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EL Teachers' Induction Phase in Bangladesh: Practices, Challenges, and Expectations

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Abstract

This study aimed to explore the English language (EL) teachers' induction phase in Bangladesh, focusing on the usual practices, challenges they face, and their expectations. Teachers' induction phase is immensely significant as they make a transition to the teaching profession. Following the qualitative phenomenological approach, qualitative data were collected from six (6) EL teachers working at the primary, secondary, and higher secondary levels across Bangladesh through interviews. The collected data were analysed using the thematic analysis framework as advocated by Braun and Clarke (2006). The key findings included a three-segment teacher recruitment mechanism, absence of pre-service teacher preparation and adequate initial training, varied initial experiences of teachers, no mentoring and observation, limited collaboration, and inadequate opportunity for professional development. Moreover, the findings also revealed that many such teachers are confused regarding their career because of discrepancies between pre-service perceptions and in-service actualities, lack of required support and resources for novice teachers, the significance of teachers' proactive role in induction, and their confusion about career planing.

Keywords: *EL teachers, induction, practices, challenges, and expectations*

Introduction

Effective teaching is highly essential for the emerging demands for different sets of knowledge and skills of the present society (Darling-Hammond, 2006). And among all the stakeholders, teachers play the most significant role in the English language teaching and learning. They profoundly influence the achievements of their learners in language learning (Darling-Hammond, 2003). However, the initial years of teaching are really challenging for novice teachers (Alhamad, 2018; Kutsyuruba, Walker, Matheson, & Bosica, 2021; Westerlund & Eliasson, 2021). "One might argue that there is no period as important to a teacher's career as the first few years of teaching" (Moir & Gless, 2001, p. 109). It is essential that the new teachers are provided with all the support they need. Otherwise, many of them may decide to leave the profession. It is argued that new teachers can be better teachers and contented with their early experiences if they go through effective induction programmes (C. Flores, 2019).

Teacher preparation is being given increased attention all over the world as teaching quality substantially impacts learners' achievements (Moir & Gless, 2001). The induction phase must positively ensure new teachers' effective classroom teaching and learners' achievements (Moir & Gless, 2001). In the UK, teachers must attend one year of induction for teaching in the public schools. They are also supposed to complete initial teacher education programmes at their undergraduate or postgraduate levels. This preparation encourages them to develop their professionalism and enhance the academic performance of their learners (Glazzard & Coverdale, 2018). Moreover, Kearney (2019) asserted that the induction programmes in NSW, Australia were full of divergences and contradictions. He recommended to initiate more structured induction programmes for novice teachers so that they become effective teaching professionals. As for Bangladesh, teacher preparation is not taken seriously, and people are inclined to believe that anybody can teach (M. A Rouf, 2021). Against this background, the present study targeted to examine the induction phase of the English language (EL) teachers in Bangladesh.

Literature Review

This part reviews the related literature and shows the gap for the present study.

Defining the Induction Phase

Teacher induction programme was started in the USA in the 1950s and 1960s (Kearney, 2019). Induction programmes can be defined as the "support, guidance, and orientation programmes" (R. Ingersoll & Smith, 2004, p. 28) for the newly appointed teachers. Again, Mitchell, Keese, Banerjee, Huston, and Kwok (2021) asserted that different induction programmes try to assist novice teachers in their initial years in a planned way so that teachers can develop their teaching skills and professionalism. According to C. Flores (2019, p. 1) "... induction is a complex process that cannot be separated from the social context of schooling practices in which beginning teachers are plunged. The process of introducing a beginning teacher into a school system is a complex one." The institutional contexts also play a major role in teachers' induction programmes (Shanks et al., 2020). Therefore, novice teachers are required to adjust to the prevailing culture of the institutions they have joined (Paor, 2017). Feiman-Nemser (2003) argued that quality induction programmes do not solely focus on retaining new teachers rather those programmes help teachers become good teachers and encourage teachers' professional learning.

