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Identifying Barriers to the Public Transport Accessibility for Disabled People in Dhaka: A Qualitative Analysis

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ABSTRACT: This paper identified the barriers disabled experience in their daily lives using public transport as their travel means in Dhaka. A qualitative investigation of empirical data provides the framework for understanding passengers' experiences with public transport to deal with barriers. In the city of Dhaka, a focus group discussion (FGD) was held with a group of 34 disabled persons. They shared their perceived barriers from their own experiences with public transport. The barriers I found were negative attitudes by drivers, misplacement of priority seats, unfriendly built environment, high cost of travel, imperfect design inside vehicles, prejudice and discriminatory attitude by other passengers, deficient levelling on transport infrastructure, long-distance between the transport stops/terminals and home, the profit-making tendency by transit boss, absence of audio support for the visually impaired, blockage in the footpath, fears of accidents and traffic injuries and wet or nasty weather. Then I suggested how we could solve their problems by increasing mobility, transport accessibility, social engagement, friendly attitude towards them, community or societal integration, and changing deep-rooted false cultural perception as well as prejudice. More research and studies are recommended to explore the accessibility challenges faced by people with disabilities in Dhaka using public transport.

KEYWORDS: Transport Accessibility, People with Disability, Qualitative Content Analysis, Public Transport

1.1 Introduction

The disabled are a weak and marginalised group compared to the other social groups of urban communities in Dhaka, Bangladesh. They are also left out and unable to carry out their daily journeys. They stereotypically cannot get the freedom of mobility (the preconditions for participating in society) as non-disabled people get (Park and Chowdhury, 2017). Mobility is necessary for every individual to participate in their community and society (Schaie, 2003). Transport mobility delivered necessary opportunities for individuals to manage their vital activities outside their home (Asplund, Wallin, and Jonsson, 2012; Brodrick and Stanley, 2013; Mollenkopf et al., 2005). Despite the numerous advantages of public transportation, those with physical impairments tend to decrease their use of public transport (Broome, Worrall, Fleming, and Boldy, 2012; Mercado, Paez, and Newbold, 2010). The ability of a public transportation system to convey people from their system entrance point to their system departure point in an acceptable period of time is referred to as accessibility (Murray, Davis, Stimson, and Ferreira, 1998). Transport accessibility is more difficult and challenging for disabled people (Schlingensiepena et al., 2015). Sometimes transport is unavailable for them (Soltani et al., 2012). In Dhaka, people with all types of disabilities cannot access public transport (Sakaki and Gomes, 2018). The current interior characteristics of Dhaka's public buses do not accommodate the needs of physically challenged people (Sultana et al., 2020; Tauhid, 2007), although the bus is the predominant mode of public transport in Dhaka (ADB, 2021). Except for a few dedicated seats, there are no facilities for disabled people on present public transport (Sultana et al., 2020). Public transport service in this city cannot provide safe and easy mobility for persons with disabilities. Disabled people in Dhaka face various social, physical, and psychological barriers that disrupt their transport accessibility (Abir and Hoque, 2011). Besides that, people with disabilities are often listed as one of the categories that could experience social exclusion due to reduced mobility (Kenyon, Lyons, & Rafferty, 2002; Barnes and Mercer, 2005; Casas, 2007) and lack of easily accessible travel options (Alsnih and Hensher, 2003). From a qualitative perspective, I attempted to analyse the difficulties of public transport accessibility for people with disabilities in Dhaka. I strive to provide in-depth and broader knowledge of their challenges, which cannot be conveniently assessed from other perspectives. I have also sought to understand how to overcome these challenges of disabled people in Dhaka.

1.2 Research Questions

What are the barriers disabled experience accessing public transport?

1.3 Objective of the study

My objective is to identify the barriers disabled people face accessing public transport in Dhaka.

