "[...] when I was in

1st semester (1st year) of university, I had sex with my girlfriend in a hotel. [probing] of course, I used it [condom] yes, I came to know from my friends, I need to use this stuff to avoid pregnancy.”

Finally, even though it is a negative way of learning, being the victim of sexual abuse was another way of embodying sex that emerged in my study. In my view, sexual abuse is an embodied way of learning about sex (not sexuality) , and about violence and power in relation to sex and the body. Two of my participants, Nayem and Sahid, experienced sexual abuse. According to Nayem (23), “[...] It was grade - 4 when I went to my maternal grandfather’s house. Their male house servant (17-18 years old) used to show me some nude pictures even though I felt nothing. At night, he used to come on my bed, hugged me, kissed me, touched my different parts of the body, and wanted to do something more. I forced him to get free from him, and shouted, then he left me. It happened several times. Basically, after many days I realized that it was sexual abuse [...].” He also experienced similar sexual abuse when he was adult, but he resisted then as well because his childhood experiences helped him to understand abuse. The essence of the Sahid’s experiences regarding sexual abuse is that these unpleasant experiences also helped him to learn about a certain use of sex, although in very troubling way.

In a nutshell, both religion and medical sciences-exercise their power to regulate young people’s sexuality with their disciplinary knowledge, for instance, framing masturbation as a morally dangerous sexual activity, versus masturbation is alright to control sexual urges.

Adolescence and Strong Curiosity

Adolescence is a life stage of human development, wherein a child faces radical physical and emotional changes and keeps growing gradually. As a result, they often face many questions

about their body and sexuality (Curtis, 2015). Some consider it to be a physical and psychosocial rebirth (Hall, as cited in Curtis, 2015, p.1). However, in some cultures, children's curiosity begins earlier, and in some cultures, young people are provided with more information while in others they are provided with less (Curtis, 2015). During this time of growing up, different formal and informal social institutions, such as schools, media/Internet, and peers are connected to young people's experiences in dealing with learning about sexuality. Their experiences in searching and learning sexuality in this time, and how society reacts to changes in their bodies, shape their adolescence. Throughout these action and reactions, young people are also growing up into gendered adults. For instance, usually a boy frames his identity and is framed by others in terms of becoming a man.

In my study, some sub-themes emerged around adolescence in terms of 'manhood,' 'independence', 'attraction to girls', and 'strong curiosity to know sex, sexuality, and body', all resonating with dominant discourse around male adolescence in patriarchal Bangladesh society. When I asked my participants how they defined or understood their adolescence, most of them pointed out their visible physical changes as well as expressions of manhood. Sayhan (24 years old) interpreted his adolescence in terms of some bodily-changes: "Beard grows slowly on my face. Hair increases and at that time I thought I need to wear underwear. When I was in class seven, I told my mother that I needed underwear, or I need a short pant". Similarly, Sipon (23 years old) addressed his experiences of adolescence in terms of feelings of bodily changes but more so emerging sexual desire: "my voice changed, but my beards did not grow on that time, I felt sexually excited, very often I felt horny, my brain was not working sometimes, my throat got dry". In addition to participants' experiences, society's reactions to their pubertal changes also defined their adolescences. Sazbin (21) understood that he was growing up when boys were

separated from their female friends when swimming in the school: “[...] we used to swim together, but when we were in grade-seven we were separated from girls in school for swimming. At that time, I thought that it is because their bodies were changing, I understood, oh, my friends’ boobs got bigger.” This separation in terms of gender was also felt by Sayhan (24): “Basically, from class eight, the feelings of the attraction of a girl started to come to me. A boy cannot stay with a girl together. They are to keep distance between them. But before class six, I played, ate, slept together. I did not feel the attraction to a girl.”

The experiences of visible physical changes and the internalization of this gender-based separation are connected to show manhood and independence, which are building blocks of the construction of adolescence for boys. Some of my participants reported that they internalized manhood when they felt freedom of movement (e.g., they could go anywhere beyond parental permission), and when showed adamant and stubborn attitudes with their parents (e.g., they began to resist their parental control).

Sazbin (21 years old) defined adolescence more broadly, leaving aside the biological constructions of adolescence: “Hangout with girls, try to impress girls, played soccer, started to smoke ...to show manhood... muscle grow”. Likewise, Sayhan (24 years old) included feelings of independence and becoming fashionable in defining adolescence.

I felt better to have some beard on my face and I also tried to keep my hair long. I also tried to wear stylish clothes. When parents order me, I felt upset because I thought I as no more kid. When parents or seniors irritate me, I went away from the home. It was my adolescence that is why I did not want to obey them. After getting SSC certificate

[grade-10] I felt very delighted because now I have passed SSC, so now I can do work.
Now I have become young [an independent adult].

Heterosexual attraction was also related to changes emerging with adolescence as all participants in my study demonstrated that attraction to girls and strong curiosity to know about sex, sexuality, and body are important defining features of adolescence. According to Muhit (22 years old): “In grade-9, I had a crush on a girl for the first time, I was always keeping thinking about her in almost whole day.” Similarly, Sipon (23 years old) mentioned attractions, feelings, fear, curiosity, and confusions about girls:

Then I got attracted and addicted to girls. [...] I used to feel shy seeing a girl, I was afraid to go in front of girls, such as I used to feel confused about what to do, whether they would like me or not, they would accept or not, am I ok or not, many more confusions I had when girls came inform of me.

Nayem (23 years old) constructed adolescence in terms of attraction to girls mentioning ‘new feelings to girls’:

[attraction to girls] When I saw the opposite sex, a bad thinking used to come in my head. I kept thinking about the girls. In addition, when a girl came to sit beside me, I got different feelings, which were new feelings, unlike previous ones. For example, I felt something different when I saw a good [sexy] figure of a madam [lady teacher]. Now I can understand why I felt so at that time.

Nayem (23) also included increasing curiosity to know about sexuality in constructing adolescence:

I also participated in the group discussion/chatting [in peer groups]. I noticed that I did not know many things, but my friends knew more than me on some of the topics of sex. They sometimes brought some small books such as novel or story in our classroom. I got so curious to know about sex more [in classroom] The boys and girls in our class used to laugh at me, but I asked for curiosity, and the teacher could understand my curiosity and questions.

In conclusion, some of my participants reproduced a concentration on the biological constructions of male adolescence, which is a dominant discourse defining male's adolescence in terms of naturalization/biological perspectives in Bangladesh and beyond. Thus, the participants also reaffirmed this dominant discourse because they underline attraction/relations with girls and related curiosity and confusions, which are thought as an important component of male adolescence. It is important to understand how participants conceptualized and navigated their adolescence, interacting with other people or institutions including peers, teachers, religious leaders, parents or media. Despite the dominant naturalizations of adolescence, in my view, adolescence-induced curiosities are socially constructed in terms of how society anticipates and reacts to pubertal changes, including who is permitted to ask about it, and what they can ask about it.