Mentoring in the Induction Phase

One of the main components of any induction programme is mentorship (R. Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). It is widely agreed that novice teachers can benefit significantly if they get help from experienced mentors (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Mentoring the new teachers

also eliminates isolation and facilitates collaboration among teachers (Shanks et al., 2020). Mentors can also help new teachers by sharing professional knowledge which ultimately facilitates new teachers' construction of professional and individual identity (Paor, 2017). Through mentoring, novice teachers then learn how to accept critical feedback and use it to improve their instructional practices (Wexler, 2019). Additionally, teacher leadership can be developed through quality induction programmes and mentoring (Gilles, Wang, Fish, & Stegall, 2018). However, for mentoring to be successful, proper selection and preparation of mentors is essential (Hobson, Ashby, Malderez, & Tomlinson, 2009). Moreover, the professional learning of mentors must be given due attention so that they can effectively help their mentees (Feiman-Nemser, 2003).

Locating the Gap for the Present Study

Novice teachers get different benefits from induction programmes. R. M. Ingersoll and Strong (2011) found that initial support for teachers had positive effects on commitment and retention of teachers, their pedagogical practices, and achievements of learners. Smith and Ingersoll (2004) also reported that induction programmes exerted a positive effect on the retention of new teachers. Similarly, Mishra, Gupta, and Shree (2022) reported that faculty members were benefited from attending a faculty induction programme as they learned about micro teaching, materials development, lesson plan preparation, taxonomy of Bloom, and constructivist teaching and learning. Then, Gilles et al. (2018) found that novice teachers became teacher leaders with the help of induction programmes and their mentors. Farrell (2016) also claimed that novice ESL teachers in Canada were helped by a new teacher reflection group. Reeves, Hamilton, and Onder (2022) then asserted that team teaching, keeping portfolios, writing journals and dairies, and online tasks were helpful for new teachers.

Different studies also examined the practices of induction programmes and needs of novice teachers. Kelly, Cespedes, Clarà, and Danaher (2019) found that the nature of relationship with colleagues, arrangement of induction programmes, and mentoring influence teachers' decision to leave or continue the job. Mitchell et al. (2021) also argued that mentors, curriculum, and the ways learning is managed help create effective induction programmes. Kutsyuruba et al. (2021) claimed that with passage of time teachers get less support from the schools, and their employment satisfactions reduce and chances of changing the profession increase. In another study, two new teachers in northern Chile claimed that they were highly benefited from external network that they themselves created in the beginning years (C. Flores, 2019). Sikma (2019) claimed that the teachers valued the social support network during their initial years, and they expected "emotional, contextual, relational, academic, and social" (p.317) support. Finally, Sela and Harel (2018) argued that beginning teachers can play an active role in their own induction by demonstrating strong attitudes, developing communication skills, collaborating with colleagues, and constructing their personal beliefs.

The difficulties encountered by novice teachers vary according to the context and culture of teachers' socialisation (Veenman, 1984). New teachers face the challenges of everyday classroom teaching considering their own educational experiences and theories they were taught (Moir & Gless, 2001). The induction into teaching positions can be a stressful one for novice teachers (Veenman, 1984). Kearney (2019) mentioned that new teachers are usually asked to teach the tough classes and assigned too many classes and duties beyond the classroom. Sydnor (2017) also claimed that sometimes they feel overwhelmed facing the hard realities of classroom teaching and other duties. Then, Goktepe and Kunt (2020) argued that the new teachers' identity construction can be impeded due to the imbalanced mentor-mentee relation, and the resistance they face in applying their pedagogical beliefs in classrooms.

Teachers faced many other challenges during the induction phase across the world. Westerlund and Eliasson (2021) reported that the Swedish novice physical education teachers faced seclusion and reality shock during their induction. Tammets, Pata, and Eisenschmidt (2018) found that Estonian novice teachers were inadequately supported by their colleagues and tertiary level experts. Similarly, Kourieos and Diakou (2019) found that the novice primary level EL teachers in Cyprus faced difficulty in dealing with learners who spoke different languages and came from various cultural backgrounds. Whalen, Majocho, and Van Nuland (2019) also reported that the novice EL teachers in Canada confronted different challenges - limited scope for getting a mentor, non-involvement of experienced teachers in induction, and limited observation opportunity. Again, Alhamad (2018) reported that EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia faced different challenges like learners' low proficiency in English, their negative attitude to English, selection of appropriate method and learner-centred approach for teaching, management of learner behaviour, the course outlining, and communication with guardians. New teachers also experienced a divergence between their pre-service assumptions and in-service realities in the teaching profession in Israel and the USA (Haim & Amdur, 2016; Knotts, 2016; Shayshon & Popper-Giveon, 2016).