2.1 Literature Review

Transport infrastructure is essential for accessibility (Wu et al., 2021). When a person exits the home, the complexities of accessibility in the public transport system begin (Park and Chowdhury, 2017, p. 2). Inadequate built environment and infrastructure make it difficult for disabled individuals in developing countries, e.g., see (Tennakon et al., 2020; Guimarães, Lucas, and Timms, 2019; Ahmad, 2015; Odufuwa, 2007), to travel unless they can be carried adequately throughout the entire route. The road system frequently lacks pathways in these countries. Those frequently exist are in poor condition, blocked by cars, trash, vendors, or roadside embellishment, absence of ramps and other accessibility elements (king and king, 2014; King et al., 2018). Low-quality tracks, such as rough exteriors due to cracks (Gallagher et al., 2011; Jenkins et al., 2015; Rosenberg et al., 2013), steeps, the need for ramps, handrailings, the lack of lifts (Iwarsson and Wilson, 2006) and a variety of other barriers obstructing accessibility on the way for disabled people (Darcy, 2010;

Figueiredo et al., 2012) and makes manoeuvring challenging for them. Especially those who depended on walkers and wheelchairs with physical deficiency. They exacerbate the danger of falling for vision deficiency too. The lack of curb ramps and steeps makes the situation worse, as they are unable to exit the footway to cross the street (Bromley, Matthews, and Thomas, 2007; Meyers et al., 2002; Rosenberg et al., 2013). Construction work was also identified as one of the major problems, expanding from signage spots and cones to the complete stoppage of the footways (Burdett and Pomeroy, 2011; Gallagher et al., 2011).

According to Bezyak, Sabella, and Gattis (2017), people with mobility impairments encounter negative attitudes and lack knowledge of disability from drivers. The feeling of being bothered can be a significant barrier for disabled in transport (Aarhaug et al., 2011). The primary consequences of negative behaviours are overt or implicit discrimination and social isolation (Yau, McKercher, and Packer, 2004). However, people with disabilities, on the other hand, are more likely than people without disabilities to face severe social exclusion and negative behaviours as a result of their needs for care (McKercher and Darcy, 2018, p. 60). They can be pushed into ghettos due to a lack of transit accessibility (Gleeson 2006, p. 139).

Lack of shelter and protection, low light, and security are public transport issues for disabled people (Crudden et al., 2015). Disabled people cannot use public transport due to the inability to access bus stops and stations (Haveman et al., 2013). Lengthy distances to public transport stoppages (Jansuwan, Christensen, and Chen, 2013; Jensen et al., 2002) and the lack of different effective routes to terminal entries are also highlighted as barriers (Maynard, 2009). Platform arrangement, such as gaps and non-level access to platforms and buses/trains, has been identified as a predominant obstacle for people with disabilities. (Karekla et al., 2011; Soltani et al., 2012). Mobility levels may also be influenced by other physical factors such as traffic safety, the season of the year, and neighbourhood features (King et al., 2006).

According to Asplund et al. (2012), physical obstacles while ascending, moving around, onboard, and disembarking are reflected as the most typical difficulties associated with an additional risk of accident for poor transport design. Especially when standing in the buses. Priority seats in the car should be next to the driver as well as the entrance (Gallagher et al., 2011).

Finding bus stations, detecting the correct bus, exchanging buses (which could include crossing the road), and identifying bus terminals are all common issues for partially or wholly blind people who use public transportation (Golledge & Marston, 1999). Where audio announcements are not present, they count on drivers to notify the stops for them. Since they count on memory to navigate, changes in the internal design of buses make it very tough for them to locate a seat (Gallagher et al., 2011). Furthermore, the lack of lights will cause trip hazards and make it impossible for low-vision patients to read signs (Rosenberg et al., 2013). Other obstacles comprised the lack of pedestrian crossings, especially on bustling roads, the lack of audio announcements at road crossings (Bromley et al., 2007; Wu et al., 2017), and reduced degree of background sound that obscures audible details (Jenkins et al., 2015). In general, people with disabilities are given relatively a lesser amount of attention in public transportation facilities (Goggin 2016; Sheller 2018). Still, there has been little study on access solutions that are concentrated on the extent of the transportation network (van Holstein, Wiesel, and Legacy, 2020), where public transport is very significant for disabled individuals (Jansuwan, Christensen, and Chen, 2013; Velho et al., 2016). Article 9, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities emphasises to confirm an equal "transport accessibility" for persons with disabilities by both Government and non- Government performers in both urban and rural areas (WHO, 2015, p. 7). However, younger segments of the population are more dissatisfied with public transportation services and transportation capabilities for disabled persons in Dhaka (Munira and Santoso, 2017, p. 15). In this study, I tried to go beyond identifying the barriers disabled people face in Dhaka's transit system from a qualitative perspective. The findings from this literature review can guide the researchers and readers to develop more understanding of the barriers disabled people face accessing public transport globally.

