



# **Exploring the Role of Libraries in Promoting Child Mental Health in Bangladesh: A Study on Some Selected Libraries**

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## **Authors' contributions**

*This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.*

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## **ABSTRACT**

**Aims:** The research aimed to figure out the existing roles of libraries in promoting child mental health. The study also focused on the child's mental health importance, the warning sign of children, common disorders and promotional strategies for child mental health.

**Methodology:** To figure out these roles' the researcher adopted qualitative research. For this

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study, the researcher collected data by a scheduled interview, the respondents were chosen mostly from the public libraries and one from Shishu academy library. In line, the text analysis technique was used to identify the different types of roles.

**Results:** The study's key findings are presented from three perspectives: firstly, the socio-economic determinants of child mental health. Secondly, libraries' role as services providers, as bibliotherapists and as motivators which affects children's mental health, and develops their thinking capability. Finally, libraries can flourish in their role by adequate books, health equipment, and by collaborating with the school library to organize workshop.

**Conclusion:** The study's conclusion is to draw the attention of the important stakeholders to the significance of children's mental health and the librarian's role in encouraging it through specialized read-aloud programs, helpful resources, and a welcoming library environment. Stakeholders should take proactive measures to promote and fund these programs by acknowledging the important effects that early exposure to literature and positive reading experiences can have a great impact on a child's mental well-being. This will help to establish a nurturing and enriching environment.

*Keywords: Library; child mental health; school; Bangladesh.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The development of a child's mind, social skills, and emotional stability are all critically dependent on their mental health [1]. This paper explores children's growth and development from infancy to puberty, a critical period when their mental development begins and significantly affects how they will conduct their lives in the future. Children go through enormous cognitive, social, emotional, and physical changes during this stage of development, laying the groundwork for their future success and well-being. In low and middle-income countries like Bangladesh, where resources for mental health care are limited, it is essential to explore innovative and cost-effective approaches to promote the mental health of children. One potential avenue for promoting child mental health is through the services provided by libraries. Libraries are not just repositories for books and information; they are also community hubs that can support a wide range of services, including health and well-being initiatives [2]. This paper aims to explore the role of libraries in promoting child mental health in Bangladesh, by examining the various ways in which libraries can contribute to the mental health of children and the unique challenges faced by libraries in this context. Existing research has shown that libraries can play a significant role in supporting the mental health of children and their families by providing access to educational resources, promoting early literacy, fostering social connections, and offering safe spaces for children to explore their interests [3]. Children can learn about and deal with mental health concerns with the support of a broad range of books, educational materials, and multimedia tools available in

libraries. They may offer age-appropriate books about coping mechanisms, emotions, anxiety, and stories with characters who are struggling with mental health issues, which can make kids feel less alone and more understood. Libraries can also serve as platforms for the delivery of evidence-based mental health interventions, such as cognitive-behavioural therapy and psychoeducation programs, which have been shown to be effective in improving mental health outcomes for children [4,5]. By collaborating with local schools, health care providers, and community organizations, libraries can help to bridge the gap between mental health services and the children who need them, thus addressing one of the primary barriers to mental health care in low-resource settings [6].

Despite the potential for libraries to contribute to child mental health promotion in Bangladesh, there are several challenges that must be addressed. These include insufficient funding and resources, limited awareness about mental health issues, and cultural stigma surrounding mental illness. To overcome these obstacles, it is essential to invest in capacity building for library professionals, develop culturally appropriate mental health resources, and engage in community outreach and advocacy efforts to raise awareness about the importance of child mental health.

In summary, libraries hold great promise as platforms for promoting child mental health in Bangladesh. By leveraging their unique position as community hubs, libraries can play a critical role in providing resources, interventions, and support to children and their families. This paper

will explore the various ways in which libraries can contribute to child mental health promotion, as well as the challenges and opportunities they face in this endeavor.

Child mental health, is the complete well-being and optimal development of a child in the emotional, behavioral, social, and cognitive domains. Children's mental health is often defined as different from adult mental health and more multifaceted because of the unique developmental milestones that children experience. Characteristics of the child (e.g., gender, genetics) are important determinants of that child's well-being. However, child mental health also includes those conditions that directly affect or modify mental health, including aspects of a child's family, community, and broader society [7]. The mental health problems children may experience may be reflected as difficulties in psychological and emotional development, social relationships, and behavior. When problems are persistent, severe, and cause impaired functioning, they are defined as mental health disorders. Well-designed mental health promotion and prevention programs and interventions can enhance the well-being of children and mitigate the escalation of problems [8].