Growing up into Masculinity and Heterosexuality, Missing Teenagerhood

How Bangladeshi young men conceptualized and constructed adolescence, which is connected to how they perceived sex, sexuality, and sex education, was firmly interconnected with masculinity and heterosexuality. They constructed their adolescence through some visible physical and emotional changes that they experienced and navigated during adolescence, as well

as a strong focus on attraction to girls and the need to have a girlfriend, which were discussed in the previous section, but there were other forces present as well. How my participants defined adolescence is connected to their everyday practices, and their everyday practices are given meaning or constructed in terms of what they learn from their peers, schools, parents, media/the Internet or pornography (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). To put it another way, Bangladeshi boys learn about sexuality through watching pornography, for example, which illustrates gendered, heterosexual, hegemonic masculinity, and the subordination of women. In the case of American boys, schools and peer culture are making “hetero-masculine” self-hood and teaching boys to deny everything that does not conform to it (Pascoe, 2007). In Bangladesh, boys’ sex education seeking practices are similarly influenced by such cultural, institutional and peer relations shaping of masculinity and heterosexuality because boys are very concerned and conscious about maintaining masculinity in their search for sex education, including what they will look for, how, and with whom. Their construction of masculinity also signifies which knowledge or sources of sex education they will value. Here, participants reproduced their development in terms of masculinity and heterosexuality, and they reinforced repeatedly that in the transition from childhood to adolescence they are growing up as a man. In maintaining hegemonic masculine/manhood and heterosexual identity, they were conforming with normative values and wrestling with the agencies of society. Accordingly, the strong desire to grow up as a hegemonic, masculine, and heterosexual man is the dominant discourse around male adolescence, sexuality, and sex education in Bangladesh. However, they expressed their manhood as if they wanted to transform their childhood to manhood directly, missing teenagerhood.

Sazbin (21 years old) urged me to understand how he was growing up as a masculine and heterosexual man: “I showed my manhood in different ways, for example, I started to shave my

beard even though that was not time. I had no beard, but just to show manly. My mom did not agree to shave, I was not allowed by mom.” Through this comment, Sazbin reproduced the dominant discourse of strong desire to grow as a man with reference to hegemonic masculinity because a tendency to show ‘physical strength’ is one of the salient features of hegemonic masculinity in Bangladesh and beyond. In a patriarchal society, such as Bangladesh, to be bearded is an important trait to be a man, which is expected. The desire to fulfill these expectations under the rubrics of a man is linked to hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1995). To grow up masculine and heterosexual, some of my participants concede that they have to strive and thrive in terms of showing evidence of masculinity and heterosexuality to the society, which was echoed in Kaif (23 years old)’s comments:

Everything had been late to me, like I have no beard until now. Sometimes my father tells me, if you get admitted in school with a clean shave your friends will not be able to admit you. My face resembles an infant. [...] When they shared their wet dream history I said that it happened to me also. I had to lie that I had wet dream, which was false. Actually, I admit it in front of them only to maintain social status.

Indeed, all participants said that they started their unnecessary beard shaving to show their manhood.

What are the challenges boys encountered if they grow up into masculinity and heterosexuality? Like girls, in my view, boys also face vulnerabilities, but these vulnerabilities are different. Some local and international studies argue that boys are also encountering vulnerabilities as they attempt to maintain hegemonic masculinity because, going on to show their manhood, they are likely to take risky behaviour including risky sexual behaviour,

committing suicide, doing drugs or alcohol (e.g., Kabir, 2015; Sanatana, Raj, Decker, La Marche, & Sileverman, 2006; Mahalik, Lagan, & Morrison, 2006; Courtenay, 2000; Moller-Leinmuhler, 2003). These vulnerabilities are related to sex education, as I mentioned earlier. For example, more than 46-48 % clients of prostitutes are young men who go to see commercial sex workers “to prove masculinity” in Bangladesh (Gazi et al., 2009, p.00). Those young males who aspire to hegemonic masculinity do not tend to use condoms in sexual relations, which is risky (e.g., Kabir, 2015). In addition, they also face vulnerabilities in terms of maladaptive coping strategies, including inexpressiveness, non-disclosure, and reluctance to seek help (e.g., Chu, 2005; Moller-Leinmuhler, 2003), this is exactly what Sahid (21 years old) encountered after being victim of sexual abuse, mentioned below.

In terms of labelling of homosexuality or to show his heterosexuality, Sahid (21 years old) could not share with his friends immediately after being a victim of sexual abuse by an adult man: “basically, I had to take time to understand the matter completely [about] what actually happened to me. I also took time before sharing [this information], I thought, how [might] my friends react to listen to me? I was a little bit worried and confused if they label me as gay. After a week, I shared with my close friends. But they did not take it negatively. Then I also share with other people.” Even though Sahid procrastinated to disclose, he ultimately told his friends. His non-closure or reluctance to seek help immediately could put negative impact on his mental health in terms of trauma. This procrastination is consistent with Alaggia’s (2005) findings that the boys who are the victim of sexual abuse are less likely to disclose than girls, and it is often because of homophobia and fear of stigmatization.

In a nutshell, my participants grew up in a society which is full of discourses (e.g., including dominant, marginalised, subversive, and emerging discourses) intertwined with

hegemony of manhood and heterosexuality. Becoming subjected to these discourses, some participant did not problematize the heteronormative and masculine values, while some of them resisted in this regard. Their subjugated docile identity of a man (e.g., via bio-power) was constructed and co-constructed (e.g., by the discourses interconnected to peers, family, pornography, media, and schools) through normalization with disciplinary power/knowledge (Foucault, 1978). Accordingly, they reproduced the dominant discourse that they have to prove themselves as normal by showing their manhood and practicing heteronormativity.

Intersectionality

In my interviews, participants raised some issues or themes, which I cannot ignore because these issues are relevant to how they experienced and viewed sex, sexuality, and sex education. I have highlighted how my participants reproduced and/or disrupted dominant discourse around sex education in Bangladesh, and how they interpreted their experiences. Now, I will shed light on how their comments suggested ‘classism’ and ‘othering’ in terms of their experience of sex education.

Classism. It is commonly believed that economic class may privilege some people in terms of receiving information about sexuality. The upper economic class’s children and adolescents may have earlier access to sex education than their counterparts because of greater access to media and communication technology, and more elite school system. In Bangladesh, of the school streams, those people who have higher economic standing go to private English-medium (i.e., the British or the North American curriculum) and English-version (i.e., Bangladeshi national curriculum) schools. This class-oriented schooling is important in my analysis because the dominant discourse regarding access to technology in Bangladesh is that the English

medium/version students have more and earlier access to the Internet and other communication technology than the mainstream Bangla medium students. In Bangladesh, it is well established that the students who go to the English medium/version schools are from the high-income family, and the high-income households have more access to the Internet in Bangladesh (Islam & Saha, 2011). As a result, these students have knowledge about sexuality at a more advanced level. Although this class-based analysis may seem trivial, since only one (e.g., Sazbin) from this class was interviewed, it is in fact crucial in terms of today's concern over Internet/media-based sex education. These issues are explained by Sazbin (22 years old) when he was asked why some of his upper-class friends knew about sexuality more and earlier than he: “[B]ecause they did not grow up like me [upper-class], I grew up in a different way. They were like in a high[er] class [upper-upper-class], like more high class. They knew everything about sex and sexuality before me. They learned to see through what their elder brother and sisters did.” The essence of the comments of Sazbin reproduced the dominant discourse that the economic class of young people is strongly connected to access to Internet as well as information on sexuality. Regarding access to the Internet-based information on sexuality, economic class or the level of family income is equally important for *Madrasha*-going students in Bangladesh. Even though upper-class people send their children to *Madrasha*, it is commonly believed that the *Madrasha* going-students are from poor family.