3.1 Research Method

It was an exploratory qualitative research approach. Qualitative research seeks to understand "the deeper meanings of particular human experiences" (Rubin and Babbie, 2011, p. 437). For a person with a disability, the barriers they face accessing transport can be found from their everyday experiences in transport. So, a qualitative approach was appropriate for this study. Focus group discussion (FGD) was chosen in this qualitative research as the data collection method. With researchers, participants, and a group moderator, FGD was completed in Dhaka (Kruger and Casey, 2015). Participants gave consent with their phone number and name. From the outset of FGD, I gave a transitory introduction to my research project. During FGD, I faced many problems with visually impaired, mentally imbalanced, and deaf participants. However, we solve these problems with group dynamics and the social interaction feature of FGD (Morgan, 1996). FGD does not discriminate against participants whether they can read or write. It also encourages a reluctant participant who thinks he/she has nothing to say (Kitzinger, 1995).

3.2 Participants' Information

This paper defined disability according to the Disability Welfare Act of 2001 (Ministry of Law Justice and Parliamentary Affairs 2001). According to them, a person with a disability is medically impaired either congenitally or due to injury or an accident. He/she becomes physically inactivated, mentally imbalanced either partially or entirely, and cannot function or lead their everyday lives (BBS, 2015, p. 1-2). My respondents were physically impaired, visually impaired, physically inactivated, mentally imbalanced, according to this definition in this study. Without help, they are unable to live their normal lives. With the help of the research team and their relatives, they participated in this study. Table one below demonstrates more detailed information on participants.

Variables	Information	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	19	55.88%
	Female	15	44.12%
Age	More than 18		
Educational status	Illiterate	12	35.29%
	Below bachelor's degree	13	38.24%
	Bachelor or Higher	9	26.47%
	Total	34	100
Disability's Identity	Deaf or Auditory Disabled	2	5.88%
	Physically Disabled	11	32.35%
	Visually or Sensory Disabled	8	23.53%
	Intellectual or Learning Disabled	2	5.88%
	Speech Impaired	2	5.88%
	Multiple Disabled	9	26.47%
	Total	34	100

Note. Information on participants.

Table 1. Participant's Profile

3.3 Sampling

I collected information from 34 respondents using the non-probability snowball sampling method. Once we managed to participate someone in the discussion, they informed us about another one they knew. Sometimes their parents or their relatives did it for us. It was not easy to find disabled participants for this research. So, I followed this type of snowball sampling method. In the qualitative study, the appropriate sample size is an extent that can sufficiently answer all the research questions. The required information becomes evident with the study's progress (Marshal, 1996), and new themes, explanations are stopped emerging from collected data. This point is called data saturation in qualitative research (Marshal, 1996; Guest et al., 2006).

