

# BARRIERS TO PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN GOVERNMENT PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN BANGLADESH

Md Alam All Pervez

*Teacher, Directorate of Primary Education, Bangladesh, Sonatonpur Government Primary School, Jhenaidah, Bangladesh.*

## ABSTRACT

*It is well established that Parental Involvement (PI) is an essential factor in children's learning and effective education. This study aims at identifying the barriers to effective PI in government primary schools in Bangladesh. An investigative study was conducted in four government primary schools in Jhenaidah Sadar Upazila in Jhenaidah district to conceptualize the current situation of PI and find out the barriers to it. It conducted eight semi-structured interviews. The sampling was purposive and the participants were selected from the teachers and parents of two rural and two urban area primary schools to get a balanced scenario. Among the interviewees, there were four teachers from four government primary schools and four parents from the same four schools. The study was conducted through a qualitative research approach. The research project collects and analyzes the perception and role of the teachers and parents in the education of the children. All of the participants agreed that parents play a vital role in their children's learning at home and school, and parental involvement exercises positive influences on the academic achievement of the children. The study identifies some remarkable barriers to effective PI in government primary schools in Bangladesh. The results show that there are some remarkable barriers to effective PI in the government primary schools in the country. The barriers are mainly constituted by the socio-economic conditions, lack of awareness, education, and motivation of the parents and the teachers. The study identifies some issues related to policy and practice also. The study also recommends possible solutions to ensure effective PI in the primary schools in the country.*

**Keyword :** - Parental involvement, primary school, Bangladesh

## 1. Introduction

Parents have a vital role to play for the effective education of the children. A large number of researches determine the urgency of parental involvement in educational settings to ensure fruitful, sustainable, meaningful and, effective education for the next generation. As a professional, I am a primary school teacher and also concerned about the very useful device named Parental Involvement (PI). Active PI can contribute a lot to children's effective learning and successful schooling. As a practitioner in the field of primary education in a developing country like Bangladesh, I feel that PI can contribute a lot to accelerate spreading effective education through balanced teamwork of teachers and parents. The Government of Bangladesh has launched some programs to promote PI in primary schools. But, these programs cannot achieve intended goals due to improper and inadequate implementation. Multidimensional problems are affecting effective PI in the country. There are lacks of awareness, lack of motivation among parents and teachers, poverty, lack of resources, etc. This is why the country is losing promising talents and being failure to attain sustainable development. A balanced teamwork of parents and teachers can eliminate the obstacles to ensure effective education for our children. If it is possible to involve our parents in the learning process of our children, we can yield a better outcome from the education sector and build an enlightened notion free from ignorance, superstition, corruption and poverty. In this study, I intend to unveil the barriers to parental involvement in the primary schools in Bangladesh and to determine possible initiatives that can help eliminate the prevailing obstacles.

## 2. Purpose:

The purpose of this study is to identify the barriers to PI. Bangladesh is a developing country in South Asia. Most of the people in this country are farmers and live in the villages. The people of the country, especially in rural areas, are unaware of the fact that parents can play a very vital role in their children's effective learning and development. People living in the villages are mostly indifferent to literacy and education. There is a primary school in almost every village. But, the country is still struggling to ensure quality education for the next generation due to lack of awareness and participation of the parents. Most of the parents leave all responsibilities for schools. But it is obvious that complete and meaningful education is impossible leaving our parents outside of the education system because parents are the children's first teachers. Additionally, during the school days, the teaching of the family goes in parallel with school education. The parents should come to schools to take part in various activities so that they can update themselves about their children's progress and assist the children in learning. By consulting with the teacher, they can gain knowledge about their duties to their children. So, this study intends to identify the issues which hinder the involvement of the parents in the school activities and learning process of their children.

## 3. Literature Review:

This literature review inspects and discusses the existing researches regarding barriers to parental involvement in educational settings and related theories regarding the involvement of parents and community with the school to ensure effective learning outcomes of the students. To do so, it defines parental involvement, discusses purposes and benefits of parental involvement, identifies barriers to parental involvement in educational settings, illustrates the approaches that address barriers, and represents the evidence of improvements regarding parental involvement.

Parental involvement (PI) refers to a variety of parental activities and actions which take place in or outside the school (Fisher, 2016). It reflects a number of activities that parents execute for the children's academic success at school (Levanda, 2011). These activities include "parenting style, parental expectations and aspirations, home rules and parental supervision, communication between parents and children, children's home activities, parental attitude towards school." (Porumbu & Necsoi, 2013, p. 706). Transmitting and receiving messages, interpersonal communication affects each other intentionally or unintentionally. The main theme of parental involvement is sharing thoughts and emotions, news, and skills which create a common ground among parents and teachers in a school to promote effective education for the students (Karaca, 2016). For this study, PI is conceptualized as the parents' attitudes and actions that assist children in achieving effective learning outcomes at home and school.