Research Objective and Significance of the Study

Different elements of teachers' induction programmes in different contexts across the world were examined by the studies mentioned above. However, as far I know no study has examined the induction phase of the EL teachers in Bangladesh. So, to unearth the practices, challenges, and their expectations as far as induction is concerned this study was carried out guided by the following research question (RQ):

RQ: What were the practices, challenges, and expectations related to the EL teachers' induction phase in Bangladesh?

The findings of the study would assist stakeholders concerned in designing effective induction programmes for the EL teachers in Bangladesh so that teachers can teach effectively inside classrooms, grow professionally, and positively impact their learners' academic achievements.

Research Methodology

Different aspects of the research methodology used for conducting the study are described in this section.

Approach and Rigour of the Study

This study was carried out following the qualitative phenomenological approach (Sela & Harel, 2018). Here the phenomenon was the ‘induction phase’ of the EL teachers in Bangladesh, and the study comprehensively examined the phenomenon through the lived experiences of the EL teachers (Creswell, 2015; Whalen et al., 2019). Again, the rigour or trustworthiness of this qualitative study was ensured by maintaining an interview data base, collecting data from various sources, and using self-reflections for eliminating bias (Chenail, 2011; Noble & Smith, 2015).

Participants

One primary (P), three secondary (S), and two higher secondary (HS) EL teachers were purposively selected for collecting data on the induction phase. The purposive sampling technique was used so that the selected teachers could provide relevant and deep data on the phenomenon explored. The participants were told about the aim of the study and their role in it. They were assured that their identity would be protected, and the collected data will not be used for any other purpose (Sela & Harel, 2018). Finally, all the teachers agreed to participate in this study voluntarily. The paper uses alphanumeric labels (T1P-T6HS) for the participants for ensuring anonymity. Table 1 shows the demographic details of the participants.

Table 1: The Participating Teachers’ Demographics

Teachers	Gender	Age (Years)	Teaching Experiences	College, School Type	Location
T1P	Female	21-25	3 Years	Government	Rural
T2S	Male	21-25	2 Months	Non-Government	Rural
T3S	Male	26-30	2 Years	Non-Government	Urban
T4S	Male	31-35	4 Years	Non-Government	Urban
T5HS	Male	26-30	1 Year	Non-Government	Rural
T6HS	Male	31-35	8 Years	Government	Urban

The researcher devised a semi-structured interview checklist (presented in Table 2) for carrying out interviews with the participants. It consisted of fifteen items, and the trustworthiness of these items was ascertained through a comprehensive review of the pertinent literature. Moreover, a pilot study was carried out with an EL teacher to ensure the relevance of the interview items. Necessary changes were made in the final interview checklist according to the findings of the pilot study.

Table 2: The Semi-Structured Interview Checklist

SL	Interview Items
1.	The teacher recruitment process
2.	Pre-service teacher preparation/education programmes
3.	Initial training/orientation programmes
4.	Duties during the initial months/years
5.	Initial days/experiences: classroom teaching, collaboration with other teachers, mentoring/observing senior teachers' classes
6.	Getting adequate support from institutions
7.	Emotional conditions/stress; job satisfaction
8.	Scope and opportunity for professional development
9.	Making differences/improvement in teaching and learning
10.	Preservice perceptions and in-service realities
11.	Challenges: support from the institution, classroom teaching/pedagogical issues, school culture adjustment, professional development
12.	Expectations/needs as novice teachers
13.	Teachers playing an active role in their induction phase
14.	Continuing in the teaching profession
15.	Any other comment on the induction phase

All data were collected through individual phone interviews as arranging face-to-face interviews was not a viable option due to the prevailing COVID-19 situation in Bangladesh. Semi-structured interviews help the researchers to move forward and backward in the data collection phase (Merriam, 1988). Thus, semi-structured interviews helped the researcher to examine the induction phase comprehensively. Individual interview schedules were developed for each of the participants considering their availability. The researcher stopped interviewing when no new data were emerging (Trotter, 2012). All the interviews were conducted in Bangla (L1) to get rich data from the participants.