3.4 Data Analysis Procedure

Qualitative content analysis (QCA) was applied to analyse the data. First, I transcribed the group discussion into textual data (meaning unit). I used the conventional qualitative content analysis method because I gathered the themes and levels from the textual data (Forman and Damschroder, 2007) and avoided preconceived categories (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). Then, I slightly edited all the meaning units eliminating incomplete sentences, replicating words, and non-relevant content while maintaining their main context. It is called condensation (Erlingsson, & Brysiewicz, 2017). Qualitative content analysis interprets the textual data with a systematic process of coding. Code identifies themes and patterns from data (Flick, 2014). In this research, coding was generated by labelling meaning units with a code using an open coding process. As the study progresses, more data becomes available, and codes are changed concerning the research context (Berg, 2009). Thus, themes and contents were created through coding. From these themes, contents, and words, I drew interpretation and result of the study (Bengtsson, 2016, p. 10). The internal consistency of the coding was strengthened as the researcher who conducted the analysis attended all of the focus groups sessions and communicated with the other members of the research group on a frequent basis as the analysis developed (Kidd and Parshall, 2000). In this analysis, some sub-categories and the codes of the meaning units are the same (Graneheim and Lundman, 2004). From these sub-categories, main categories and themes were generated. Themes and main categories are broad ideas that describe an underlying meaning and provide an answer to the inquiry (Graneheim and Lundman, 2004). Following that, I provide the analysed data to the actual groups (respondents and their relatives) to ensure that their ideas were correctly recorded (Kagaari et al., 2017).

Formulating Themes and Categories from the Discussion

For example, **Interview Quotation →** "When it is a rainy day or bad weather, we cannot come out of our home, and there is no chance for us to get transport. As we have to use the mobility aid, we cannot use an umbrella……." **Condensed Meaning Unit →** *"We cannot manage to access the transport because of nasty and damp weather. As we have to use a mobility aid instrument, we cannot save ourselves from rain or bad weather. We cannot easily take shelter in a covered place like others on the road where rain cannot pour"* [Female, 29 years old] (Group discussion, 2020). **Code → "rainy or bad weather".** The **theme** was that bad weather severely interrupts the travel of disabled people in Dhaka. They cannot access transport for it.

4.1 Findings and Discussion

In this part, I discuss and interpret the findings of my study. The first section discusses the barriers to transport accessibility. Then I illustrated the way to remove these barriers. The first section has a few quotations from FGD. I translated the discussion from Bengali to English and removed the name of the participants.

4.2 Barriers

By asking participants to ponder the public transport environments, the barriers were found below.

Due to rough surfaces, rocks, trash, cracks, steeps, and the absence of the ramp on the road, disabled people have to face difficulty getting on public transport. More precisely, the built environment is unfriendly and awkward for them to travel in Dhaka.

The associated meaning units were:

"The structure and design of the road infrastructure are not appropriate for us. There are no ramps on the road. It is almost impossible to get on the bus. The rough surface, rocks, trash, cracks, and construction materials on the road make moving more challenging for us". [Male, 26 years old]

"I never move smoothly with my wheelchair on the road. I always fear going out with the wheelchair. In fact, roads are not suitable for us (the wheelchair users)". [Female, 23 years old] (Group discussion, 2020).

Disabled people face negative attitudes from drivers and transit contractors. The below meaning unit is also a determiner of another thing that the transit bosses have very little knowledge about disability in Dhaka. So, they care for their interest instead of helping the disabled people in Dhaka.

The significant condensed meaning unit was:

"Drivers are reluctant to pick us up when they come to know that I am impaired. Because it is more time consuming for drivers to take an impaired person than normal people and we also need help to get in the transport. In the centre of the busy road, drivers stop vehicles that show complete contempt for the lives of travellers." [Male, 26 years old] (Group discussion, 2020).

"Getting on the vehicle takes more time than normal commuters for us. So, transit bosses try to avoid us for more income taking normal people than us." [Male, 34 years old] (Group discussion, 2020).

Separated places, highlighted labels, and alternative ways in transport systems can be a blessing for disabled people in this capital. However, these are absent in the present transport system. What is present in this transit infrastructure