The library plays an important role to provide and exploring the children's mental health. Libraries welcome children from the very earliest months of life, helping parents and careers to support them as they grow and learn. Working with schools and other partners, libraries provide a range of activities, programs and initiatives which introduce, extend and refresh the library experience for children [9]. Children's mental health is essential for every country. Currently, there are numerous initiatives in Bangladesh that cater to children's mental health, with libraries, in particular, playing a significant role. Libraries play a crucial part in supporting children's mental health by offering various services and resources. Understanding how libraries can enhance their services for children's mental health is essential [10].

### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

Without identifying the gaps, it is impossible to find a real solution to the problem. So, the first and foremost task of any research work is to identify the research problem correctly. A research problem is typically identified by an area that the researcher continues to study. So,

in order to conduct research, the researcher must develop a well-defined, researchable problem. In Bangladesh, 10–20% of children and adolescents have a mental health problem of some type. The development of schooling is adversely affected by symptoms like attention deficiencies, cognitive difficulties, a lack of motivation, and depressive mood. It is often unclear what school-related factors affect children's mental development and effective preventive measures and interventions [11].

Good mental health allows children to think clearly, develop socially and learn new skills. Additionally, good friends and encouraging words from adults are essential for helping children develop self-confidence, self-esteem, and a healthy emotional outlook on life. Through this research, we would like to find out how libraries explore and promote children's mental health.

### 1.2 Research Question

- What is the key determinant of a child's mental health?
- What are the existing roles of the library as well as their effect in promoting school-going child mental health?
- How can libraries flourish in their role in promoting school-going child mental health?

### 1.3 Objective of the Study

- To figure out the role of libraries in promoting children's mental health.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Child Mental Health

A child's proper development heavily depends on their emotional well-being; children need to be healthy in order to learn, grow, and lead productive lives. Most children and teens who require mental health services are unable to get them due to the current state of the mental health service delivery system, which is insufficient to satisfy their needs. With the addition of effective treatments, services, and support, the mental health system can become better equipped to help children and youth with mental health problems, or those who are at risk, to thrive and live successfully [12]. For younger individuals, books can be therapeutic. It promotes empathy and emotional intelligence by

letting students investigate various emotions and beliefs. Children can learn to analyze their emotions and comprehend those of others through stories.

Mental health disorders in children are generally defined as delays or disruptions in developing age-appropriate thinking, behaviors, social skills or regulation of emotions. These problems are distressing to children and disrupt their ability to function well at home, in school or other social situations [13]. The aim is to learn how librarians and literature may help troubled youngsters return to their normal lives. That is what the study is about.

## **2.2 Key Determinants of Child Mental Health**

Children's mental health problems have become more frequent recently throughout the world. Some key barriers to children's mental health are discussed below:

### **2.2.1 Poverty and income inequality**

Poverty is one of the social determinants of mental health that affects children and teens. According to the American Psychological Academy, living in poverty can be associated with negative conditions such as food insecurity and substandard housing. Also, it is linked to problems such as inadequate nutrition, limited health care and unsafe neighborhoods [14].

### **2.2.2 Food insecurity**

Food insecurity and malnutrition affect millions of infants, children, and teens around the world. An increase in the number of children and youth who suffer from hunger. Food insecurity and malnutrition are associated with poorer mental health outcomes among children and teens [14].

### **2.2.3 Neighborhood or community**

In addition to factors such as poverty and food insecurity, a child or adolescent's neighborhood or community can significantly affect their mental and behavioral health. This includes environmental factors and geographical factors [14].

### **2.2.4 Racism**

Racism is defined as a belief that race (that is, how one looks) is the primary determinant of

human traits, abilities and rights and that racial differences (such as skin color) produce an inherent superiority of a particular group. Racism has increasingly been viewed as a social determinant affecting child mental health [14].

### **2.2.5 Parental mental health**

Children of parents who are mentally ill or who have a history of mental disorders are at increased risk of mental disorders. Children who have been diagnosed with mental disorders are more likely to have parents who are in poor mental health. While the father's poor mental health was significantly associated with depression and anxiety problems, the mother's poor mental health was significantly associated with all the mental disorders examined: ADHD, depression, anxiety problems, and behavioral and conduct problems [15].

## **2.3 Prevalence of Mental Disorders in Children**

There have been few epidemiological studies of the prevalence of child and adolescent psychiatric disorders in Bangladesh. The prevalence of childhood disability in Bangladesh is increasing with the improvements in child survival [16]. Now a day's behavior problems form an increasing proportion of the presenting complaints [17].