So many studies find PI beneficial for children's effective learning outcomes. Policymakers and stakeholders often advocate PI to the schools for the overall betterment of the students. PI is important to create parent-school cooperation and increase parents' contribution to their children's education (Graham-Clay, 2005). The more we can involve our parents in the learning process of their children, the more we can expect effective outcomes from them (Cotton and Wiklund, 2001). Effective communication between parents and teachers is vital for students' regular attendance and academic success. Good communication among school staff, parents and, other related organizations plays a significant role in providing effective education for the students. Particularly, the mutual communication between the parents and teachers considering students' performance exercises immense influence in understanding students' learning gaps or problems related to their academic activities. Thus, it helps measure appropriate guidance and counseling, increase parental support in learning to enhance the motivation and achievement of the students (Ozmen et al., 2016). Many developing and developed countries have emphasized repeatedly on parental involvement in education and have achieved desired positive outcomes. Several studies also have been done worldwide to identify barriers to PI. But, in a developing country like Bangladesh, very few pieces of research have been conducted to find out the barriers to the effective implementation of PI (Islam, 2018). Creating a favorable environment, sound and meaningful communication can render support for schools, teachers, parents, and students to achieve the desired improvement in the standard of education (Ozmen et al., 2016). According to Afrin and Chowdhury (2019), PI is being emphasized due to its significant positive influence on students' learning, education, and behavioral pattern. PI is a very important factor for effective and sustainable education for the next generation of both developed and developing countries. Parents can play a vital role in the overall learning and development of their children because they are the first teacher of their children. They can play an important role in the regular attendance of their children to school, completing home works, enrolling in higher education, forming positive outlooks and behaviors. Further, a school with meaningful PI can assist the parents in meeting various needs regarding their children's education (Molland, 2004). PI helps parents maintain close contact with the teachers and

school which benefits both parents and teachers to make the children well educated good human beings. Similarly, parents can easily notice the gap in the learning of their children and take the necessary steps to overcome it. Excepting teachers, parents can be the best guide for the progress of the children. PI can create a congenial environment and build up confidence for the children which helps their learning and achieving a good score in the exams (Afrin and Chowdhury, 2019). Additionally, PI can assist parents to develop a relationship with schools that can motivate the parents to participate in school programs and provide the parents with much-needed counseling and guidance for their children (Ozmen et al., 2016).

A number of barriers at various levels are causing hindrance to PI in educational institutes. There are certainly some associations and programs to strengthen the bond between schools and parents all over the world. But these associations and programs do not work properly due to problems with school resources, misunderstanding between families and schools, school unfavorable environment, teachers' incorporating mentality, etc. (Gungor & Tasdan, 2016). Barriers to PI in schools can be identified as the inability to maintain good communication, deficiency of organizational knowledge, and failure to make alternative plans. On the other hand, parent-related barriers to PI can be identified as family background, educational status, parents' working hours, negative outlook regarding school affairs (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2002). Similarly, fruitful PI can be hindered due to misconceptions regarding PI, difficulties with expression and, inefficiency in listening and perception, religious and cultural differences, lack of knowledge, transportation problem, etc. Generally, headteachers and parents mention lack of time as the main barrier on the way to PI (Ozmen et al., 2016). Similarly, a lack of technological knowledge can cause a barrier to PI. Most of the parents and teachers do not have sufficient knowledge and facilities to use modern technologies efficiently which would contribute to effective PI (Graham-Clay, 2005). The study led by Islam in 2011 and 2012 found some significant barriers to parental involvement in government primary schools in Bangladesh. Firstly, the children who are studying in the primary schools of rural areas are first-generation learners. Their parents are not literate and mostly indifferent to their children's learning. As a result, they like to feel free leaving all responsibilities to the schools. Secondly, during his intervention, his observation found that in planting and harvesting periods most of the parents in the rural area remain busy with their cultivation. Thirdly, there are different religious days for people of different religions. Some of these religious days are not a public holiday. So, sometimes schools face difficulties to arrange the parents' meetings. Fourthly, the parents of lower grade students sometimes acknowledge PI unnecessary (Islam, 2018). Similarly, findings of Afrin and Chowdhury (2019) show that there is not an adequate practice of PI in government primary schools in Bangladesh. The teachers of primary schools of rural area are apathetic towards the activities which involve parents to schools. There is no sufficient supervision in the remote area.