Othering. In terms of expressing views and experiences, some participants in my study attributed certain incidences or patterns to other boys, not themselves. Through these conscious or unconscious tendencies, they sometimes highlighted their own, more normative positions in society, which conformed to existing social exceptions. In other words, they reproduced the

dominant hierarchy instead of challenging it. For instance, Sayhan (24 years old) distinguished “we” from “they” very well in terms of pornography addiction:

Those of my friends who are addicted to pornography go to pornographic sites and watch pornography. However, other people like me who are not in a situation like them watch or download dramas or famous speeches of exemplary figure. The pathetic matter of their cases is that they become addicted to that. [...] It damages the mindset of an individual. We remain normal watching a girl, but [those] who are accustomed to watching pornography, they become haughty and horny to tease the girl. Some imagine “if I can do something with that girl”.

Similarly, Nayem (23 years old) illustrated this ‘othering’ in terms of merit position and family reputation, even though both positions are contradictory to the more dominant construction of masculinity wherein most of the participants felt proud to share their experiences of wet dreams and masturbation with friends during chatting:

[...] Because my merit position, in class time, I had to sit in the first bench, I could not mix with the back - benchers who knew about sex and sexuality. Otherwise people would have labelled me as bad boy or deviant, I wonder. In the break hour, they talked about sex, masturbation, wet dreams, and girls’ body parts. I only listened to them, I never took part in those chatting. [...] anyway, when I experienced wet dreams first, I could not share with my friends even though they used to ask me about experiencing wet dreams and masturbation because they already had started masturbation. Basically, I was first boy or second boy in my class (by dint of merit), I was also a son of a teacher of my school. I thought sexuality stuffs are bad things, I would be labelled as a bad boy

If I shared. I was concerned about my own reputation as well as my family's reputations. My friends can do everything, but I cannot do.

Furthermore, Sazbin (21 years old) distinguished himself from his other friends in terms of addiction to girls and sexuality, and maturity: "I think my friends were more advanced than me, I can say they were more sexually addictive than me. They have already [had] sex with girls specifically at that time, when I started to know." The essence of the othering by Sazbin is that he tended to reproduce the discourses of 'innocence' around childhood indirectly. By saying, 'someone is more addictive to sex and girls during adolescence than me,' he signified that he was normal and innocent as a child with paying not much attention on sexual issues because society embraced and appreciate this innocence.

Chapter 6

Projected Sex Education: Complicated Views

One of the foci of my thesis is to understand how Bangladeshi young men think about the dynamics of potential sex education based on their adolescent experiences and current realizations. This is one of the nine major themes that emerged from the interviews, which depicts what young men propose for sex education in terms of the place where it should be taught, who should provide it, who it should be provided to, and what should be provided based on their adolescent experiences and current understanding as young men. Before my interviews, I had suspected that they would not give me straight proposals for what is needed in terms of sex education. What was said in the interviews reinforced what I had anticipated because they produced very complicated views when I asked them how they would design sex education curriculum for Bangladeshi boys. Even though they produced complicated views, they covered most of the unresolved questions around sex education, such as who (teachers/determiners), whom/when (age), what (content: appropriate content for appropriate age), where (space/place), why (best interest), and how (pedagogy, formal/informal), echoing van Vliet & Raby's (2008) observations about key points to consider around sex education. Accordingly, in this chapter, I shed light on my participants' "views" on proposed sex education, delineating how their views reproduce and/or disrupt dominant discourse around sex education in Bangladesh, rather than their "experiences" of sex education revolving around peers, schools, parents, the Internet/pornography, masculinity, heterosexuality, which I focused in the previous chapter.

Participants had common views about school as an important space for providing sex education. They are not interested in relying on unreliable peers, uncomfortable parents, and

corrupted porn videos or Internet. In my interviews, the themes and sub-themes of school-based sex education emerged and interwove within age/time, space, content, amount of content, teachers-focused instruction, and book format. However, in terms of considering the unresolved question around sex education, mentioned above, participants showed their complicated, inconclusive, and interwoven views around school-based sex education. Through these views, which I discuss below, they reproduced and challenged the dominant discourses connected to sex education. Following Foucauldian discourse analysis, I am interested in shedding light on both what they said and what they did not say, and what the participants sought to promote. We can also consider how power is exercised in terms of the above-mentioned questions.

In my interviews, time/age (i.e., when sex education should be provided), space (i.e., where sex education should be provided), and contents and its amount interwove as an important sub-theme. Saibal (24 years old) said that it should be 10 years old (grade-5) when it should start:

I think, from grade-5, human organs and physical structure should be introduced to the students as much as details. Differences between male and female should be introduced through multimedia projectors. Students should be provided with awareness about sexual stuffs, the girls should be informed about their 'boundary' [of friendship and forming peer groups], to whom they can mix. Students should be provided with awareness about sexual harassment.

In making this comment, he reproduced the popular and dominant discourses that children are assumed to be innocent (e.g., Robinson, 2008), asexual (e.g., Robinson, 2008; Flanagan, 2011; Surtees, 2005), and vulnerable (e.g., Lam, 2012; Robinson, 2008) because he does not think that children may need sex education before 10 years old. However, some people also disagree to the

age of 10. In this case, he also disrupted the dominant discourse that school age is not in any way a time to provide sex education. In addition, he also embraced another dominant discourse that girls should be restricted in terms of movement and friendship boundaries. By this comment, he indicated that girls should form their peer groups with girls, not boys. Therefore, he proposed a sexual double-standard content of sex education for schools because he mentioned only girls in this regard.

In addition to the interplay between space and content, my participants also valued schools as a place of sex education, delineating how it serves the best interest of children. Sazbin (21 years old) acknowledged that school is an effective means of sex education, and sex education is for the best interest for the young people, such as reducing sexual harassment against girls:

Because we spend the most time in school, is not it? We cannot share with our parents, it would be better if school teachers helped them. Student-teacher relations is very respectable in Bangladesh, they may be effective way to provide sex education. For example, boys tease girls, it can be stopped if boys are educated about girls' and boys' normal changes in terms of body, organ and sexual health.

Sazbin strongly advocates school as an effective space for providing sex education to young people. Similarly, in the discussion of Saibal's comments, mentioned above, one conspicuous issue that emerged is that school is an effective place to provide sex education in terms of equality and equity. In fact, through their comments, they disrupted the dominant discourses that private sexual issues should not be discussed in classroom.

Again, in terms of the content of the sex education, Sipon (23 years old) asserted that “school should make aware students about negative consequence of masturbation, perverted sexual thinking, and they should be provided how this stuff impact on health degradation”. In making this comment, even though Sipon advocated for school-based sex education, he again reproduced the popular discourse of sexuality that sexuality is dangerous, especially for children. This similar position was also held by Sahid (21), when he advocated for school-based sex education. In a moment of the interview with Saibal (24 years old), he contradicted himself about introducing sex education in school. On the one hand, it is clear that he advocates for school-based sex education through bold comments such as: “yes, of course, [it] must be because it is an educational institution, it is the proper place to provide sex education [...] if school does it, all people will get sex education. Otherwise, some people will get knowledge on sex education, some will not, or some people will get partially, some people will get completely.” Here, Saibal resisted the dominant discourse that schools should not provide sex education to young people as it is their private issue. On the other hand, he also suggested not to introduce sex education in schools: “[laugh] now, you know brother, there is no need to educate young people about sex and sexuality. Now you know, Internet is available, people are learning and understanding themselves, know everything automatically, they do not need to seek help to nobody. They do not need to go for help to know about sex and sexuality.”