Another recent study shows that, the estimate of the prevalence of mental health problems and its associated factors in school-going children at the age of 5-11 years in Bangladesh. The problems are equally prevalent in both sexes. More than one in five (20.9%) children was found to have emotional and behavioral disorders, another 41.8% were with borderline difficulty scores and 37.1% were with of normal range. Domain-wise difficulty prevalence suggests emotional problems in 23% children, Conduct problem in 20.9% children, Hyperactivity in 1.5% of children, Peer problems in 22.4% of children and Pro-social behavior in 54.1% of children. None of the age, sex, family income, number of children, father's level of education and mother's education appeared as a significant predictor of emotional and behavioral disorder in children of Dhaka city. However, Mother's occupational status appeared as a significant predictor of a child's emotional and behavioral disorder [17].

**Table 1. The studies reported prevalence of mental disorders in children**

<b>Author's and Publication Year</b>	<b>Year of Data Collection</b>	<b>Setting</b>	<b>Place of the Study</b>	<b>Average (Years), Sexes</b>	<b>n (Sample Size)</b>	<b>Outcome Measures Instruments</b>	<b>Prevalence</b>
Rabbani and Hossain, 1999	1994	Urban School	S	NA (both)	1,288	Rutter's B2 Scale	13.4%
Kelkar, 2004	1997-1998	Urban Slum	S	10-16 (both)	210	Semi-Structured Questionnaire	22.9%
Mullick <i>et al.</i> , 2005	2002-2004	Rural, Urban and Urban Slum	C	5-10 (both)	922	SDQ D A WBA	15.2%
Khan <i>et al.</i> , 2008	2001-2003	Rural	C	2-9 (both)	453	TQ	14.6%
Jahan <i>et al.</i> , 2009	2009	Rural Urban	C	5-17 (both)	3,564	RQC	18.4%

Source: BMC Psychiatry, 2014

NA= Not Available, both= Male and Female, C= Community Based Study, F=Facility Based Study, S= School-Based Study, UCEP=Under Privileged Children's Education Program, Rutter's B2 Scale= Rutter's Behavior Scale (B2), SDQ= Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire, DAWBA= Development and Well-Being Assessment, TQ= Ten Questions, RQC= Reporting Questionnaire for Children

## 2.4 Warning Signs of Mental Illness in Children

Warning signs that your child may have a mental health disorder include:

Having frequent anger, nervousness, unusual behavior, avoiding social interactions, talking about death or suicide, out-of-control behavior that can be harmful, drastic changes in mood, behavior or personality [18], changes in eating habits, loss of weight, frequent headaches or stomachaches, difficulty in concentrating, changes in academic performance, avoiding or missing school.

## 2.5 Importance of Promoting Child Mental Health

Promoting children's mental health is a key part of keeping them safe, helping them develop and ensuring they have positive outcomes into adulthood [19]. The importance of psychological well-being in children and adolescents, for their healthy emotional, social, physical, cognitive and educational development, is well-recognized. There is now increasing evidence on the effectiveness of interventions to improve children's and adolescents' resilience, promote mental health and treat mental health problems and disorders. Mental health problems will contribute significantly to the global burden of disease in the 21st century [20].

To make sure that the child's or adolescent's mental health is supported, all parents must have access to information and encouraging surroundings. Specific activities such as tackling bullying, provision of education to increase awareness of mental health issues and to improve the recognition of children's emerging needs, and provision of support for those children with particular needs, have a vital role to play in improving the chances for children and adolescents. Everyone in a community has a role to play in ensuring that the environment in which children are growing up promotes their mental health.

For children with learning difficulties and their parents or careers, the provision of special education, training and promoting the need for early intervention may make a significant difference in overall development [20].

## 2.6 Child Mental Health Promotional Strategies

For promoting child mental health, libraries follow some promotional strategies such as:

**Building healthy policy for children:** For every youngster, libraries offer a door to countless options - to have fun, to learn, to discover and to share. They are fundamental to reading, learning, exploring their identity, and participating in a society that increasingly values knowledge and depends on being able to find and use information. So, it is important to create a good policy for children.

**Creating supportive environments:** The tranquility of libraries can be a refuge from the stresses of everyday life. A calm, welcoming environment can provide children a sense of safety and security, giving them a place to rest and relax while reducing their anxiety.

**Providing interesting reading materials:** The use of books can develop a child's mental health. Non-fiction books help children better understand complex ideas and their own emotions. Meanwhile, fiction books often weave these topics into their storylines, including picture books for younger children.

**Encouraging children to speak out:** Children are always encouraged to speak their minds. The promotion of mental health and emotional well-being is the focus of numerous libraries' programs, workshops, and other activities. Talks about emotions and mental health issues may be included, as well as storytelling sessions and arts and crafts projects. Children can express their feelings in a safe environment through these activities, which can also promote open conversations.