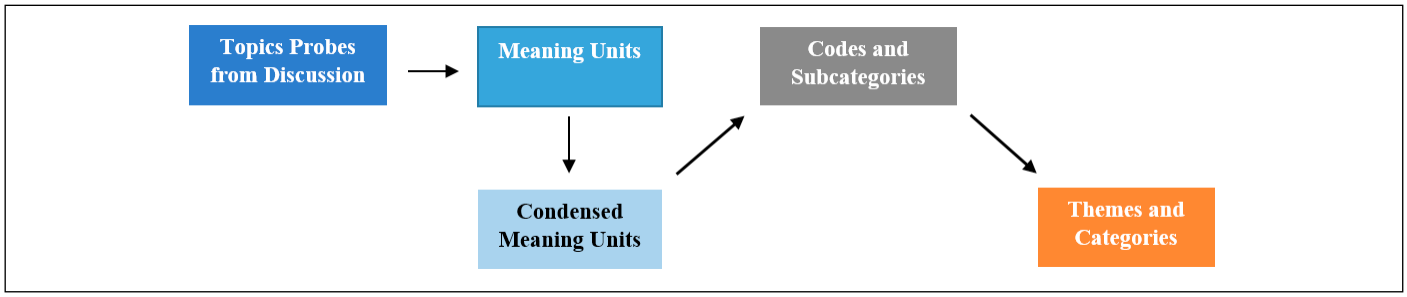

Figure 1. Steps of Qualitative Content Analysis

is not appropriately maintained. These inappropriate settings in transit platforms and transit stops act as barriers for disabled people to access public transport in Dhaka. The meaning units were:

"Bus stops are far away from my home. When I try to get on or come off from bus or other types of transport, I have to struggle with the distance between transport stops and home" [Male, 26 years old]

"There is no separate passenger shelter, no adequate lighting, and no different level or margin for us. Even though they are not usable for the lack of proper maintenance." [Male, 26 years old] (Group discussion, 2020).

The road and footpath are blocked by the hawkers, vendors, and the informal sectors. Due to the construction work, construction materials are kept on the roadside in Dhaka. Thus, a considerable portion of the road remains unusable for the disabled in Dhaka. These blockages create a barrier for them getting on public transport in Dhaka for the disabled.

The meaning unit from the discussion was:

"Roads and footpaths have always been developed and restored. A huge portion of roads, especially pavements, are always covered by construction materials. Hawkers and informal sectors also occupy footpaths." [Female, 22 years] (Group discussion, 2020).

Disabled cannot get on the vehicle, usually like us. Accidents and injuries are evident to every respondent while getting on the vehicle. They have to struggle due to the impoverished inner vehicle design and misplacement of priority seats in this city. Priority seats are not the same in public transport. The placement of priority seats in Dhaka's transport is different. It is annoying for the disabled as many of them use only memories for identifying seats. In Dhaka, sometimes careless men frequently occupy the allocated seats for disabled people and do not share their seats with disabled people (Sajib, 2021, p. 28). Thus, they face discriminatory attitudes from non-disabled passengers. The associated meaning units were:

"I can never securely get on and off in public transport. I was injured several times, getting on the vehicle. Inside the transport, the design and infrastructure are not friendly with us. Placement of the priority seats does not take a similar pattern in all vehicles. They are varied remarkably and cause problems for us" [Male, 26 years old] (Group discussion, 2020).

"Some passengers take the seat reserved for the disabled and women. Some are reluctant to share a seat with us" [Female, 23 years old] (Group discussion, 2020).

Generally, travel costs for people with disabilities are higher (Freeman and Selmi, 2010; Kastenholz et al., 2015; Yau et al., 2004). It is also relevant in Dhaka. The related meaning unit was:

"Transit managers claim a more considerable amount of money than other passengers. Sometimes the bus contractor, drivers, and the transport supervisor expect more money for additional assistance in public transport." [Male, 26 years old] (Group discussion, 2020).

"We have to take someone to accompany us on our visit. It also increases transportation costs." [Female, 30 years old] (Group discussion, 2020).

Wet and nasty weather causes an issue as the disabled are unable to hold an umbrella using the mobility aid at the same time (Park and Chowdhury, 2017. p. 6). They are also unable to protect themselves from rainy and damp weather like non-disabled people. So, they face difficulty accessing public transport during bad weather. It was also found in a meaning unit below:

"We cannot manage to access the transport because of nasty and damp weather. As we have to use a mobility aid instrument, we cannot save ourselves from rain or bad weather. We cannot easily take shelter in a covered place like others on the road where rain cannot pour " [Female, 29 years old] (Group discussion, 2020).

Thus, wet and nasty weather is a barrier to access transit for the disabled in Dhaka.