In making this comment, based on the above discussion, when it comes to issues of sex education, most of us readily agree that the Internet is a very compelling sex educator for today’s young people. Where this agreement usually ends, however, is on the question of credibility and authenticity of information and knowledge. Some are convinced that school-based sex education is more authentic than the Internet-based information. However, Saibal underlined the

importance of the Internet for today's generation, and also disrupted the dominant discourse that pornography provides corrupt sex education.

In a nutshell, both Saibal and Sahid agreed to introduce sex education in schools, but they want to exclude pleasure and desire from sex education, they only advocate for awareness - type sex education including awareness about STIs, abortion, sexual harassment and violence against women, and issues commonly addressed in other countries (e.g., the Western and developed societies) which have already introduced formal school based sex education (e.g., Fine , 1992 ; Harrison & Hillier , 1999 ; Bridges & Hauser, 2014 ; Cameron-Lewis & Allen , 2013). My conclusion, then, is that these participants engage in an inclusion/exclusion strategy to reproduce and perpetuate the dominant discourse, which is that sex is dangerous, especially for children. They become docile to the dominant discourses perpetuated through different institutions, such as religion, family. They normalized this way of thinking embracing the power / knowledge of these institutions (Foucault, 1978).

In addition to sex education content, in my interviews, the participants also talked about the amount of sex education content that is appropriate for particular grades and ages. In this regard, they also showed their complicated, conservative, liberal, and mixed views which will be highlighted in the following section. Regarding amount of content, Sahid (21) reminds us not to be too broad. He seems to worry that if sex education is highlighted broadly in school, it will bring negative impacts on young people, including inspiring them to have sex out of marriage, and he also reminds us of the dominant discourse which favours abstinence until marriage: "I think that sex education, such as limited, basic, awareness-type, sex education adjusted to our cultural values, can be provided". Similarly, Sayhan (24 years old) was too worried about today's young people as he came to know that schools are currently providing knowledge on

reproductive health: “at the age of fourteen or fifteen, a boy reads in grade-10. But I heard that, in class six, it has been included. I think it is not right. From grade-eight and nine, it is very good for the student. But you seem that students in class six are in eleven years old. So, at that time, it is so dangerous for them.” Even though his concerns are about timing, he seems more concerned about the amount of contents for grade-6/7 students. The essence of this arguments is that he wanted to reproduce a popular discourse that sex is dangerous. If young people are provided with sex education comprehensively, they will likely to be involved in sexual relations out of marriage. In fact, he also wanted to reproduce an old dominant discourse - abstinence until marriage.

Despite the conventional and conservative views, mentioned above, my participants also underscored comprehensive sex education. Kaif (23 years old) suggested that young people should be taught mutual-respect between boys and girls through school-based formal sex education:

In fact, a boy should know that he can do it[love]/ fall in love to a girl when the girl-friend will have same feeling. When both have the same feelings, then they can do something [love, physical relations]. When one of them has negative feelings at that situation, both should show respect to their personal choice of each other.

In fact, Kaif is corroborating an emerging discourse around sex education calling upon “comprehensive sex education,” wherein sex education will teach mutual-respect, pleasure, and gender equity in sexuality. However, his proposed comprehensive sex education is still sexist because he referred to sexual pleasure and love for only heterosexual relationships. In this context, even though he has “disembedded” (Giddens, 1990) from conventional ideas around sex

education, his views on proposed sex education are constructed by his heteronormative docile society, and with heterosexual discourse of sexuality, which is reproduced by heterosexual disciplinary power/knowledge, excluding same sex relations clearly (Foucault, 1978), for example, which he has learned interacting with peers and from pornography, schools, and parents (Berger & Luckmann, 1996).

Similarly, even though Muhit tried to propose more liberal and comprehensive sex education, attention to pleasure is missing in his thoughts.

Boys and girls should be given idea about biological things; they have a mind-set that they should stay separate [from each other]. However, they should be given a liberal idea that friendship happens without thinking about sexuality. They should treat each other as friend [probing], they should be given the idea about the benefits and loss of physical relations, use of condom, technology - induced sexual abuse and scandal [...] at higher education level they should provide right idea about pregnancy, masturbation, abortion, and these types of thing.

Overall, Nafiz's suggestions are more comprehensive and cross-cutting intertwined with human life. He wanted to relate sexuality to 'whole human lives. He also emphasised the contents, amount and volume of sex education to be provided in schools.

I think sexuality is one of the biggest parts of human life. A chapter should be given in the book, not as a small paragraph in the chapter. Love, marriage, and a family depends on sexuality, everything is connected with it. I think giving a small paragraph in the book instead of a chapter is illogical. It should have a separate subject. [...] From class nine, teachers should warn about potential problems if they masturbate. I think, if

students are given the right information on that time, they will not engage in doing these sexual stuffs. [...] They can understand about good and sinful activities.

However, Nafiz was also concerned about the negative aspects of sexuality, and his concerns reproduced religious discourses. To sum up, in terms of content and amount of sex education, even though participants' comments advocates for comprehensive sex education, they embraced the conventional and dominant discourse that the need for awareness-type sex education and sexuality is dangerous. Of importance, they contradicted themselves here. On the one hand, they advocate for school-based formal sex education. On the other hand, they complained against comprehensive sex education. What is more important here, is that they again advocate for sex education which is incomplete, partial, limited, gendered, and sexist through inclusion/exclusion doctrines (Foucault, 1978).

After discussion about time, space, and content of sex education, I asked participants about the ideal format of a sex education textbook, for example, if it is a separate textbook or a chapter in another book. This is an important question because it analyzes how young people value sex education. In other words, how young people emphasize sex education. Nafiz (23) rationalised why a separate text-book is needed to educate sex and sexuality to young people in school:

I think it will be most helpful when students will have a separate book on sex education. Then students must read the book, otherwise, if it is included in other books as some chapters, students will try to avoid because they will look for an alternative topic to answer in the exam script, or they will avoid because they will fell uncomfortable to read loudly at home [...] For instance, there is a topic like AIDS. Students do not read it

at home because other family members can hear. So, it is an unreadable topic for students. I think if students have a separated mandatory book they will read it beyond doubt. They will know about sexuality.

However, Sahid (21) did not advocate for separate sex education textbook: “I think, subject matters of sex education are not so wide that it needs to be separated. No need to be highlighted separately”. Similarly, Sipon (23) said that “No, if they are given a separate textbook, they will not keep it in their home or with them. It is better few chapters to be added to other books.”