**Make space and time to talk:** It's crucial to foster an atmosphere where kids can express their emotions without fear of consequences. This area is produced by libraries.

**Bibliotherapy:** The librarian in bibliotherapy selects appropriate literature in diverse formats and uses them to guide and encourage depressed patients to read to the point of experiencing insight and understanding, accompanied by healing or increased ability to cope better. Bibliotherapy can assist children in overcoming problems by having them read stories about characters who have successfully

resolved a dilemma similar to their own. Identification with a literary model can foster thought and possible resolution to a problem such as dealing with a separation, illness, death, poverty, disability, alienation, disaster, or war [21].

**Library's role and its effect:** Libraries can help lessen the stigma associated with mental health problems. Books and other resources that openly address mental health mainstream the subject, promote open conversations, and serve in eradicating stigmas.

In order to support children's mental health, libraries offer some of the following services:

*Promoting and resourcing a variety of well-being initiatives:* such as games, Lego, Toy bricks, jigsaws, and craft activities for children. When children engage in these sorts of activities, they relax, socialize, and have fun. These enjoyable, informal activities provide children with a sense of belonging and foster a sense of well-being.

*Celebrating the national days and weeks:* When all children are celebrating national days like Library Day, Victory Day, Independence Day, etc. together this can help with their mental health. On these occasions, special events are held at all libraries, and children are welcome to take part.

*Having supportive library staff:* Supportive library staff is always helpful for children. Children can easily talk to library staff about any kind of topic and library staff will help them with books, stories, etc. That is promoting the mental wellness of the youngster [22].

*Read-aloud programs:* A volunteer or librarian may read books aloud to a group of kids in a library on a regular basis. Within a library, a dedicated area can be made for such. Children can be encouraged to participate by asking questions or talking about the narrative after the reading sessions, which should be interactive. For elementary school children, there are variations of the read-aloud and storytelling hours. These often include discussions and presentations by the children themselves, as well as summer reading programs.

*Young adult programs:* For middle and junior high school kids, there may also be book talks, summer reading programs, creative writing seminars, drama groups, and poetry readings.

*Books and other materials:* A especially critical phase is between the ages of six and nine for children. These are the years when they normally make the transition from just hearing and looking at picture books to reading independently for enjoyment and schoolwork. A story that will make them laugh or want to know what happens next will motivate them to read even though it's difficult [22].

*Group activities:* By the time children are five to ten years of age, they usually enjoy participating in group activities. Popular activities include reading aloud, storytelling, films, puppet shows, arts and crafts, and reading programs [23]. Libraries often act as social gathering places, bringing individuals of all backgrounds together. For mental health, social connections and a sense of belonging are crucial, and libraries can give children the chance to interact with others in a welcoming environment.

*Audiovisual materials:* Almost all libraries also offer recordings of children's stories and songs. Many also offer cassette tapes, compact discs, videotapes, book/cassette kits, and even puppets and educational toys [22].

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The research described in this document is based solely on qualitative research methods. The title "Exploring the Role of Libraries in Promoting Child Mental Health": A Study on some selected Libraries" suggests detailed research on the Role of Libraries in Promoting Child Mental Health. It has been decided to take a qualitative approach. As is common knowledge, the descriptive study takes into account a great deal of data. In-depth information will be easier to obtain as a result of this.

The realization that certain research issues require a more in-depth understanding and investigation of the context, individual experiences, and views involved led to the decision to embrace qualitative research methodologies as a means of data collection and analysis. We are able to acquire a wide range of detailed and contextually rich data by using qualitative data collection techniques such as interviews, focus groups, observations, and open-ended surveys. These methods allow us to gain significant insights into the nuances of the phenomenon that is the subject of the inquiry.

Although it is true that doing a qualitative study might require an enormous amount of time and effort, the returns are tremendous. Because of the breadth and depth of the data that was collected, the validity and authenticity of our conclusions will be substantially improved, which will, in the end, result in an analysis that is more solid and illuminating.

### 3.1 Interviews

Interviews are an effective way of data collecting that can be utilized in quantitative research to directly collect primary information from participants or respondents. The sources of data were used in this study: interview data. For this study, qualitative interviews were the primary method of data collection for three reasons. Qualitative interviewing is appropriately used when “studying people’s understanding of the meaning in their lived world” [24].

For this study, two of the interviews were conducted over zoom meeting; the remaining one interview was conducted by face-to-face of the participant. The interviews were audio-recorded and notes were taken during all interviews. The average interview range is 35-45 minutes. The audio recordings were carefully transcribed. Building a trusting relationship with the interviewee is essential if you desire to record the true scenario, which is what this study attempted to accomplish.