Additionally, the parents of the respective area are not aware of the fact that they can play a vital role in the learning and development of their children by taking part in the happenings in the school. The activities of SMC (School Management Committee) and PTA (Parent-Teacher Association) are very limited. Even, the members of SMC and PTA have no clear concept of parental involvement or parental participation. Further, the monitoring system of the respective authority is not enough. The stakeholders do not give proper importance to the fact and show negligence to their duties. Likewise, Illiteracy, lower socio-economic condition, political issues, lack of time, lack of awareness, reluctant mentality, and social barriers are the main causes which hindrance PI (Afrin and Chowdhury, 2019). Most of the parents of lower socio-economic backgrounds possess less or no interest in their children's study-related activities and feel free leaving all responsibilities to the school. Besides, the disintegration of the families causes a great barrier to effective PI (Mafumbate, 2019). There is also a lack of scope and opportunity for the enthusiastic and literate parents to take part in school activities. Additionally, there is a lack of transformation facilities for parents in rural areas. Furthermore, teachers have to execute some extra duties like child census, home visit, supervising cleanliness, distributing stipend, etc. (Afrin and Chowdhury, 2019). According to Ozmen et al. (2016), socio-cultural differences such as dress code, language, values, etc., the financial problem of parents, lack of trust of parents in teachers, teachers' unwillingness to cooperate the parents, their indifference to inform parents about the issues related to school, parents' illiteracy or having a lower level of education, misbehaviors of teachers, teachers' mistrust, etc. cause a great hindrance to PI. Further, there is some time and economy-related issue which bar the effective PI. In most cases, working parents cannot manage their time to take part in school activities and pay attention to their children's education. They do not get enough time to work with the school. Further, parents from low economic backgrounds intend to skip any social gathering including school gathering (Finders and Lewis, 1994). Additionally, teachers' incorporating mentality causes a barrier to PI. Sometimes, teachers cannot pay heed to the parents because they have to do some extra works such as children census, home visit, preparing papers for distributing stipend to the children, etc. (Afrin and Chowdhury, 2019).



### **2.5 Approach to PI:**

Approach to PI determines the study of parents' relationship with the teachers and the degree of contributions to school communities through various activities for the development of students' academic success (Rogers et al., 2009). A sound and continuous communication between teachers and parents have an extensive role to play in developing a school environment and to meet the expectation and need of the students (Olcer and Kocer, 2015). A trust-based PI can help both teachers and parents to determine problems, find ways to overcome them, provide students with assistance regarding their learning and education. So, to establish good communication with parents, teachers and headteachers must have a good perception of the socio-economic condition, culture, values and beliefs of the parents. Similarly, parents should always be inspired to visit the school as much as possible. Further, the parents should be informed of the meeting schedule agenda by the school at the very beginning of the education year. Furthermore, expert teachers should exchange their experience with novice teachers to make them able to establish good communication with parents (Ozmen et al., 2016). It is obvious that parents need assistance to prepare themselves to guide their children properly and prevent abuse (Jabeen & Karkara, 2005). According to the regulation of the Bangladesh government, there are two advisory committees working with each government primary school. They are the SMC (School Managing Committee) and PTA (Parents Teachers Association). Excepting these committees, there are a number of programs named Mothers' Gathering, Book Festival, Courtyard Meeting, etc. But, meetings and activities of these committees and programs are not arranged or conducted regularly. The members of SMC and PTA are indifferent to their duties. Even the parent-members of these committees are not informed adequately of their role and responsibilities. In some cases, the ignorance of headteachers and teachers are very evident. So, it should be made sure that these committees and programs are working properly. Additionally, the monitoring system should be strengthened to use these devices fruitfully (Afrin and Chowdhury, 2019). According to Islam (2018), the monthly parent-teacher meeting can involve parents in school activities and enhance student performance. Through the scheduled parent-teacher meeting, school performance can be improved by motivating parents and ensuring transparency and accountability of the teachers. In these scheduled meetings, teachers provide monthly reports which improve teachers' pedagogical practices or exertion. Every report card for each child comprised some particular information regarding their performances at school. These report cards helped attract parents' attention to the points. Thus, being involved and motivated, parents engage themselves in the process of learning and development of their children (Islam, 2018). Generally, the common practice of PI is limited in seeing exam scripts, result publishing ceremony, sports day, cultural programs, picnic, mothers' assembly, etc. Children of involved parents likely do better in the exams and enroll in higher education than the less involved parents. Children of involved parents feel valued and secured and maintain the discipline. Similarly, these parents become able to understand the problems of their children's learning and development and take proper initiatives to overcome them (Afrin and Chowdhury, 2019). Realizing the importance of collaborative efforts, stakeholders and teachers should take an open-door approach for parents. They should create a favorable and cooperative environment among parents, school staff and other related organizations to build up a mutual bond to overcome the barriers to PI. Further, specific training sessions should be conducted to achieve effective communication skills between parents and school staff. To solve schedule related issue which hinders the attendance of the parents to the meetings at school, teachers should undertake surveys to determine the work hours of the parents so that they can make the schedule of class or school meetings flexible for the parents (Ozmen et al., 2016). So, teachers should be skilled in the art of teaching and improved in their knowledge about efficient communication with the community of parents (Graham-Clay, 2005). Furthermore, Mafumbate (2019) argues that respective authorities should introduce basic education programs for uneducated parents to improve their proficiency and competency to help their children in the key aspects of learning.