Barriers and obstacles for the blind and visually impaired are slightly different from other disabled. Some visually impaired can see, but it is not appropriate for making a journey. They face the same barriers as others mentioned before. Among them, lacking information, absence of audio messages, and exact schedules were recognised as barriers to accessing public transport in this study. The meaning units were:

"It is terrible for me to find a specific transport. I cannot change the bus and do not know the right route as there is no audio support. So, we have to rely on others." [Male, 32 years old].

"I found it very difficult to read the notification and other signs on the road. Even in most cases, the exact schedules are not maintained, and the traffic lights, roadside headlights are wrecked." [Male, 29 years old] (Group discussion, 2020).

From this discussion with respondents, it becomes clear that the obstacles they encountered accessing public transport impacted their daily journey very depressingly. In other words, it can be generalised that an inaccessible and inadequate transportation system in Dhaka prompts disabled people to refuse to leave their homes for their daily journey.

4.3 Suggestion and Problem Solving

It is possible to improve the life quality of disadvantaged communities and promote societal cohesion in the long term. A key aspect of community cohesion is secure, reliable, and affordable transportation (Sze and Christensen, 2017). Barriers-free and better access to travel have been attributed to greater mobility and social engagement, promoting a more positive life quality perception (Banister and Bowling, 2004). However, these barriers to mobility are triggered by the elaborate social attitudes that non-disabled individuals have built around such impairments rather than by the physical impairments themselves (Pierson, 2010, p. 34). People described disability as an absolute and permanent inability to work in everyday life (Nicolaisen, Blichfeldt, and Sonnenschein, 2012). It is not the correct perception. A man with little ability in one area might have high capability in another area (Buhalis et al., 2005, p. 16). Instead of proposing the society understand their diversity of capability or be structured to be respectful of their difficulty, people with disabilities believe they must conform or adapt themselves to the structure (Nicolaisen et al., 2012). Thus, they are accepting the culturally rooted prejudice and negative perception towards them. From the perspective of contract theory, people who have contact and interaction with the disabled have a positive attitude towards the disabled group (Daruwalla and Darcy, 2005; Pettigrew and Tropp, 2006). This aspect of interaction can help to abolish discriminatory attitudes towards the disabled community. Responsiveness of government directives and institutional collaboration in strategic urban planning is crucial for enhancing the walking environment and accessibility of transport conveniences and services (Hallgrimsdottir et al., 2016). Furthermore, geospatial details about accessible services for pre-trip planning were deemed helpful for people with reduced mobility (May et al., 2014; Aarhaug and Elvebakk, 2015). Visually disabled individuals cannot use the architectural solution designed for people with mobility disabilities. Instead, they require an assortment of augmentative and alternative communication devices (AAC), just like Teletext decoders, sensory or tactile markers (Chang and Chen, 2011; O'Neill & Knight, 2000). A journey is a complicated sequence of events, and for it to be procurable, each connection in the chain must function properly (Wennberg, Hydén, and Ståhl, 2010). So, every aspect of the journey should be focused equally to eliminate these barriers in their accessibility chain.

Themes/ Main Categories	Physically Disabled	Visually or Sensory Disabled	Speech Impaired	Intellectual or Learning Disabled	Multiple Disabled	Deaf or Auditory Disabled
The built environment of Dhaka is awkward for disabled people to access public transport.	x	x	x	x	x	x
The placement of priority seats in Dhaka's public transport is different. It is annoying for the disabled as many of them use only memories for identifying seats. This condition disrupts their transit accessibility.	x	x			x	
Disabled people faced negative attitudes from transit bosses.	x	x	x	x	x	x
Travel costs for the disabled are higher than usual as they need additional assistance, and someone must accompany them. For the high cost, they avoid using public transport.	x	x		x	x	
The insider environment of transits is not disabled-user friendly. It prompts them to avoid accessing public transport.	x	x			x	
Disabled face prejudice and discriminatory attitudes from some passengers using public transport.	x	x	x	x	x	x
Lack of precise levelling and signs for specific/separate/alternative places on transport infrastructure for the disabled makes their transport accessibility difficult.	x	x			x	
The long-distance between transit stops or transit terminals is liable for the low transit accessibility for disabled people in Dhaka.	x	x		x	x	
The profit-making tendency deprives disabled people of their equal rights of accessing public transport.	x	x		x	x	
Bad weather severely interrupts the transport use of disabled people in Dhaka. They cannot access transport for it.	x	x		x	x	
The blockages in the pavements and the footpath by others disrupt their normal flow of journey as they have to use these footpaths and pavement most of the time to access transport.	x				x	x
The possibility of traffic injury and accidents for disabled people during travel causes fears among them to access transport.	x	x		x	x	x
No audio support for blind or visual impaired to access public transport and other transit infrastructure		x				x