Data Management and Analysis

A cell phone was used to record the interview data, and the collected data were stored with a personal computer and a thumb drive. Later, all data were transcribed verbatim by the author for analysis. The thematic analysis framework, as espoused by Braun and Clarke (2006), was used for analysing the data. This framework consists of six stages: getting familiarised with the data, producing initial codes, discovering themes/subthemes, reevaluating themes, naming themes, and producing report. The data set was analysed in its entirety to get a holistic picture of the phenomenon examined. Moreover, the participants verified and confirmed the findings to ensure reliability, and the findings were also matched with similar studies. The author translated the excerpts used in the findings section into English.

Findings

The main findings of the study are presented here supported by illustrative excerpts from the participants.

A Three-Segment Teacher Recruitment Process

The teachers at government and non-government institutions, in most cases, had to go through a rigorous recruitment process that consisted of several elements: a written test to assess teacher candidates' subject knowledge, a viva voce to gauge their oracy skills, and a demonstration class in front of experts, administrators, and schoolteachers to test their teaching skills and personality. However, in different recruitments, these three elements were organised differently. Whoever performed well in all these three segments, were finally appointed as the EL teachers.

I had to take a written test, then a viva voce and a demonstration class as part of the selection process. (T5HS)

I had to teach a demonstration class in front of schoolteachers, and they observed my teaching methods, classroom management, and my pronunciation. Then, I sat for a viva voce. (T4S)

Absence of Pre-Service Teacher Preparation and Adequate Initial Training

None of the participating teachers attended any pre-service teacher preparation programme before joining their jobs. However, most of them had completed their bachelor's and master's degrees in English literature, Applied Linguistics and English language teaching, and as learners they studied some courses related to pedagogy and language skills.

I have not attended any pre-service teacher education programme. (T6HS)

Moreover, as far as teachers' initial training was concerned, the emerging scenario was not encouraging as shown in Table 3. It is surprising that teachers were sent inside classrooms for teaching after joining without any initial training. Those who attended the three-day orientation programme and basic teacher training were introduced to other teachers, told how to teach their learners, how to behave with other colleagues, how to use teachers' guide (TG), and given primary ideas about administrative aspects.

Table 3: Teachers' Initial Training Data

Teachers	Teachers' Initial Training
T1P	Three-day orientation programme
T2S	No initial training
T3S	No initial training
T4S	No initial training
T5HS	Attended a basic three-day teacher training in the first week
T6HS	No initial training

However, T3S, T4S, and T5HS attended training programmes after being into teaching for sometimes arranged by their respective institutions and British Council. That training focused on syllabuses, marking scripts, materials use, setting creative questions, pedagogy, and attitude and role of teachers. But those training sessions were not adequate and did not focus on application rather on theoretical knowledge.

I received a three-day basic teacher training in the first week of joining. It was rather theoretical. No focus was given on application in real classroom teaching. (T5HS)

I joined as a teacher and started teaching without any initial training. (T3S)

After four months of my joining as a teacher, I attended a three-day training programme. (T3S)

Conventional Initial Duties and Varied Experiences

These teachers taught different classes both online and offline, checked exam scripts, set question papers, invigilated exam halls, met learners' guardians, checked and corrected homework, worked as academic coordinators and class teachers, and prepared lesson plans in their induction phase.

Initially, I had to teach classes, set question papers, check exam scripts, and interact with learners and their guardians. (T2S)

The teachers had both positive and negative experiences in their beginning years. Among the positive experiences were feeling good as the learners responded to the new teachers in classes, a positive institutional environment, helpful colleagues, and gradual adjustment to the whole experience. On the other hand, the negative experiences included too many learners in classes - about 100 to 175, some learners, especially the brilliant ones did not attach much importance to the novice teachers, and learners' poor subject knowledge and language skills. Moreover, feeling stress, nervousness as a new teacher, lack of initial training on different aspects related to teaching and mental wellbeing, confusion as a novice teacher, problems with classroom management, difficulty in making learners understand the class contents, and giving lecture-based classes were some other negative experiences. Then, some teachers had to teach online classes initially due to COVID-19, so they could not make their classes interactive. Interestingly, when offline classes started during the post-COVID period, learners did not show much interest in interaction in classes rather they expected lectures from their teachers.