### **2.6 Evidence of improvements with PI:**

As the awareness about the importance of PI is rising, a great number of researches are encouraging PI to achieve effective education for the students. The PI is considered a part and parcel of an education system that can surely be devised to improve the performance of the students. According to Mafumbate (2019), it is a must to participate and involve the parents in children's education process to reach the desired academic achievement. To overcome the barriers arisen from lingual and cultural differences, teachers should seek knowledge about that particular language and culture (Lai and Ishiyama, 2004). Additionally, face-to-face interviews, conferences, group discussions, internet technology, etc. can provide teachers and schools with immense benefits to establish healthy communication with parents. Similarly, schools should initiate guidance service to cope up with the negative outlook of the parents towards schools to eliminate the barriers to meaningful PI. And these guidance services should have plenty of

resources to provide the parents with essential information regarding the issues they worry about, to make them understand the teachers' approach to their children's education, to enable them to behave accordingly under certain conditions. These types of activities not only eliminate parents' negative attitudes towards schools but also increase their interests in school-related activities (Graham-Clay, 2005). At pre-primary, primary, and high school levels, mutual correspondence between parents and teachers ensures students' success by providing information, training, and enlightenment. Additionally, the trust-based communication between parents and teachers help the schools implement various programs and make the environment congenial for students' learning (Ozmen et al., 2016). Meaningful PI develops mutual trust between parents and schools which increases encouraging outlook towards students' effective learning and development (Celik, 2005). Technical terminologies should be avoided during communicating with the parents because this professional jargon may cause a barrier to PI. Teachers would explain the technical terminologies when it is a must to use them. During the face to face communication with the parents, teachers should use simple and easy language so that the parents can understand it without any difficulty (Williams and Cartledge, 1997). The research conducted by Asad Islam (2018) identified a mentionable improvement in the performance of teachers and students through the implementation of PI. In his intervention, he implemented teacher-parent meetings for about two years to ensure parental involvement in the primary schools. The findings show that these meetings encourage parents to interact with their children more frequently. Further, parent-teacher meetings help create a congenial environment for the parents to interact with other parents and the teachers and cooperate with the activities of the school. Importantly, the research finds that PI helps improve the test score and attitude of the students as PI encourages parents to assist and monitor their children in completing school tasks. The research also shows that PI contributes to improve the pedagogical practice of the teachers. Through the intervention, Asad Islam found that the teachers were more concerned about improving their pupils' grades and attendance. Additionally, the intervention helped improve the attendance of the teachers as well. Similarly, the research strongly advocates that PI stimulates parent-teacher interactions in a cost-effective way. The parents got themselves involved in their children's learning and education at home even after a year of the end of the intervention. Furthermore, the parents ensured that their children had had a good breakfast before going to school. As a result, the children felt valued and became motivated and ambitious to do better than before. They did their homework regularly and maintained very good behavior with their classmates and teachers. Therefore, PI proves itself an effective tool to bring a positive change in the educational settings in a developing country like Bangladesh (Islam, 2018). However, marking lack of PI in government primary schools, Afrin and Chowdhury (2019) emphasizes creating more forums for the parents so that the parents can easily get excess to the happenings of the school and help the students in learning and development. They also suggest making the SMC (School Management Committee) and PTA (Parent Teacher Association) more active to ensure the PI. Besides, a respectful relationship should be build up between parents and teachers. Additionally, regular parent-teacher meetings should be conducted and there should be an arrangement of a snack during the meeting to show respect to the parents and make the atmosphere comfortable. Likewise, teachers should maintain regular communication with parents, and counsel and motivate them to make the way easy for the parents to get involved in the affairs of the school and assist their children's effective learning and development. Further, the cell phone number of the parents should be kept in a diary so that teachers can contact if needed because the children of involved parents improve more verbally, mentally and physically than the non-involved parents (Afrin and Chowdhury, 2019). The children who are valued by their parents and assisted in learning are likely to be successful in achieving effective education (Bower and Griffin, 2011). PI has a great influence on the complete growth of the youngsters. The children of involved parents are confident, disciplined, punctual, mentally and physically sound, attentive, and achieve a better score in the exams (Afrin and Chowdhury, 2019).

#### 4. Methodology

In order to administer an in-depth investigation and achieve the research aims, this study used qualitative method. This research project would focus on a holistic study to identify the barriers to parental involvement in government primary schools in Bangladesh. Additionally, qualitative method is suitable for exploring attitudes and behavior, and experiences in the real-world setting (Dawson, 2012). So, I intended to employ the qualitative approach to examine the prevailing practices and experiences of parental involvement among the parents and other stockholders. I also intended to measure the participants' perception of working together as a team. For this reason, qualitative methods seemed to be appropriate because the qualitative method "focuses on the phenomena that are occurring and have previously occurred in a natural setting" (Leedy and Ormrod, 2015, p.269). Additionally, I found the qualitative method suitable for this research because it would help me explore multifaceted scenes linked to the issues and assess the scope of primary schools to cooperate with the parents in certain situations. According to Leedy and

Ormrod (2015), the qualitative method is suitable for the education sector where the issue has many dimensions and layers.

The sample of my study was comprised of one parent and one teacher from each school. The sample was selected non-randomly and purposively. The purpose of my study was to identify the barriers to parental involvement in Bangladeshi government primary schools. For this, I would like to select four government primary schools situated in Jhenaidah district in Bangladesh. Jhenaidah is a district headquarters of Bangladesh situated to 200 km west from the capital Dhaka. Since, I live in Jhenaidah town, I might enjoy some advantages regarding language and mobility. Among the four schools, I would select two schools from rural areas and two schools from the urban areas because doing this might increase the validity of the study. I should interview one teacher and one parent from each of the four schools. I built up a sample specific to the demand of the study. There were two groups of participants. These groups would be able to provide a comparative picture of the policy and practice regarding PI. In the first group, there were four parents of four primary school going children from four schools. The second group comprised of four teachers from the same four schools as the parents.