Note. Table showing participants responded to each theme and category.

Table 2. themes and categories and the types of participants contributing data to each theme.

4.4 Some Images of Inaccessible Transit Infrastructure in Dhaka

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Figure 2. These images were collected from Dhaka. The identities of people and places were removed (Personal collection, 2021).

5.1 Conclusion

Disabled people are disadvantaged members of society. Hearing their desires would make them feel more included in the community. Their travel needs are adventuresome like ours (Ray & Ryder, 2003). So, they need a user-friendly transport system for travelling. Barrier-free accessibility in public transport systems can change the lives of persons with disabilities (United nation, 2007). Many development objectives, such as access to health care, work, and social contact, rely on physical connectivity and transportation (Julie et al., 2018). Being disabled, they are deprived of these typical development initiatives too. We construct the barriers they face accessing public transport. So, our responsibility is to make the transport system more usable, comfortable, friendly, and considerate for disabled people. Besides that, public transportation operators should work more closely with core stakeholders of disability communities. It is not possible to make a sustainable society keeping a large community deprived and excluded. This exclusion and deprivation can be eliminated by increasing mobility and accessibility to public transport. Besides that, cities like Dhaka will be more resilient if there is equal participation of the disabled community. The researcher believes that the barrier-free transport system can bring this equality for the disabled and make their life more enhanced in Dhaka.

6.1 Limitation of the Study

This research did not include multifaceted barriers that interact simultaneously in the present quality of public transport for the disabled in Dhaka. Besides, it could not include Intermediate Public Transport (IPT) like rickshaws, three-wheeler autos, as they are more expensive to rent than other means of transport. They are also restricted from entering the few Metropolitan areas (the midpoint of the capital) and can not cover the city-wide route in Dhaka. Drivers of these transportations (such as rickshaws) in Dhaka, Bangladesh, according to Bhuiya (2018) and Tauhid (2007), are reluctant to carry or support the disabled to board.

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Compliance and Ethical Interest

Author and who helped the author have no conflict of interest and commercial interest.