A scheduled interview approach was used to carry on conversations. Schedule interviews give participants more room to answer in terms of what is important to them. The question was framed in this manner to provide participants with the flexibility and freedom to explore the phenomenon in depth. Mostly open-ended questions.

### 3.2 Sampling

In the current study, the sample members who were selected had a special relationship with the phenomenon under investigation, sufficient knowledge and relevant work experience in the field of library, and active involvement in Promoting Child Mental Health.

All the libraries in Bangladesh have been regarded as the sample population for this study. From the sample population, only 2 Public libraries and one Special child public library are

selected as a sample in this study purposively. The sample public libraries are:

- Divisional Public Library, Rajshahi
- Dhaka Public Library
- Bangladesh Shishu Academy (Special child public library)

## 4. DATA ANALYSIS

Interview material was properly structured thanks to the information recorder used during the interview and notes taken at the time. In the current study, text analysis was used to organize and analyze the interview data. Researchers frequently use textual analysis to learn more about a subject.

In order to look for recurring patterns, interview transcripts were read through several times. Quotes and phrases from the interviews that were crucial to the study were underlined by the researcher.

In the data preprocessing phase of quantitative analysis, text analysis techniques play a vital role because they assist the transformation of unstructured text data into a structured format that is suitable for statistical investigation. This is why text analysis techniques are so important. Textual data can be cleaned, standardized, and tokenized to reveal significant insights, patterns, and correlations that have been concealed inside the text. This can contribute to more robust and complete quantitative studies across a wide variety of domains and study topics.

### 4.1 Findings

To answer the questions properly, an effort has been made by using the question: who are the respondents of the study?

### 4.2 Who are the Respondents of the Study?

As per the research, the study selected librarians as respondents (L=3) from the public library context.

To figure out the answer to research objective 1, top indicators, aspects of each indicator as categorizations, and the variables from coding to put in the categories about each indicator while analyzing interviews, were fixed in the following manner.



**Table 2. Informants’ characteristics**

Professional of child mental health promotion					
Id	Educational Qualification	Gender	Age range	Title	Work experience
R1	Master's degree in LIS	Female	Over 35	Head of Library	18 years
R2	Master's degree in LIS	Male	Over 35	Assistant director	11 years
R3	Master's degree in LIS	Male	30-35	Assistant director	3 years

**Table 3. Roles of libraries**

The roles of libraries in promoting children's mental health.	
Roles	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Library as resources provider</li> <li>2. Library as a campaigner</li> <li>3. Library as Collaborator</li> <li>4. Library as a Bibliotherapist</li> <li>5. Library as a services provider</li> <li>6. Library as a motivator</li> <li>7. Library professionals as counselors and observers</li> </ol>

**Table 4. Analysis Library Professionals as Resources Provider**

Role	Categorization	
	Higher level	Lower level
As resources provider	Toy bricks + craft activities +Books+ Cartoons+ Braille book+ Furniture (R1+R2+R3)	Kano Computer(R3) Audio-video materials (R1+R2)

**4.3 Objective 1: To Figure Out the Role of Libraries in Promoting Children's Mental Health**

The role of libraries in promoting children’s mental health has changed over the time. Through interviews, we found some roles that are played by libraries in promoting child’s mental health. Roles are analyzed below:

*"We decorate the library with a variety of beautiful furniture for children. So that the children enjoy the library and they are more cheerful mentally."(R3)*

Book is not only for academic purpose but also books can carte healthy life. In the interview, the data respondent said that they provide many children's books which is helpful for child mental health.

**4.4 Library Professionals as Resources Provider**

Library is the storehouse of knowledge. Now library provides fiction and non-fiction books and provides many mental health-related resources. In addition, libraries offer many resources which help children's mental health.

*"We provide children with colorful large font books that appeal to children." (R1)*

*"We usually have all kinds of books for children, especially stories, fairy tales, scrapbooks, translation books, more cartoons."(R2)*

*According to respondent 1: "We provide toy bricks for the mental development of many children. Here we give different concepts, that you make it, then it creates creativity in them, and they get emotional support."*

Cartons can make a child happy. They can quickly learn by cartons. It is also helpful for a child's mental health.

*"Sometimes when kids feel a lot of loneliness or need to be taught something, we show*

them some educational cartoons. Such as Mina Raju and some more foreign cartoons.”(R3)

In an interview, one of the respondents in an interview said they provide kano computers that help build up child knowledge.

According to respondent 3: "We are taught programming with a computer program (Kano Computer). They are taught how to open and install computer parts. This increases the children's knowledge of different types."