## 5.2 Summary of findings

Both parents and teachers opine that PI in the primary schools can bring a positive change. It can greatly facilitate shaping effective education and contribute to the national growth and prosperity. All of the participants admitted that parents can play a very vital role to make the school education consumable for the young children. Parents' role is no less important than that of teachers because a child spends a large portion of its time at home with the parents. If parents take proper care of their children, the children can receive effective education and be a good human being. Meaningful PI can improve children's intellectual faculty to a great extent. Many parents dream that their children would bring fame for the family and country but the illiterate parents do not know how to support their children in their learning. Besides, as the parents are the first teacher for the children, they exercise a very powerful influence on developing the personality of the children. PI in the primary schools can help the children be punctual, disciplined, moral, democratic, and humanitarian from the very beginning. Besides, the friendly relation between parents and teachers can accelerate the development of the students. The study finds differences in practicing PI between town and rural areas. The schools in the town area are frequently supervised and monitored due to ease of excess. On the other hand, schools in the village are usually overlooked due to distance and transportation difficulties. In town area schools, the programs related to PI are arranged regularly. But in rural area schools, the picture is the opposite. As a result, PI in the rural area is almost absent. The parents in the rural area of Bangladesh are mostly illiterate and unaware of the importance of their involvement in their children's education and development. A good teamwork can contribute a lot to the effective education of the children. Half of the participants strongly argued that parents are as influential as the teachers because home is the first school for a child. So, keeping the parents out of the learning process is barring the advancement of education.

The study found that PI in primary schools in Bangladesh was very insufficient especially in the rural areas which provide us with alarming news as most of the people of the country live in the villages. As a result, a large number of children and parents have been being deprived of proper and sufficient PI. The barriers to PI are diverse. Poverty is the first bar to PI. We have poor parents in urban and rural areas. They remain busy with the daily wage earning activities for the family. So, they have little time to give to the family members in necessity let alone in helping in the education of the children. Lack of motivation among parents is another bar to meaningful PI. Most of the parents are not aware of the importance of their involvement. They feel free leaving all the responsibilities to schools and teachers. Besides, some parents are illiterate. They usually avoid coming to school and cannot help their children in academic education anymore. Similarly, the schedule for parents meetings is sometimes incompatible for the presence of the parents. It seems very difficult to gather all parents at a time at school. So, the teachers have to repeat the activities again and again for the parents which creates impatience among the teachers and hinders effective PI. Sometimes, lack of motivation and enthusiasm among the teacher also create hindrance to PI. In rural areas, parents' meeting is not arranged because of the absence of proper monitoring. Additionally, there is a shortage of teachers in the rural areas of the country. No teacher likes to work in rural area schools because there is no sufficient citizen facility like transportation, electricity, etc. Lack of awareness among the parents causes a great barrier to PI. The parents, especially in the rural area, do not maintain regular communication with the school. They like to believe what schools are doing is enough for the children. Additionally, the workload on the teachers is another strong barrier to PI. Teachers have to do some extra work such as updating the voter list, distributing stipend, worm tablet campaign, student union election, and so on. On the one hand, schools suffer from the scarcity



of teachers. On the other hand, they have to conduct extra classes without interval. As a result, they get tired and lose interest in PI. Finally, dissatisfaction among the teachers regarding promotion, national class routine, teachers' politics, taking advantage of unfair privileges, etc worsened the issue.

#### 5.4 Recommendation:

From the findings of the study, we can apparently see that there is a lack of sufficient PI in the primary schools in Bangladesh. We can also see that the situation of PI is worse in rural areas than the urban ones. The findings of the study and the literature review show that meaningful PI can contribute a lot to ensure effective education in the country. To overcome the barrier to PI, the practitioners and policy makers should take some important initiatives. In the first place, teachers should be appointed as per the exact proportion of the number of classes and students. Part-time teachers could be appointed to solve the shortage of teachers in certain areas immediately. Besides, Ma Shomabesh (Mothers Meeting) and Parents-Teachers Association meetings should be arranged once in a month regularly. Those who cannot come someday should be informed over the phone about the progress of his/her child so that he/she can take proper steps accordingly. Sending notes on the khata (notebook) daily also could be helpful in this regard. Proper monitoring should be enhanced to ensure the regular arrangement and effectiveness of Ma Shomabesh (Mothers Meeting) and Parents-Teachers Association meetings. Additionally, students with special needs should be taken into extra care. Both in the rural and urban areas, transportation should be improved for the easy mobility of the students, parents, and practitioners. Further, different programs and training sessions should be introduced to enhance motivation regarding effective PI among the parents and the teachers. The programs should aim at increasing awareness among the parents and skill, patience, and mindfulness of the teachers. The extra burden of the work of the parents should be reduced so that they can get enough time to engage the parents successfully in the learning of students. Furthermore, prevailing dissatisfaction among the teachers should be removed. Qualified and experienced teachers should get due respect, privileges and promotion which would inspire them to do the best for the betterment of the education system of the country. Schedule for Ma Shomabesh (Mothers' Assembly) and Parents-Teachers Association meetings should be flexible and convenient to the parents. Besides, awards could be introduced for the best parents and students. It would inspire other parents to do good to the school and their children. Similarly, the environment of the school should be congenial for the parents so that they do not feel shy and uneasy to share anything about the learning of their children. Teachers should always address the parents with due respect and welcome to the school cordially. Importantly, policymakers should enhance surveillance after releasing an office order whether the order is being implemented properly or not. Additionally, home-visit by the teachers is a useful device to connect the home to school when a child is absent for a long time. There should be acknowledgeable and sufficient instruction for implementation. Further, the local government could arrange scheduled open discussions of educational stakeholders, practitioners, and parents to assess the situation which could help the policymakers to find the exact way out to solve any problem regarding the PI to the primary schools. Besides, the illiterate parents would either be assisted to be literate or inspired to practice literacy of their own so that they can facilitate their children's learning. Finally, the policy makers should take initiatives to establish a friendly relationship between teachers and parents.