Finally, who should teach sex education? Most of my participants favoured a teacher. Nayem (23 years old) wanted to rely on teachers as sex educators even though he feels need of training for teachers because its success depends on teachers, as he believes:

[...] in my opinion, whatever you provide or whenever you provide, you must underline on an issue, that is, who will provide this education? [probing] the teachers should be provided with sex education and training so that they can deal it in the classroom with ease. The success of sex education in school depends on the teacher, if a teacher takes it negatively, how come. So, the teachers’ mentality does matter here. [...] you need to know if a teacher perceives this education as good or bad... when a teacher presents this as good, it is good. When they present as bad, it is bad [...]

He repeatedly emphasised the relevance of teachers’ views, beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions to sex education, after that, he suggested to think further about school-based sex education:

[...] So, when they teach sex education in a classroom, they will feel excited, bad things will come in their brain because they will not consider it as a lesson, they will rather consider it as sex talk. And I am 100% sure of that. [probing] yes, what is the

teachers' views about sex education. Even teachers teach this content in this way, in which female sexuality is undervalued or degraded. It is 90% cases because these teachers have no academic background in sex education. In addition, their lessons may increase teasing tendency among boys.

Nayem raised concern about taking teachers' views into account in designing school-based sex education because it may backfire, as many of their views are still often unequally gendered; hence, it will have negative impact on gender relations or promote gender violence. Nayem thus implies the need for teachers themselves to be educated about how to teach sex education.

In Bangladesh, the teacher-student relation is still authoritative, where teachers are dominating, and these imbalanced relations are dominant in school pedagogy, and this pattern is also evident in my study. Even though Nayem underlines how teachers approach their students with sex education content, the evidence shows that students can also try to show their power, such as via resistance, by asking embarrassing personal questions because teachers are also concerned about their personal and schools' reputations, which may be disturbed through rumours (e.g., Harrison & Hillier, 1999). For example, in my study, Kaif (23 years old) said that "in grade-8, one lady teacher used to teach us social sciences, wherein there was a topic on HIV/AIDS, we intentionally insisted and asked about this topic, but she repeatedly ignored our queries, we did it intentionally to make fun with madam [lady teacher], she felt embarrassed. We enjoyed that." In this example, the students were not only pushing for information but were harassing a female teacher by embarrassing her. Through such actions, he resisted teachers' authority, embraced hegemonic masculinity.

In conclusion, participants are socially and discursively constructed as a masculine and heterosexual man being regulated by disciplinary power/knowledge of social institutions, such as peer groups, family, schools, and the media/internet/pornography. Their discursive constitution is well echoed in their views of how they want to see the potential sex education in Bangladesh. their views reproduced and/or disrupted dominant discourses around sex education.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

Using social constructionism and Foucauldian discourse analysis, I employed a qualitative methodology in my study, wherein I collected Bangladeshi young men's views, experiences, narratives, and stories to address the research questions: How did Bangladeshi young men receive sex education during adolescence? How did they interpret their experiences? How did their narratives reproduce and/or disrupt dominant discourses related to sex education, including discourses around sexuality, teenagerhood, masculinity, and manhood? I wanted to listen to their narratives as they recalled their experiences growing up, as well as their current experiences and understanding. This study identified the formal and informal sources of information about sex and sexuality they sought. In so doing, I analyzed their narratives regarding what they learned through interacting with different social institutions such as family, peers, school, media/the Internet. The narratives and views, as told throughout this thesis, illustrated that they sought and received information on sexuality during their adolescence, even though they were not provided with formal sex education, such as through parents or school.

Whatever the nature of sources and amount of sex education, all participants received sex education with the help of peers, pornography (i.e., videos, written, and picture), the Internet, media, parents, schools, and religion. Of these sources, peers and pornography were most convenient and common in terms of becoming informed about sex and sexuality. However, my participants identified peers as an unreliable source, and pornography/internet as a corrupt source, alongside silence in sex communication with parents, and paucity of school-based sex education. In these processes of learning sexuality, masturbation was the most common and popular way to embody of sexuality. In addition to masturbation, they embodied their learned

sex education through sexual abuse, ejaculation, witnessing other's physical relations, and having sex with girlfriends. My study reveals that what they learned about sexuality from these informal sources was gendered and sexist, reproducing hegemonic masculinity, naturalizing of sexuality or seeing sexuality as dangerous, masturbation as morally, physically, and mentally degraded, sexually infected diseases prevention-focused knowledge and skills, brutality in sexuality as normal with girls, and undermining the need for girls' consent in sexuality. These ideas around sexuality as well as sex education influenced how participants defined their adolescence. Accordingly, my participants defined adolescence in terms of pointing to physical/natural changes, society's reaction to pubertal changes, strong attraction, and curiosity to girls, showing dynamics of manhood, masculinity, and heterosexuality, as well as showing resistance and struggles to maintain hegemonic masculinity.

I have also identified some common-sense truths/dominant discourses around sex education based on the existing literature, my participants' subjective views, and experiences, and society's overall ideas in Bangladesh, which are intertwined with social institutions, as mentioned above. As my participants are embedded in these discourses, I analyzed how my participants reproduced and/or disrupted these dominant discourses. In this regard, my participants are of mixed minds, both reproducing and disrupting the dominant discourses. Some participants embraced dominant discourses while others disrupted them, and even sometimes contradicted themselves. These dominant discourses are interconnected with 'power-knowledge' relations. My study also reveals that the social institutions (e.g., religion, schools) are holding a professional and authoritative position through their circulation and reproduction of these dominant discourses, and they thus create disciplinary/expertise knowledge (e.g., religion advocating for abstinence until marriage or medical science suggesting that masturbation is

alright) on certain subjects (e.g., sexuality or masturbation) to exercise their power in relation to young people. In addition to disciplinary power, my study demonstrates that the dominant discourses or common-sense truths (e.g., publicly talk about sex is dangerous) produces my participants as 'subjugated bodies' exercising bio-power. Thus, through both disciplinary power and bio-power, participants become subjected to the discourses (i.e., through normalization), and do not resist the dominant discourses, even though they also sometimes problematized the dominant discourses, which is consistent with the heart of Foucault's (1978) discourse analysis.

I also asked my participants about their views based on their adolescent experiences and current understanding in terms of how they would propose that sex education be provided for Bangladeshi boys. In this case, they also produced some complicated views in designing sex education. However, their views covered most of the unresolved questions around sex education, such as who educates (teachers/determiners), to whom and when (age), what should be taught (content: appropriate content for appropriate age), where (space/place), why (best interest), and how (pedagogy, formal/informal). In this regard, participants also embraced and /or resisted the dominant discourses around sex education. Whatever they believed about the future of sex education in Bangladesh, all participants agreed that young people need to be provided sex education, and it should be school-based formal sex education.

Limitations of the Study

There are some limitations to my study that need to be addressed. First, my study excluded self-identified females because I wanted to understand the views and experiences of young men, which are usually different from those of females. Having acknowledged the sufferings and vulnerabilities of girls in terms of sex education-seeking behaviour, I was

interested in understanding boys' experiences because they have different forms of sufferings and vulnerabilities in navigating adolescence, sexuality, sexual health, and sex education.

However, it would be very interesting to conduct a future study comparing both boys' and girls' experiences around sex education in Bangladesh.

Second, in terms of the sexual identity of my participants, all participants were self-identified heterosexual, even though I intended to include a more diverse group of participants representing different sexualities. However, it was not achievable because sexual diversities in Bangladesh are not acknowledged socially and legally. Because of homophobia, homosexual people generally do not disclose their identity.