I enjoyed teaching as a new teacher. It was a positive environment. My new colleagues were helpful. (T2S)

I had to teach too many learners in a single class. So, it was basically lecture-based classes. (T6HS)

In the initial classes, I was a bit nervous. So, I used to take a lot of preparation before the class. After one week, things were getting normal. (T5HS)

I faced difficulty in making the weak and mediocre learners understand the class contents. (T4S)

In the same vein, some teachers received support from their institutions, some did not. Some were given the chance to conduct classes using digital contents in the multimedia room. Some of them also received different teaching aids, materials, and teachers' guide. On the other hand, some teachers did not get adequate support from schools, so they faced different problems. They got no board in the class for writing, no sound system, no library facility, and other logistic support.

Though my school is a rural one, the government has allocated a laptop and a projector. (T1P)

I got different teaching aids and materials from the school. (T2S)

There was no sound system in the class. So, learners could not listen to me. (T5HS)

I did not get much support from school. I had to learn and manage myself. (T4S)

No Mentoring, Observation, and Limited Collaboration

None of these teachers was assigned an official mentor during their induction phase. And there was no arrangement for them to observe the experienced teachers' classes. All the participating teachers claimed that they could do much better with the help of an official mentor in their beginning days.

I felt the need of a mentor as I initially faced problems with class management as the class size was large. (T5HS)

Nobody was assigned as my official mentor in the initial years. (T1P)

I was not given the chance to observe senior teachers' classes. (T4S)

However, the new teachers sometimes had informal conversations with their experienced colleagues. They discussed different issues like managing the weak learners in the class, setting question papers, facing different emerging challenges, sharing contents, and solving subject related issues. On a different note, many of their colleagues were not helpful, and the novice teachers felt isolated in the teachers' room. In the absence of mentoring, classroom observation, and collaboration, some new teachers ultimately tried to sort out things on their own.

When we get time, we discuss classroom issues among ourselves. (T3S)

My colleagues helped me when I faced any problem in the class. I talked to them about classroom management and question setting. (T2S)

I did not have that much collaboration with my new colleagues. (T5HS)

Basically, I relied on my own experiences and the Internet for help. (T4S)

Limited Opportunity for Professional Development

There was limited scope and opportunity for professional development (PD) of the teachers at their respective institutions. Sometimes, there was sporadic training for them arranged by some external bodies like British Council. And the subject teachers discussed different issues among themselves. Then, on a personal level, they tried to learn different aspects of teaching and learning. Teachers also reflected on learners' feedback to improve their performance. But these initiatives were not adequate for their PD. And their respective schools and colleges rarely took any initiative for their PD. Teaching loads and other duties did not leave much time for their PD. The teachers asserted that teachers themselves should initiate the first steps for their PD.

Teachers cannot manage time for PD as they have to work as guide teachers and different committee members. (T6HS)

No formal initiative was taken by the school for new teachers' PD. (T5HS)

I need more opportunities for my PD. Whatever I have received is not enough. (T4S)

Perceived Improvement in Teaching and Learning

The teachers reported improvements in their teaching and learning. Some of them were initially introvert but gradually they opened up. Particularly their teaching skills were improving as they employed varied effective techniques in their classroom teaching. They came to know how to manage classrooms and help individual learners - weak, mediocre, and standard. They built up rapport with their learners, and the learners started to appreciate them, and vice versa. They learned about their individual learners' strengths and weaknesses, and their emotional conditions. More importantly, they started teaching in the ways learners wanted to be taught, not their ways. Teachers then could plan and use materials better to make classes interactive. Ultimately, they became more confident as teachers.