#### 5.4 Conclusion:

The purpose of this study was to investigate the barriers to parental involvement in the government primary schools in Bangladesh. A huge number of research works have proved the importance and effectiveness of PI in educational institutions. Like other countries of the world, the government of Bangladesh has initiated some specific programs to ensure effective PI in the primary schools. Regular arrangements of these programs can facilitate the educational progress of primary school children. These programs can also help enhance pedagogical practices and increase the efforts of the teachers. In this paper, all the participants unanimously agreed on the inevitability of the PI to ensure effective education at home and school for the children. The treatment effect is stable and robust and is observed regardless of either the education level or experience of the teachers or the socioeconomic backgrounds of the students.

The results show that the intervention induced parents and other household members to spend more time at home helping the children study or do homework. The intervention also helped to improve the attitudes, behavior, and confidence of the children. However, these results are based on self-reported survey data, and there could be experimenter demand effects. Thus, the results based on survey questions on students, parents, and teachers should

be interpreted with caution. Our main conclusion, namely that increased parent-teacher meetings that also provide information about a child's academic progress through a report card can be a cost-effective tool for improving students' outcomes, has important policy implications. Such programs are low-cost and easy to implement, even in disadvantaged communities where parents have low levels of literacy. In the context of developing countries, there is not enough evidence of what a simple one-on-one parent-teacher scheduled meeting can do to improve students' educational achievements. Our results demonstrate that even parents from disadvantaged backgrounds in developing countries can make significant contributions to their children's school performances if they are provided with adequate information and encouraged to become involved. Parent-teacher meeting is a policy choice that can be put into practice by schools at virtually no additional cost. In fact, according to the education officials in Bangladesh, schools are supposed to hold regular meetings with parents. In practice, such meetings between teachers and parents informing students' academic progress do not take place. Hence, policymakers could consider parent-teacher meetings to improve the educational attainment of children in developing countries.

## 5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Firstly, I would like to thank the participants of the study, who generously gave of their time, and discussed their thoughts about Parental Involvement in primary schools in Bangladesh. Then I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Beth Cross (University of the West of Scotland, UK), for her guidance and support throughout the journey. Finally, I like to thank especially all the children at home and abroad who have inspired me to conduct this study.

## 6. REFERENCES

Afrin, H. and Chowdhury, M.S.R. "Parental involvement in rural government primary school: current practices, problems and prospects" IJCIRAS Volume 2 Issue 4 2019

Boudah, D. J. "Conducting educational research: guide to completing a major project" SAGE Publications, Inc., Thousand Oaks, CA. 2011 Available: doi: 10.4135/9781483349138

Bryman A. "Social Research Methods" 4<sup>th</sup> ed. 2012 Oxford University Press Available: [https://www.academia.edu/30520568/Social\\_Research\\_Methods\\_4th\\_Edition\\_by\\_Alan\\_Bryman.pdf?auto=download](https://www.academia.edu/30520568/Social_Research_Methods_4th_Edition_by_Alan_Bryman.pdf?auto=download)

Bower, H.A. and Griffin, D. "Can the Epstein model of parental involvement work in a high-minority, high-poverty elementary school? A case study" Professional School Counseling Volume 15 Issue 2 2011 Available: DOI: 10.5330/PSC.n.2011-15.77

Celik, N. "The problems faced in school-parents relationship" Unpublished Master's Thesis 2005 Marmara University Institute of Educational Sciences, İstanbul Available: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1149130.pdf>

Catsambis, S. "Expanding the Knowledge of Parental Involvement in Secondary Education: Effects on High School Academic Success" 1998. Report No. 27. Available: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/234755308\\_Expanding\\_the\\_Knowledge\\_of\\_Parental\\_Involvement\\_in\\_Secondary\\_Education\\_Effects\\_on\\_High\\_School\\_Academic\\_Success\\_Report\\_No\\_27](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/234755308_Expanding_the_Knowledge_of_Parental_Involvement_in_Secondary_Education_Effects_on_High_School_Academic_Success_Report_No_27)

Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison, K. "Research Methods in Education" 8<sup>th</sup> ed. 2018 London: Routledge

Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison, K. "Research Methods in Education" 7<sup>th</sup> ed. 2011 London: Routledge Available: [https://www.academia.edu/23527119/Research\\_Methods\\_in\\_Education\\_7th\\_edition](https://www.academia.edu/23527119/Research_Methods_in_Education_7th_edition).