Third, I mentioned earlier that religious beliefs or atheism are important because they signify how an individual perceives the issues around sexuality and sex education, such as public talk about sexuality or masturbation. All participants were Muslim, even though I tried to include some participants from the religious identity other than Islam.

Fourth, even though I had the intention to synthesise young men's reflections on their pubertal-experiences and their current understandings around sex education, interviewing current adolescent boys could enrich my data because there has been a huge social change that has taken place in Bangladesh due to communication technologies (e.g., access to the Internet), and my participants passed through their adolescence when the Internet/ the smart cell phone was not available in a large scale. In terms of inclusion of participants, interviewing some school teachers and parents could also enrich my data because they are key people in education/sex education. Their experiences and views could underpin my analyzing data.

Fifth, there is a formal chapter on ‘puberty and reproductive health’ of the book entitled ‘Physical Education, Health Science, and Sports’ in the current school curriculum in Bangladesh. Whatever the amount of sex education this book chapter is currently providing to young people, my participants received no formal sex education from schools like what is currently being provided to students. My study does not delve into how much sex education current students are receiving or what are the influences of partially-formal content in their everyday lives.

Sixth, I admit that the presence of my own bias and interpretations in any stages of this endeavour might have existed as the data collection, transcriptions, translation, and analyzed were performed solely by me. As it was a deconstructive discourse analysis, however, I did not play the role of the conventional researchers, such as ‘knowers’ and ‘measurers’ of human beings and their behaviours (Macleod, 2002). Instead, my role was to be an expert in asking questions and analyzing the data, and I took maximum care allowing my data to speak for itself instead of playing a role imposing my value-laden ideas in data analysis. Despite my efforts, it needs to be acknowledged that it is almost impossible to leave researcher’s biases absolutely, but I tried to make sure that I did not miss anything overtly or overestimate anything based on my own interest, values, ideologies, and interpretations, becoming aware of the presence of biases and systematic in my data analysis.

Finally, the main focus of the research was to understand how Bangladeshi young men received sex education during their adolescence or how they navigated sex, sexuality, and sex education during their adolescence. Accordingly, I searched and found most of the literature which examines how young people interact and consult with different formal and informal agencies, such as family, schools, peers, Internet, and pornography, to explore sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, and physical and emotional changes due to puberty and

adolescence. As I collected their recollections and narratives during their adolescence, a significant amount of their talk during interviews referred to masturbation, wet dreams, defining adolescence, constructing masculinity, heterosexuality, and embodying sexuality. In fact, ideas and education around these issues are entwined with how young people seek and consume sex education when they have just embarked on adolescence. Of these, I acknowledge, how young men construct their masculinity is a cutting-edge issue around sex education. My study illustrates that participants' constructions of adolescence were firmly interconnected with masculinity and heterosexuality, and these constructions are also connected to how they perceive sex, sexuality, and sex education. Similarly, how my participants defined/constructed their masculinity is connected to their everyday practices and interaction with their surroundings, including peers, parents, and media. My study demonstrated, for example, that Bangladeshi adolescent boys construct their adolescence in the ways that are gendered, heterosexual, reflecting hegemonic masculinity, and reproducing the subordination of women, in which learnings from pornography play pivotal role. Then, which knowledge and information adolescent boys value depends on their constructed masculinity. However, this issue was not originally the main focus of my thesis. In fact, I realized the depth and breadth of this issue when I sorted out the overarching themes, which is why I highlighted masculinity in the analysis section instead of the review of the literature.

In spite of the limitations of my study, I believe that my study is the first attempt in Bangladesh to offer an insightful and evidence-based understanding of the lived experiences of young men intertwined with sexuality, sexual health, sexual health education, and sex education. Globally, my study is one of few in this field, which analyzes young people's views on their sex education and experiences in terms of post-structural/Foucauldian discourse analysis. In terms of

the approaches, on the one hand, the approach I used in study, semi-structured qualitative interview, permitted me to explore my research questions with flexibility. On the other hand, these approaches also permitted my participants to express their life-narratives, views, and ideas in their own words (Esterberg, 2002). In my data analysis, thus, I was able to weave nine participants' narratives together and present a compelling comprehension of sex education in Bangladesh based on their views and experiences. Finally, the cohort of my participants is a strength of my study, which proposed a synthesized form of potential sex education for Bangladeshi boys based on their own experiences of suffering, vulnerability, help-seeking and coping mechanism during adolescence and current understandings and realizations that they have as matured and educated young men with their eye-opening views. For example, now they can realize what they mistook and felt was lacking during adolescence. These realizations helped them to reflect on future sex education in Bangladesh.

Implications and Future Research

There are some important implications of my study. First, my study will contribute to research in the field of sex education, sexual health education, sexuality, and gender/boys' studies including masculinity and heteronormativity in terms of adolescent boys and young men in Bangladesh. I can publish my project, wherein my participants' narratives and stories will add to the research on young people, particularly young men, highlighting how they are learning about sex and sexuality and what they are experiencing: how the conventional social institutions/informal agencies are effectively working (or not) in educating young people, and how young people are now more relying on newly emerging (e.g., the Internet/pornography) sources to explore sexuality.

Second, as I mentioned earlier, the Bangladesh government has recently introduced a chapter on puberty and reproductive health in the school curriculum, even though it has long been providing some contents in schools. This shows a gradual increment in addressing the importance of formal sex education in the school curriculum. Therefore, I also hope that my study will contribute to designing and updating future sex education curriculum in Bangladesh.

Finally, I hope my research has initiated a break in the silence around conversations on sexuality among young people, policymakers, academicians, teachers, school administrators, and parents, many more stakeholders. In Bangladesh, a conservative and culturally-repressive society, public-talk about sexuality is taboo, and working with sexuality or sex education is a matter of stigma and embarrassment. In my own case, I have seen how some people reacted when I shared the purposes of my research. I have seen how it is difficult to shift the paradigms: from the paradigm of silence to one of public-talk about sexuality. Yet, my study may inspire people to talk about sexual health and sex education publicly, and lead to future research.

To the future researchers, it would be a great work for future studies to build on this study by recruiting a larger group of self-identified males representing a more diverse population in terms of class, age (e.g., adolescent boys at present), religion, and sexualities. It would also be beneficial for future researchers to advance my study by recruiting young self-identified women, which would complement my research and open the door to dialogue regarding how Bangladeshi young people are receiving sex education, and how this learning is framing their experiences, beliefs, perceptions, attitudes, and practices around sex and sexuality. It would also facilitate a comparative analysis of boys' views and experiences around sex education helping in the processes of how sex education can be designed or improved. In addition to the above mentioned diverse participants, a study could be conducted recruiting school teachers, parents and

government and non-government stakeholders involved in education administrations of Bangladesh, which would provide more concretized, effective, and pragmatic suggestions for future sex education design and improvement.

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Appendix A

Interview Schedule

The main research question to be explored is: **“how Bangladeshi young men received sex education during adolescence?”**

The interview Guide -which facilitated **Skype Interview** - as follows:

1. Age:
2. Schooling Background-
 - Location:
 - Co-ed/single sex:
3. Parents Background-
 - Mothers’ level of education:
 - Mother’s occupation:
 - Father’s level of education:
 - Father’s occupation:
4. Type of current university: Private/public
5. Year of study:
6. Discipline of study:
7. Family income:
8. Religion:
9. Marital status:
10. Sexual orientation:
11. ... *Ice breaking* ... can you tell me about your childhood memories? How/where/who did you pass your childhood?