Initially, my classes were lecture-based, but now I follow interactive classroom techniques. (T6HS)

I have become skilled in lesson planning. Moreover, my teaching techniques and learner handling have improved. (T5HS)

Now, I can manage my classes better. Initially, my classes were chaotic. (T3S)

I have improved a lot as a classroom teacher, especially in teaching techniques. Now, I better understand how to help individual learners. (T1P)

Conflicting Pre-Service Perceptions and In-Service Actualities

A few conflicts existed between teachers' pre-service assumptions and in-service actualities. Lack of cooperation among colleagues, teachers' and schools' beliefs and philosophy, challenges to maintain cordial relations with colleagues, poor quality of learners, poor salaries, teaching not being an easy job, rigidity of school authority, class preparation taking a good amount of time, working outside office hours, and too many duties outside teaching were the main areas of conflict. However, as expected some of them enjoyed a more positive environment.

I found no conflict between pre-service assumptions and in-service realities. (T1P)

But I found teaching very complex. I had to think about the overall development of the children. I had to manage the classes, materials, and consider learners' psychological aspects. (T4S)

There are many duties outside classroom teaching, so teachers are not satisfied. (T6HS)

As a profession, it demands a lot of time and is full of pressure. (T5HS)

I expected better salaries and incentives for the teachers. But no incentive was given. (T3S)

It's not so easy to maintain working relations with the colleagues and students. (T2S)

Key Challenges Faced by Teachers

Many challenges were faced by the participating teachers during their induction phase. The first group of challenges included adjusting to the new environment/culture, building and maintaining relations with colleagues, and lack of collaboration with colleagues. The second group of challenges then included difficulties with question paper setting and exam script checking without training on them, learners being afraid of English and exam-oriented, lack of materials, getting negative feedback from the learners, problems with retaining learners' attention in classes, and many learners being irregular.

Additionally, the third group of challenges included lack of formal activities for PD, heavy teaching load - 20 to 22 classes per week, working extra hours, lack of logistic support, quick change of curriculum and the difficulty to adjust to it, and problems dealing with guardians as they wanted schools and teachers to run things as they wished.

Quick change of curriculum creates problems. (T6HS)

It was difficult to adjust to a new environment at the school and maintain good relations with the colleagues. (T5HS)

The school authority did not arrange any programme for teachers' PD. (T4S)

Learners are more interested in studying only for the exams. They are not interested in background and fundamental knowledge. (T3S)

Guardians want to see that the institution is running according to their wishes. (T2S)

Required Support and Resources as Novice Teachers

The teachers mentioned that they wanted to get different support and resources from their respective institutions during the induction phase. First, they would like to receive initial training as new teachers, and regular training at schools would ensure their PD. Arrangement for official mentors was another expectation. They also wanted better financial support. Then, they expected more teaching aids, materials, and other logistic support. Provision of more digital materials would facilitate the practice of listening and speaking skills. It would be better for them if they are not assigned too many duties beyond teaching. They would also appreciate a friendly environment at their respective schools and colleges, not a rigid one. They also wanted to see that the school authority respects their personal beliefs. Teachers then must be evaluated regularly and get feedback on their performances so that they can take necessary steps for further improvement. Usually, the new teachers were given too many duties; that should be reduced. Finally, there must be an official and structured induction programme for all the novice teachers.

All institutions must ensure logistic support for the novice teachers. (T6HS)

Somebody needs to observe my classes directly and give feedback on all aspects of my teaching. (T5HS)

Teachers' personal beliefs must be respected and should not be treated negatively. For new teachers, there should be proper guidance from the school authority. (T4S)

There must be induction programmes for all the teachers. We also need regular training at the institution so that we can enhance our skills. (T3S)

Remember, it's Your Induction

According to the participants, novice teachers can play an active role in their own induction by different ways. Teachers must enter their classes with adequate preparation so that they can prepare and implement the lesson plans properly. Then, they must have class management skills, ideas about teaching methods and techniques, and adequate subject knowledge. If there is a lack of materials, they must ask for materials from the school authority. When they face a problem, they can talk to their colleagues. They must communicate with each learner inside and outside the class. And they must try to relate classroom contents to learners' practical life. New teachers also need to adjust to the culture of the institution. Besides, they can attend training and courses personally for their PD. They can also use digital platforms - websites and YouTube - for their PD. They can observe experienced teachers' classes as well with their permission. It is also essential for them to be dedicated to their profession.