Corbin, J., Strauss, A. "Grounded Theory Research: Procedures, Canons, and Evaluative Criteria." Qualitative Sociology. Vol. 13 Issue 1 1990 Available: <http://med-fom-familymed-research.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2012/03/W10-Corbin-and-Strauss-grounded-theory.pdf>



Cotton, K., and Wikelund, K. "Parent Involvement in Education" Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory School Improvement Research Series 2001

Denscombe, M. "The Good Research Guide: For Small-scale Social Research Projects" 6th ed. 2017 Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill Open University Press.

Denscombe, M. "The Good Research Guide: For Small-scale Social Research Projects" 4th ed. 2010 Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill Open University Press.

Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) "Revised Program Document of Third Primary Education Development Program (PEDP) 3" Dhaka 2015

Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) "Annual Primary School Census (APSC)" Dhaka 2018

Epstein, J. L. "School, Family and Community Partnerships" Boulder CO: Westview Press 2001 Available: [https://books.google.com.bd/books?hl=en&lr=&id=PgnDwAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PA1&dq=Epstein,+J.+L.+\(2001\)+School,+Family+and+Community+Partnerships.+Boulder,+CO:+Westview+Press.&ots=KUMWuXyMZw&sig=v-tp45oyMyiROEuQkX-R7v4hV44&redir\\_esc=y#v=onepage&q=Epstein%2C%20J.%20L.%20\(2001\)%20School%2C%20Family%20and%20Community%20Partnerships.%20Boulder%2C%20CO%3A%20Westview%20Press.&f=false](https://books.google.com.bd/books?hl=en&lr=&id=PgnDwAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PA1&dq=Epstein,+J.+L.+(2001)+School,+Family+and+Community+Partnerships.+Boulder,+CO:+Westview+Press.&ots=KUMWuXyMZw&sig=v-tp45oyMyiROEuQkX-R7v4hV44&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=Epstein%2C%20J.%20L.%20(2001)%20School%2C%20Family%20and%20Community%20Partnerships.%20Boulder%2C%20CO%3A%20Westview%20Press.&f=false)

Erdener, M.A. and Knoepfel, R.C. "Parents' perceptions of their involvement in schooling" International Journal of Research in Education and Science Volume 4 Issue 1 2018 page 1-13 Available: <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1169840>

Finders, M. and Lewis, C. "Why some parents don't come to school" Kaleidoscope: Contemporary and Classic Readings in Education Volume 106 1994 page 50-54 Available: [https://books.google.com.bd/books?hl=en&lr=&id=QDwqACGdf0IC&oi=fnd&pg=PA106&dq=Finders,+M.+and+Lewis,+C.+\(1994\)+Why+some+parents+don%E2%80%99t+come+to+school.+Kaleidoscope:+Contemporary+and+Classic+Readings+in+Education.+Vol.106,+pp.50-54.&ots=9spj7qthXh&sig=dZQa4P7AGhbMZ\\_7r1eK442Sqrn8&redir\\_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.com.bd/books?hl=en&lr=&id=QDwqACGdf0IC&oi=fnd&pg=PA106&dq=Finders,+M.+and+Lewis,+C.+(1994)+Why+some+parents+don%E2%80%99t+come+to+school.+Kaleidoscope:+Contemporary+and+Classic+Readings+in+Education.+Vol.106,+pp.50-54.&ots=9spj7qthXh&sig=dZQa4P7AGhbMZ_7r1eK442Sqrn8&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false)

Fisher, Y. "Multi-Dimensional Perception of Parental Involvement" Universal Journal of Educational Research Volume 4 Issue 2 page 457-463 2016 Available: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0886779817303942>

Graham-Clay, S. "Communicating with parents: Strategies for teachers" School Community Journal Volume 15 Issue 1 2005 page 117-129 Available: <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ794819>

Galletta A. "Mastering the Semi-structured Interview and Beyond: From Research Design to Analysis and Publication" New York University Press New York 2013 Available: [https://books.google.com.bd/books?hl=en&lr=&id=NdbtHg6sPgIC&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=Galletta+A.+\(2013\)+Mastering+the+Semi-structured+Interview+and+Beyond:+From+Research+Design+to+Analysis+and+Publication.+New+York+University+Press,+New+York.&ots=dyFv0U-zVo&sig=-Gl4awqx2xCmpEGhZ-wX0rsPgTM&redir\\_esc=y#v=onepage&q=Galletta%20A.%20\(2013\)%20Mastering%20the%20Semi-structured%20Interview%20and%20Beyond%3A%20From%20Research%20Design%20to%20Analysis%20and%20Publication.%20New%20York%20University%20Press%2C%20New%20York.&f=false](https://books.google.com.bd/books?hl=en&lr=&id=NdbtHg6sPgIC&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=Galletta+A.+(2013)+Mastering+the+Semi-structured+Interview+and+Beyond:+From+Research+Design+to+Analysis+and+Publication.+New+York+University+Press,+New+York.&ots=dyFv0U-zVo&sig=-Gl4awqx2xCmpEGhZ-wX0rsPgTM&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=Galletta%20A.%20(2013)%20Mastering%20the%20Semi-structured%20Interview%20and%20Beyond%3A%20From%20Research%20Design%20to%20Analysis%20and%20Publication.%20New%20York%20University%20Press%2C%20New%20York.&f=false)