12. What did you learn about sexuality/sex education as you were growing up and who/where did you learn it from?
13. What were your experiences of puberty?
14. What are the changes that you noticed? How did you feel about them?
15. Did other people notice changes in you? How did you feel about that?
16. When did you become sexually active? How or with whom?
17. To whom did you look for information or knowledge about sex and sexuality when you were growing up?
18. Who helped you the most? How? Were they male or female?
19. Did you seek help from parents? If so, how did your parents help you or not?
20. If so, do you think that their assistance was helpful for healthy growth? Why or why not?
21. Did you seek help from other family members? If so, from who, were they male or female? how did they help you, and was it useful information?
22. Did you receive any information regarding sex and sexuality from your friends? If so, were they your senior or same age friends, Were they male or female friends?
23. How did they help you, and what did you learn from them?
24. Do you think that their assistance was helpful for your healthy growth? Why or why not?
25. Did you seek help from anyone else, such as relatives, neighbors, seniors? Who are they? Were they male or female? If so, how did they help you? Do you think that their assistance was helpful for your healthy growth? Why or why not?
26. Did you have any unpleasant experiences in seeking knowledge and information regarding sex and sexuality?

27. What knowledge regarding sex, sexuality, sexual health, reproductive health, human body or organ did you get from school, teachers, and the textbooks?
28. In which classes (grade) did you get information regarding sex, sexuality, sexual and reproductive health?
29. Do you think this information were enough? Too much? Why or why not?
30. If it is not enough, what else should they have taught?
31. Why do you think they did not provide enough?
32. Do you think that school should provide sex education? Why / why not?
33. Do you think that school should have separate text book on sex education? Why / why not?
34. What are the other sources, if any, that you depended on for sex education?
35. Did you have any information from the Internet, other mass media or electronic media?
36. Did you look at any pornography to help yourself to understand sex and sexuality?
37. What was your age or grade of study when you first watched pornography?
38. How did you get the pornography?
39. Do you think that pornography as a sources of sex education was helpful for your healthy growth? Why or why not?
40. How and when did you know about women's menstruation, masturbation, contraceptive (e.g., condom) and its uses and needs?
41. How did you learn?
42. Do you have anything else to add?

Appendix B

Letter of Invitation

November 23, 2017

The title of Study: Young Men's Experiences and Views of Sex Education in Bangladesh: A Foucauldian Discourse Analysis

Student Principal Investigator: Tauhid Khan, M.A candidate, Department of Child and Youth Studies, Brock University, ON, Canada.

Principal Investigator: Dr. Rebecca Raby, Professor, Department of Child and Youth Studies, Brock University, ON, Canada.

We would like to invite you to participate in a research project, entitled "Young Men's Experiences and Views of Sex Education in Bangladesh: A Foucauldian Discourse Analysis."

The purpose of this project is to document the experiences and views of young men about sex education in Bangladesh.

We would like to talk with Bangladeshi young men who are studying in different universities belonging to the age range between 19-24 years. This interview will involve a one-hour Skype video call aimed at documenting how you were informed about sex and sexuality during adolescence, or how sex education was provided to you. The interview will be conducted by Tauhid Khan in Bengali.

In terms of direct benefits of this study to young people of Bangladesh, participants will have the opportunity to narrate their concerns, challenges, misunderstanding, misconceptions, and social reactions from their surrounding people (e.g., parents, peers, teachers and other community people) towards their physical and emotional changes during adolescence. Having the opportunity to narrate the experiences in this study may help the participants in their family lives such as caring for their own kids. Additionally, the findings of this research may assist policymakers to understand the young people's current challenges in terms of a number of social issues/problems. Lastly, this research may directly assist in designing sex education in Bangladesh.

All information you provide will be confidential; your name will not be included or in any other way associated with the data presented in study results. Participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time and may do so without any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled. If you are interested to participate in this

study, please contact me with the following e-mail addresses. I would also like to request not to put 'comments' or 'Like' on the Facebook wall to show your interest.

If you have any pertinent questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Brock University Research Ethics Officer (905 688-5550 ext 3035, rreb@brocku.ca). If you wish to obtain a summary of the research findings after the study has been completed, please e-mail at tk16gl@brocku.ca.

If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact us at the information below.

Thank you,

Tauhid Khan (tk16gl@brocku.ca) and Dr. Rebecca Raby, Professor (rraby@brocku.ca)

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through Brock University's Research Ethics Board [REB File #: 17-093]

Appendix C

Informed Consent/Verbal Script

Date: November 20, 2017

Project Title: Young Men's Experiences and Views of Sex Education in Bangladesh: A Foucauldian Discourse Analysis

Student Principal Investigator (SPI): Tauhid Khan Department of Child and Youth Studies Brock University Cell: 19053257032, tk16gl@brocku.ca	Principal Investigator (PI): Dr. Rebecca Raby Professor, Dept. of Child and Youth Studies Brock University (905) 688-5550, ext. 3172, rraby@brocku.ca
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INVITATION

You are invited to participate in a study that involves your experiences and views about sex education in Bangladesh. The general purpose of this research is to document how you were provided education about sex and sexuality during adolescence.

WHAT'S INVOLVED

As a participant, you will be involved in a Skype video call for one hour. The questions that will be asked during the interview will address what you learned through sex education as you were growing up and who/where you learned it from? I will ask: What were your experiences of puberty? To whom did you look for information or knowledge about sex and sexuality? Who helped you the most? How? Other questions will investigate the kind of specific and established sources of sex education available to you such as family, parents, peers, friends, relatives, community people, schools, teachers, media and the Internet. We shall further discuss whether you encountered any challenges, confusions, and unpleasant incidences in navigating sex and sexuality during adolescence, and what these were, and how you handled them. Finally, we will discuss your general opinions and views from your personal experiences what information should be provided to boys and how.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS AND RISKS

In terms of direct benefits of this study to young people of Bangladesh, participants will have the opportunity to narrate their concerns, challenges, misunderstanding, misconceptions, and social reactions from their surrounding people (e.g., parents, peers, teachers and other community people) towards their

physical and emotional changes during adolescence. Having the opportunity to narrate the experiences in this study may help the participants in their family lives such as caring for their own kids. Additionally, the findings of this research may assist policymakers to understand the young people's current challenges in terms of a number of social issues/problems. Lastly, this research may directly assist in designing sex education in Bangladesh. Regarding potential risks, there is a low likelihood of psychological risks for participants who might recall their vulnerabilities due to fear, confusions, difficult situations or misconceptions regarding sex and sexuality during their adolescence. If you feel stressed and need of supports or psychological counselling, I will provide the contact information of student counseling services of your university. In addition, I would like to provide the following organizations and their contact number, which provide free mental health supports and counselling over phone, maintaining confidentiality:(1) Mennonite New Life center (phone: 416-699-4527)(2) Bangla link Mind Care Service (phone: 7899). Given the controversial nature of the topic of this research, please be aware that there are some potential risks associated with being involved. I will, however, do everything possible to protect your confidentiality.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information you provide will be confidential; your name will not be included or, in any other way associated with the data presented in study results. I will report the findings in this study using some participants' quotes and these quotes will be treated with confidentiality – including removing any identifying features (personal names, dates, and places) that might inadvertently identify you. The Skype interviews will be audiotaped, and I will transcribe the information immediately. Afterwards, the recorded interview will be securely disposed of. A unique code will be assigned to each transcribed data and the transcripts will be stored in a closet with locks. The electronic data will be protected on a computer that is password protected. Data will be kept for future use by researchers. Access to this data will be restricted to student principal investigator and the members of the supervising committee. I would like to use this data in my future research project, such as PH. D research. If you do not permit to use data for my future research purpose, I will destroy your data after the publication of this current research findings.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. In addition, if you wish, you may decline to answer any specific questions. Furthermore, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time and may do so without any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled. If you choose to withdraw during or after your interview, your interview data will be deleted from any electronic storage and hard copies destroyed.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