Novice teachers must try to enhance their subject knowledge and classroom management skills. (T6HS)

They must give efforts for their PD. For example, they can read a lot. (T4S)

It is very important for the novice teachers to enter the class with adequate preparation. (T3S)

Learners are very interested in new teachers. New teachers can call them by names and assign different tasks and praise them. Learners will be happy. (T1P)

To be or not to be in Teaching

T2S and T4S opined that they were satisfied with their present job and would be in the teaching profession. T1P, T3S, and T5HS claimed that they will be in the teaching profession, but not in their present job. T1P wanted to give up her present teaching position as she was looking for better opportunities, and many people in Bangladeshi society looked down upon the primary school teachers. They think that primary school teachers have no status. Besides, T6HS was planning to give up teaching profession as teachers in general were not given enough respect and were given too many assignments outside teaching. Teachers had no executive power, so society did not attach importance

to them and recognise their contributions. T3S and T5HS would also like to change their present jobs for better salaries.

I will be in teaching as I like to deal with learners. (T5HS)

A teacher is not given much importance in the society as given to a doctor or a magistrate. (T6HS)

I will switch school if I get better opportunities. (T3S)

They (people) say that you have completed your master's. So, why are you teaching at a primary school? (T1P)

Two teachers were managing the load of three or four teachers. (T5HS)

Sometimes, I was very upset and stressed. I decided to resign. Then, gradually I tried to cope up. I struggled a lot. (T4S)

Discussion

Firstly, the three-segment teacher recruitment process ensured that quality teachers were appointed at government and non-government educational institutions. However, the story should not end there. These young and bright minds must be adequately supported during their induction phase and beyond so that they can sustain in the teaching profession, utilise their potential, and enrich the quality of education in Bangladesh (C. Flores, 2019; Hulme & Wood, 2022; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Then, the absence of pre-service teacher preparation and adequate initial training aligns with other studies (M. A. Rouf, 2021), and contrasts with the UK context (Glazzard & Coverdale, 2018). If teachers are sent into classes without any initial training, they will start teaching following their personal beliefs, and once internalised, in the long run it would be difficult to change those beliefs through further training (Moir & Gless, 2001). As the in-service training focused on theoretical knowledge (M. A. Rouf & Mohamed, 2017), it might not develop teachers' practical teaching skills. Again, as for the support from educational institutions, the fact is that the non-government educational institutions are managed by private stakeholders, and their financial abilities and management ethos vary.

Secondly, during the induction phase, mentors play a significant role in guiding the teachers. And literature (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Gilles et al., 2018; Hobson et al., 2009; R. Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Mitchell et al., 2021; Wexler, 2019) has focused on mentoring and collaboration during the induction phase. The absence of mentoring, observation, and consequent limited collaboration among teachers corroborate the fact that the concept of mentoring has not been practised in the schools and colleges; rather, it has been conceptualised as a theoretical construct. Teachers are then conservative in their pedagogical beliefs and reluctant to allow their colleagues to observe their classes (Richter & Herrera, 2016). Again, the culture of knowledge sharing is missing in Bangladeshi academia. So, they cannot reduce the isolation among them and work together for improving their professional practices as advocated by Shanks et al. (2020).

As the in-house mentors face different obstacles like limited time, conflicting interests, and vagueness regarding their role, schools can appoint external paid mentors for guiding the novice teachers (Ewing, 2021).

Thirdly, limited scope and opportunity for teachers' professional development (PD) has also been reported in other studies (M. A. Rouf & Mohamed, 2017). The fact is that both teachers and institutions are negligent about teachers' PD. They cannot grasp the fact that a teacher must grow every day of her career otherwise she will fail to prepare her learners for the emerging needs of the society (Darling-Hammond, 2006). It is also true that teaching loads and other duties work as barriers to their PD. Besides, teachers' personal initiatives for their PD are conspicuously missing (M. A. Rouf & Mohamed, 2017). As they went on teaching their classes and gained experiences, some of the teachers naturally became more open and improved their teaching skills.