#### 4.5 Library Professionals as Campaigners

We can see that the library hosts a variety of workshops, filmmaking, mini-author workshops, and National Day Celebration.

Different types of workshop campaigns are significant for the mental development of children. When children participate in other library-based workshops, it brings a beautiful, emotional development to them. From the interview respondent, we learned that the library conducts various campaign workshops to meet the different needs of the children. Which was expressed by two of the respondents in a way:

"Competitions are organized on the occasion of different national days. Such as drawing competitions, recitations, storytelling, etc. Which play an unprecedented role in a child's mental development." (R3)

"We do a lot of library-based workshops events, like some filmmaking workshops, drawing workshops with colors, Children's films, program-making workshops, and mini-writer workshops where 6 to 9-year-old children participate." (R1)

#### 4.6 Library as a Collaborator

Libraries are collaborating with school libraries at multiple levels through Librarian. To share resources and expand services to the local

school's library collaborates with the school, which would enhance their lesson plans on a variety of topics. For many competitions, the library collaborates with the school library. Respondent statement:

"We are in school, Essay competition, Handwriting competition, we do recitation competitions and various other programs so that we have a collaboration with the school." (R2)

"Whenever we want to do a competition, we collaborate with the head teacher of the school through the librarian." (R1)

#### 4.7 Library as a Bibliotherapist

Bibliotherapy can assist children in overcoming problems by having them read stories about characters who have successfully resolved a dilemma similar to their own. If children become emotionally involved with literary characters, they can verbalize, act out, or draw pictures describing their innermost thoughts. which was expressed by one of the respondents in a way:

"We let them read books in proportion to what they want according to the needs of the children, what they want to read. For those who are deaf and dumb, I sometimes tell stories, and for those who are visually impaired, we sometimes read a lot of books and stories. This is the type of bibliotherapy we use" (R1)

We find another example of bibliotherapy being offered in libraries in Bangladesh from the following respondents. He said that they do not usually provide psychological services in that way. However, they do a variety of books, and storytelling for emotional transcendence.

"We usually suggest different types of books according to the emotional needs of the children. Sometimes we try to keep them mentally healthy by telling stories" (R1)

**Table 5. Analysis of library professionals as campaigners**

Top Indicators	Categorization	
	Higher level	Lower level
As campaigner	Organize large scale campaigns(R1) National Day Celebration, (R1+R2+R3) Film-making workshop+ mini writer workshops. (R1)	do not organize large-scale campaigns (R1+R2)

**Table 6. Analysis of libraries as services provider**

Top Indicators	Categorization	
	Higher level	Lower level
as service provider	supportive environment + Books + brail corner + child encyclopedia + Lesson room service+ Opportunity to participate in the competition+ supportive library staff (R1+R2+R3) open shelf(R1)	Wheelchairs for the disabled(R2)

**4.8 Library as Services Provider**

Libraries offer various services designed to help families extend children's interests, often for free or at very low cost. Good mental health allows children to think clearly, develop socially, and learn new skills. Additionally, good friends and encouraging words from adults are important for helping children develop self-confidence, high self-esteem, and a healthy emotional outlook on life.

In our interview data, we see libraries offer a variety of services that are helpful to children to develop new skills and self-confidence.

*"We arrange their various sessions on how a child can develop life, develop leadership. By doing this, they easily get many new skills and education." (R1)*

Every child wants a good supportive environment. In this case, the library helps them. The library is always for the people; doors are open and provide a safe free place. To develop mental health well decorated and supportive environment is essential.

*"We have decorated our library according to the needs of the children. Here we have created a supportive environment for children. For example, suppose there is adequate light and air, fans, and specially made low furniture. And most importantly supportive staff." (R3)*

Playing games is a very important part of a child's mental health. Libraries create opportunities for children. Children can easily play many games in the library space.

*"We may not provide children's mental health services directly in the library, but children can play using our library space. We organize various competitions. For example, recitation competitions, storytelling, through which the development of mental health occurs, even if not directly." (R2)*

*"We have a variety of game-based services here which makes the kids more cheerful and happy. For example, we have chess here, and various sports are arranged, high jump, long jump etc." (R1)*

The role of libraries as service providers is highly promoting child mental health.

**4.9 As a Motivator**

Every Librarian strives to motivate their employees to more excellent and higher performance towards achieving library mission. Motivation, however, is not about manipulation. It is about understanding the urges. To provide better services librarian motivates firstly his staff.