Participants who signed up for feedback will be notified periodically on the stages of the research and the timeline for when results will be compiled. After the study, the disseminated information will consist of the purpose of the study, the research questions and the findings. The current tentative goal is that feedback will be sent to participants by email in September 2018. Beyond this study, it is quite likely that attempts

will be made to present and publish the results. It is worth emphasizing again that the findings in this study will be confidential and anonymized.

CONTACT INFORMATION AND ETHICS CLEARANCE

If you have any questions about this study or require further information, please contact Tauhid Khan or Dr. Rebecca Raby using the contact information provided above. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Research Ethics Board at Brock University [REB File #: 17-093]. If you have any comments or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Research Ethics Office at (905) 688-5550 Ext. 3035, reb@brocku.ca.

Thank you for your assistance in this project. Please keep a copy of this form for your records.

CONSENT AGREEMENT (current study)

I agree to participate in this study described above. I have made this decision based on the information I have read in the Information-Consent Letter. I have had the opportunity to receive any additional details I wanted about the study and understand that I may ask questions in the future. I understand that I may withdraw this consent at any time. I indicate my consent to participating in this study.

First Name:

Signature:

Date:

CONSENT AGREEMENT (re-use/re-analyze of current study's data)

In terms of re-use or re-analyze my data, I am giving consent to use this data for future research purpose based on the study described above. I have made this decision based on the information I have read in the Information-Consent Letter. I have had the opportunity to receive any additional details I wanted about the study and understand that I may ask questions in the future. I understand that I may withdraw this consent at any time. I indicate my consent to participating in this study.

First Name:

Signature:

Date:

Appendix D

Themes and Sub-themes: At-a-Glance

Sex Education: Discursive Experiences and Views

1. Unreliable Peer Navigators

- Exploring and learning sexuality with peers
- Misguided, contradictory, and inconsistent ideas about sexuality
- Complete and sufficient ideas about sexuality
- Mixed feeling about peer supports
- Community people's supports

2. Porn: A Depraved and Corrupted Mentor

- Internet or porn?
- Porn makes deviant
- Porn as sex educator or pleasure
- Gendered, sexist, and undermining girls' consent
- Critique of western influences
- Mixed feelings

3. The Poverty of School-based Sex Education

- Received little and partial sex ed
- Sexual disease preventive and biological perspective
- Abstinence only until marriage
- Uncomfortable sex education
- gendered, sexist, sexual double standards
- Self-help is the best help

4. Silence in Parental Sex Education

- Silence
- Gendered ideas
- Parents treatment to boys

5. Embodying Learning Sexuality

- Practising masturbation
- Beliefs about masturbation
- Understanding erections and wet dream
- Witnessing other; physical relations
- Physical relations with GF

- Sexual abuse

6. Adolescence and Strong Curiosity

- Pointing to visible physical changes
- Society's reaction to pubertal changes
- Attraction to girls
- Construction of adolescence
- Need for information

7. Growing up into masculinity and heterosexuality, missing teenagerhood

- Becoming a man, not a teenage
- Struggle and resistance to maintain hegemonic masculinity

8. Intersectionality

- Classism
- Othering

9. Projected Sex Education: Complicated Views

- Time
- Space
- Amount
- Content
- Book format

Appendix E

Participants' Background Information

Table-1: Participants' Background by age, religion, schooling, and parents

Participants	Age	Religion	Schooling		Medium/ stream	Parents' Background				
			Location	Co-ed/ mixed		Family income (CAD)	Father's education	Father's occupation	Mother's education	Mother's occupation
Sazbin	21	Islam	Dhaka	Co-ed	English	92,307	MBBS	Physician	MBBS	Home-maker
Kaif	23	Atheist	Dhaka	Co-ed	Bangla	10,769	M.A	Govt. Officer	B. A	Home-maker
Nayem	23	Islam	Dis. Town	Co-ed	Bangla	7,692	B. A	School Teacher	G-5	Home-maker
Nafiz	23	Islam	Rural	mixed	Bangla & Madrasha	3,035	Illiterate	Farmer	G-5	Home-maker
Sayhan	24	Islam	Urban	Co-ed	Bangla	3,076	G-12	Govt. job	G-10	Home-maker
Saibal	24	Islam	Peri-urban	Co-ed	Bangla	53,846	G-12	Business	B. A	Home-maker
Sipon	23	Islam	Mixed	Co-ed	Bangla	9,230	G-8	Remittance earner	G-5	Home-maker
Sahid	21	Islam	Urban	Co-ed	Bangla	6,553	G-12	Govt. job	G-9	Home-maker
Muhit	22	Islam	Rural	Co-ed	Bangla	5,538	G-5	Business	G-5	Home-maker

Table-2: Participants by their current educational background and sources of sex education

	Sazbin	Kaif	Nayem	Nafiz	Sayhan	Saibal	Sipon	Sahid	Muhit
Type of university	Private	Private	Private	Public	Public	Private	Private	Public	Public
Location of university	Dhaka	Dhaka	Dhaka	Dhaka	Jessore	Chtg	Dhaka	Chtg	Dhaka
Discipline	BBA	Engineering	Engineering	Sociology	Physical ed	BBA	BBA	Politics	Sociology
First ideas about sexuality	G-1	G-5	G-9	G-	G-9	G-8	G-3	G-7	G-9
Sources of Sex Education									
School Textbook									
Formal sex ed	yes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
General sciences	-	-	-	-	-	yes	-	yes	yes
Social sciences	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	yes	yes
Religion studies	-	-	-	-	-	-	yes	-	yes
Bangla literature	-	-	-	yes	yes	-	yes	yes	yes
Biology	-	-	-	-	-	-	yes	-	-
Pornography									
Videos	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Written	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Picture	yes	yes	-	-	-	yes	yes	yes	yes
Other Sources of Learning									
Friends	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Girl Friends		-	-	-	-	-	yes	yes	
Cousin	yes	-	-	yes			yes	yes	yes
Community people	yes	-	-	yes	-	-	yes	yes	yes
Internet	-	-	yes	-	-	-	-	yes	yes
English movies	-	-	-	-	yes	-	-	-	-
Religious lecture	-	-	-	yes	-	-	yes	-	yes
Canvassing	-	-	yes	-	-	-	-	-	yes
Witnessing real sex	-	-	-	-	-	-	yes	-	-