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Condensed Meaning Units	Codes	Sub-Categories	Themes/ Main Categories
"The structure and design of the road infrastructure……	unfriendly built environment for disabled	unfriendly built environment	The built environment of Dhaka is awkward for disabled people to access public transport.
"I can never securely get on and off in public transport……	misplacement of priority seats	misplacement of priority seats	The placement of priority seats in Dhaka's public transport is different. It is annoying for the disabled as many of them use only memories for identifying seats. This condition disrupts their transit accessibility.
"Drivers are reluctant to pick us up when they come to……	negative attitude by drivers and transit-contractor	negative attitude by drivers and transit-contractor	Disabled people faced negative attitudes from transit bosses.
"Transit managers claim a more considerable …… *"We have to ta……*	high cost of travel for disabled	high cost of travel for disabled	Travel costs for the disabled are higher than usual as they need additional assistance, and someone must accompany them. For the high cost, they avoid using public transport.
"Inside the bus, the design and infrastructure of transport……	imperfect design inside vehicles	imperfect design inside vehicles	The insider environment of transits is not disabled-user friendly. It prompts them to avoid accessing public transport.
"Some passengers……	prejudice and discriminatory attitude by other passengers	prejudice and discriminatory attitude by other passengers	Disabled face prejudice and discriminatory attitudes from some passengers using public transport.
"There is no separate passenger shelter, no…… *"I found it very difficult to ……*	Lack of levelling and sign on transport infrastructure for disabled	lack of levelling and sign on transport infrastructure for disabled	Lack of precise levelling and signs for specific/separate/alternative places on transport infrastructure for the disabled makes their transport accessibility difficult.
"Bus stops are far away from my home. When I co……	Long-distance between the transport stops/terminals and home	long-distance between the transport stops/terminals and home	The long-distance between transit stops or transit terminals is liable for the low transit accessibility for disabled people in Dhaka.
"Getting on the vehicle takes more time than normal comm……	Having profit-making tendency by transit boss	The profit-making tendency by transit boss	The profit-making tendency deprives disabled people of their equal rights of accessing public transport.
"We cannot manage to access the transport for nasty……	rainy or bad weather	rainy or bad weather	Bad weather severely interrupts the transport use of disabled people in Dhaka. They cannot access transport for it.
"Roads and footpaths have always been develop……	blockage in footpath	blockage in footpath	The blockages in the pavements and the footpath by others disrupt their normal flow of journey as they have to use these footpaths and pavement most of the time to access transport.
"I can never securely get on and off in public tra……	fears of accidents and traffic injuries	fears of accidents and traffic injuries	The possibility of traffic injury and accidents for disabled people during travel causes fears among them to access transport.
"It is terrible for me to find a specific transport……	absence of audio support for visual impaired/ blind	absence of audio support for visual impaired/ blind	No audio support for blind or visual impaired to access public transport and other transit infrastructure

Note. The design of this table was taken from (Bengtsson, 2016, p.11).

Table 3. Findings of Qualitative Content Analysis in Tabular Form

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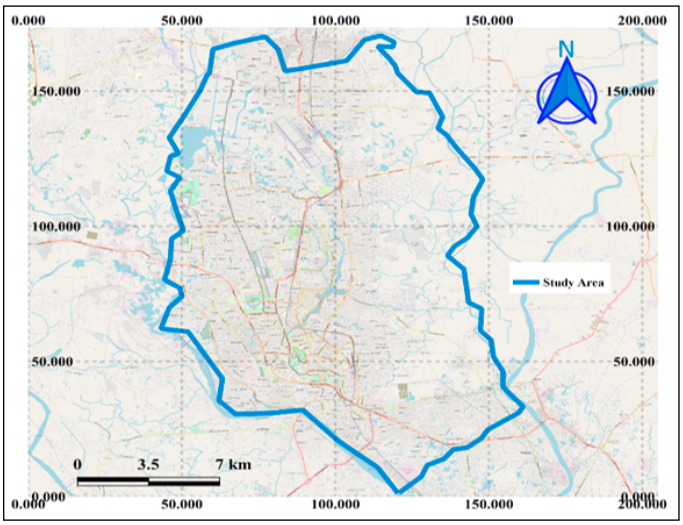
Study Area in Map



Note. The author created this map with the help of QGIS, version 3.18, 'Zürich'.

QUESTIONS ASKED IN THE FGD/CHECKLIST

(The original questionnaire was in the Bengali Language).

Only for Academic Purposes

1. What is the condition of the transit infrastructures, vehicle stops, vehicle platform, road and the transport you use? Are they user friendly for you?
   .....
   .....
2. Describe the attitude of the transit bosses and other passengers while travelling? Are they truly friendly and cooperative with you?
   .....
   .....
3. Does the travel cost regular for you? Do you have to spend more than others on travel?
   .....
   .....
4. After getting in the vehicle, what obstacles suffer you the most?
   .....
   .....
5. What is the variety of obstacles for the visually impaired?
   .....
   .....

6. Can you use the footpath? Does anyone block the footpath on the road?
   .....
   .....
7. Describe the weather-related difficulty you face accessing transport.
   .....
   .....
8. Have you ever encountered any accident or suffered from any injuries accessing transport? Describe, please.
   .....
   .....
9. How are the preserved places for the disabled highlighted? Are they enough for you? Describe their condition, please?
   .....
   .....