Fourthly, conflicting pre-service perceptions and in-service realities are corroborated by some previous studies (Haim & Amdur, 2016; Knotts, 2016; Shayshon & Popper-Giveon, 2016; Westerlund & Eliasson, 2021). The fact is that many people in Bangladesh usually take teaching as an easy profession without knowing different subtleties of the profession. They cannot see the big picture of education and teachers' role in that. When they join the profession, they find that teaching is not only about reading and classroom teaching; it's about handling human beings and shaping their characters and lives and more. Then, the negative experiences and challenges faced by the teachers are aligned with some other studies (Alhamad, 2018; Kearney, 2019; Kutsyuruba et al., 2021; Sydnor, 2017; Veenman, 1984; Westerlund & Eliasson, 2021; Whalen et al., 2019). The truth is that lack of exposure, training, and other profession related realities create these challenges for the novice teachers.

Fifthly, this is not a surprise that teachers wanted to get initial and regular training during their early career days (R. M. Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). This training and mentoring would prepare them for facing the challenges in their initial years. Again, many prospective candidates do not want to join teaching as the salary is poor. Their demand for increased salaries is justified if we want to recruit and retain the brightest ones in teaching. Then, more materials and less duties would help them perform better as teachers. A rigorous and structured induction programme, regular evaluation and feedback would help them sustain the transition to teaching profession (Kearney, 2019). As Shanks et al. (2020, p. 11) commented "whether there is a national teacher induction scheme or not, does not appear to be as important as the infrastructure of support, training and education involved and how support is shared and communicated."

Finally, the novice teachers can play a proactive role in their early career days by honing their skills in teaching and classroom management, collaborating with colleagues, adapting to the culture of the institution (Paor, 2017; Sela & Harel, 2018), and ensuring PD. This would definitely give them an edge over others, and help them keep swimming

during the initial days rather than sinking (Glazzard & Coverdale, 2018). Then, given the existing realities, some teachers wanted to change their present institutions; some wanted to give up the teaching profession (Kelly et al., 2019; Kutsyuruba et al., 2021). The reality is that teaching is no more a prestigious profession in Bangladesh. The traditional societal respect for teaching and teachers is gone. Moreover, the absence of structured induction programmes in Bangladesh clearly shows that the stakeholders do not care that much about the novice teachers' transition to the profession, and they are negligent about teacher preparation as is the case in Portugal (M. A. Flores, 2021).

Conclusion and Suggestions

The present study targeted to explore the practices, challenges, and expectations related to the EL teachers' induction phase in Bangladesh. The key findings included a three-segment teacher recruitment mechanism, absence of pre-service teacher preparation and adequate initial training, varied initial experiences of teachers, no mentoring and observation, limited collaboration, and inadequate opportunity for professional development. Moreover, the findings also revealed perceived improvement in teaching and learning, conflicting pre-service perceptions and in-service actualities, different challenges faced by teachers, required support and resources as novice teachers, the significance of teachers' proactive role in their induction, and their confusion about career planning. Finally, generalising its findings to the whole target population was not a target of this qualitative phenomenological study rather it aimed to understand the examined issues broadly through teachers' lived experiences. Further studies can be carried out with a bigger sample to uncover the general picture of teachers' induction in Bangladesh. As per the findings of this study, some recommendations are given below for stakeholders' consideration.

- a) There must be a structured induction programme for the novice EL teachers in Bangladesh. The Ministry of Education can assign some teacher education experts to design an induction programme.
- b) Assigning the experienced teachers as mentors of the novice teachers would help them face the challenges of teaching in the initial years. Both - mentors and mentees- need to manage adequate time for developing an effective mentoring relationship.
- c) All novice teachers must be allowed to observe the classes of experienced teachers. Later, they should reflect on the observed classes.
- d) All aspiring teacher candidates must attend pre-service teacher education programmes. The concerned authority should stop recruiting candidates who have no pre-service teacher preparation.
- e) Supporting the novice teachers' smooth transition to the teaching profession must be an immediate policy priority in Bangladesh.

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