*"Mentally depressed children often behave violently in the library. Tearing up books, shouting, and the staff often gets angry, which is an obstacle to achieving our main goal. That's why we try to motivate the staff, that these can't be done, we have to be more patient and serve the children properly." (R1+R2)*

*"Since there is still a behavioral problem in the library. This is why we motivate employees to provide better services. So that the quality of our service is further improved" (R1)*

Children need praise, encouragement, and at times a reward for helping their motivation with general day-to-day tasks, especially when they are achieving new goals. Libraries not only motivate their staff but also motivate children, and motivation and reward can help develop a child's mental health.

*"We organize various competitions for children. We reward them for participating in the competition so that they are more motivated and oriented towards the library" (R2)*

*"Mentally depressed children often do a lot of unexpected things. Then, as a librarian, I call them and tell them stories, or love them. Then there's a peace of mind between them." (R1)*

#### 4.10 Library Professionals as Counselors and Observers

To understand a child's mental problem counselling is essential. In other countries, libraries counsel the parent to understand the problem. Still, in Bangladesh, this concept is not popular, but library professionals try to advise them using a different method.

*"In our modern library management system, we occasionally have a monthly chat called Red Tea Chat to engage the community. Here we sometimes try to ask what the children want, whether their mood is improving or if you as a parent, what you want for children?" (R3)*

At present, in Bangladesh, there is no direct counselling. That is why library professionals observe the children and try to understand the problem.

*"Since there is no system of direct counselling yet, we usually observe. We provide mental health services to children based on some of the symptoms. Some people are angry, and some people feel very lonely and depressed, they are not talking, they are not behaving normally" (R1)*

#### 4.11 The Challenges of Libraries in Promoting Child Mental Health

The problems and challenges identified from the respondent's statement in different aspects of libraries' roles regarding child mental health promotion. These are as follows:

**Environmental challenges:** The children hope that the environment where they will be located will be beautiful, and developed but we have not been able to fill it appropriately in the library yet. (R1).

**Infrastructural problems:** Children want an environment that will be secluded; they will be able to live in the joy of a comfortable mind. (R1).

**Lack of skilled manpower:** There is not enough manpower to support the special care of children. (R2).

**Lack of adequate training facilities:** No special training is yet provided for mental health care to children. (R3).

**Budget challenge:** According to the background of Bangladesh, the budget in the library is less. (R2).

**Behavior problems:** The staff at the library sometimes do not have child-friendly behaviors. (R1).

#### 4.12 Recommendations

**Make space and time to talk:** It's essential to create an open environment where children can discuss their feelings without judgment. The library creates can this space.

**Promotion and marketing:** The concept of providing mental health services to children has not been developed in Bangladesh yet. Therefore, libraries should promote and market more and more children's mental health.

**Increase special training facilities:** Libraries need to provide more specialized training to provide mental health services for children.

**Skilled manpower:** Skilled manpower can fulfil the mission of a library. For this, adequate skilled manpower has to be recruited in each library.

**Fund allocation:** there should be enough budget. In this case, the library can allocate funds by planning according to its own needs.

**Building healthy policy for children:** A library is a place where a child has access to opportunities for mental health development. A health policy needs to be formulated to properly provide mental health services to children in the library.

### 5. DISCUSSION

Finally, the study has come up with a summary of findings as per its Question:

**Question-1: What are the key determinants of child mental health?**

In the literature review, the key determinants of child mental health are identified and discussed. It can be seen that there are different types of determinants for determining the mental health of a child, e.g., Poverty and income inequality, Food insecurity and malnutrition, Neighborhood or community, Household income, Parental mental health, and Racism.

**Question-2: How does the role of libraries affect the child's mental health?**

Every library's role affects child mental health, but in the present study, we see that the library provides child-friendly books, toy bricks, an encyclopedia, a reading room facility, braille books, etc. These kinds of services are not new; it is expected. However, they do not provide any extra benefits to promote child mental health.

Respondent 1 said they provide bibliotherapy, but the therapy is significantly lower. Libraries collaborate with school libraries, but it is not for child mental health. Respondent 2 said they are sometimes rewarded to children, but all libraries are not doing this: it is disappointing. According to Respondent 2, they do not yet consult directly with parents. But counselling is essential for promoting child mental health.

**Question-3: How can libraries flourish in their role in promoting school-going child mental health?**

At present, the mental health of the child is a very important issue. In this case, the library can be a medium to promote children's mental health. At the time, the library is not doing enough to promote the child's mental health. In this case, the library can do a variety of work to improve the mental health of school-going children. The first step is to increase the quality of child mental health services. Adequate mental health care equipment for children, such as books and sports equipment, should be added. In addition, more work can be done. For example: to collaborate with different schools, organize workshops and seminars.

**6. CONCLUSION**

The overall finding shows why child mental health is essential and the library's services for children's mental health. Although promoting child mental health by the library is not popular today, the library plays a vital role in this section.

In Bangladesh library doesn't provide child mental health directly, but they provide many services which promote child mental health. There are a lot of challenges, but if the right policy is integrated, the library can highly promote child mental health. Libraries can play a crucial role in promoting child mental health in Bangladesh. Libraries offer a safe and supportive environment for children to explore their emotions, learn coping skills, and access resources related to mental health and well-being. By partnering with mental health professionals and community organizations, libraries can provide targeted programming and services to support children's mental health needs. Additionally, libraries can serve as a hub for disseminating information about mental health and reducing the stigma surrounding mental illness. However, some challenges need to be addressed to fully realize the potential of libraries in promoting child mental health. These include the need for increased funding and resources, as well as training for library staff to effectively support children's mental health needs. Overall, libraries have the potential to be powerful allies in promoting child mental health in Bangladesh, and policymakers, community leaders, and other stakeholders need to recognize and support the important role that libraries can play in this area. By investing in libraries and leveraging their unique strengths, we can help ensure that all children in Bangladesh have access to the resources and support they need to thrive mentally, emotionally, and academically.

**6.1 Limitations**

Cultural and contextual factors: The cultural and contextual elements unique to Bangladesh may have an impact on the function that libraries play in fostering children's mental health there. The generalizability of the findings to other areas or nations may be restricted by several factors.

Lack of resources and infrastructure: Due to its inadequate infrastructure and resources, Bangladesh is faced with some difficulties, such as a lack of accessible library facilities, not an abundance of skilled librarians, and insufficient funding. The use and efficacy of library-based remedies for children's mental health may be affected by these restrictions.

Limited research evidence: It's possible that there aren't sufficient studies explicitly looking at how libraries in Bangladesh affect children's

mental health. The reliability and validity of the results could be compromised by the limited scope, methodology, or sample size of the available literature.

**Stigma and cultural barriers:** In Bangladesh, seeking assistance or support for mental health concerns may encounter cultural resistance. Libraries might not be considered typical settings for dealing with mental health issues, and social hurdles might make it difficult to use library services to support children's mental health.

## 6.2 Further Area of Research

**Longitudinal studies:** To further understand the long-term effects of library-based interventions on child mental health outcomes, longitudinal research that follows children over a prolonged period is necessary. Such studies could evaluate whether the advantages of library programs are maintained over time and investigate potential variables affecting the preservation of favorable mental health outcomes.

**Comparative studies:** It would be easier to comprehend the special contributions libraries make to fostering children's mental health if we could compare the efficacy of interventions based in libraries with those based in other settings, such as schools or community-based initiatives. In the context of Bangladesh, comparative studies can be used to pinpoint the particular benefits and restrictions of library-based techniques.

**Mixed methods research:** A deeper comprehension of the experiences and viewpoints of children, parents, librarians, and other stakeholders participating in library-based interventions would result from the combination of qualitative research methodologies with quantitative studies, such as focus groups or interviews. The contextual complexities, obstacles, and facilitators of using libraries to promote children's mental health can be clarified by qualitative study.

**Intervention development and evaluation:** The development and evaluation of evidence-based therapies that are specifically suited to the Bangladeshi setting can be the main focus of future study. To broaden the reach and impact of library programs on children's mental health, these interventions may include innovative approaches like digital platforms or community partnerships.

**Cost-effectiveness analysis:** For sustainability and scalability, it is essential to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of library-based interventions for encouraging child mental health. Future studies may explore the financial implications of putting such solutions into practice, including cost-benefit analyses and evaluations of resource allocation methods.

**Stakeholder engagement and collaboration:** The relevance, viability, and impact of library-based interventions can be improved by incorporating a variety of stakeholders, such as policymakers, educators, mental health specialists, and community members in the study process. Future studies can concentrate on involving stakeholders in cooperative research and implementation efforts to build a complete strategy for child mental health promotion in Bangladesh.

## CONSENT

As per international standard, parental written consent has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

## ETHICAL APPROVAL

In conducting this research study, a significant part of the focus has been put on icing that the entire research process has been fully ethical and unprejudiced. To achieve this, the researcher has stuck to several different ethical considerations that guarantee that none of the ethical principles are violated during the course of the research study and data collection.

Following are some of these ethical considerations made in this research study:

- All the participants will be told that the participation is entirely in a voluntary manner.
- The researcher personally conducted research and wrote their own findings.
- All sources used are properly attributed (cited), where used, in the text to avoid plagiarism
- The sources cited were personally reviewed, without relying on another researcher's interpretation of the cited source.
- All data and associated findings are real and were not fabricated.

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## COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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