Gungor, S. and Tasdan, M. "Communication obstacles at primary schools from the perspective of school principals" Mersin University Journal of the Faculty of Education Volume 12 Issue 1 2016 page 391-409

Hoover-Dempsey, K.V., Walker, J.M., Jones, K.P. and Reed, R.P. "Teachers involving parents (TIP): Results of an in-service teacher education program for enhancing parental involvement" Teaching and teacher education Volume 18 Issue 7 2002 page 843-867

Hornby, G. "Parental involvement in childhood education: Building effective school-family partnerships" Springer Science & Business Media 2011 Available: [https://books.google.com.bd/books?hl=en&lr=&id=YcS-MZ\\_bX0UC&oi=fnd&pg=PR3&dq=Hornby,+G.+\(2011\)+Parental+involvement+in+childhood+education:+Buildin+g+effective+school-family+partnerships.+Springer+Science+%26+Business+Media.&ots=J9b83ArU53&sig=hYieLRVzuiwILjKkU\\_52W3EK2ys&redir\\_esc=y#v=onepage&q=Hornby%2C%20G.%20\(2011\)%20Parental%20involvement%20in%20childhood%20education%3A%20Building%20effective%20school-family%20partnerships.%20Springer%20Science%20%26%20Business%20Media.&f=false](https://books.google.com.bd/books?hl=en&lr=&id=YcS-MZ_bX0UC&oi=fnd&pg=PR3&dq=Hornby,+G.+(2011)+Parental+involvement+in+childhood+education:+Buildin+g+effective+school-family+partnerships.+Springer+Science+%26+Business+Media.&ots=J9b83ArU53&sig=hYieLRVzuiwILjKkU_52W3EK2ys&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=Hornby%2C%20G.%20(2011)%20Parental%20involvement%20in%20childhood%20education%3A%20Building%20effective%20school-family%20partnerships.%20Springer%20Science%20%26%20Business%20Media.&f=false)

Hornby, G. and Blackwell, I. "Barriers to parental involvement in education: an update" Educational Review Volume 70 Issue 1 2018 page 109-119 Available: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00131911.2018.1388612>

Islam, A. "Parent-teacher meetings and student outcomes: Evidence from a developing country" European Economic Review Vol.111 2019 page 273-304 Available: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0014292118301764>

Jabeen, F. and Karkara, R. "Government support to parenting in Bangladesh and India" Save the Children Discussion Paper 2005 Format Printing Press Kathmandu.

Karaca, M. "Communication from sociological perspective" Electronic Journal of Social Sciences Volume 15 Issue 57 2016 page 626-648.

Kimaro, A.R. and Machumu, H.J. "Impacts of parental involvement in school activities on academic achievement of primary school children" International Journal of Education and Research Volume 3 Issue 8 2015 page 483-494 Available: <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/5ce2/302a9033a8e75b8086b2679a8686b13956b4.pdf>

Lai, Y. and Ishiyama, F.I. "Involvement of immigrant Chinese Canadian mothers of children with disabilities" Exceptional children Volume 71 Issue 1 2004 page 97-108 Available: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/001440290407100106>

Lavenda, O. "Parental involvement in school: A test of Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's model among Jewish and Arab parents in Israel" Children and Youth Services Review Volume 33 Issue 6 2011 page 927-935 Available: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0190740911000119>

Leedy, P. and Ormrod, J. "Practical Research: Planning and Design" 11<sup>th</sup> ed. 2015 Harlow, Essex: Pearson Education Limited Available: <https://trove.nla.gov.au/version/222124031>

Mafumbate, T.W.M.R. "Effects of Parental Involvement in Academic Wellness of Primary School Learners in the Lubombo Region, Eswatini" Journal of Culture, Society and Development Volume 51 2019 Available: DOI: 10.7176/JCSD

Ministry of Education (MoE) "National Education Policy 2010" 2010 Dhaka Available: <https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/national-education-policy-2010-enbn>. [Accessed 08 April, 2020].

Menter, I., Elliot, D. Hulme, M., Lewin, J. and Lowden, K. "A Guide To Practitioner Research in Education" Sage Publication 2011 Available: <https://www.dawsonera.com/?li=true&dest=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.dawsonera.com%2Fabstract%2F9781446210079&modal=signIn>

Molland, J. "We're all welcome here" Instructor Volume 114 Issue 3 2004 page 22-25.

Ozmen, F., Akuzum, C., Zincirli, M. and Selcuk, G. "The communication barriers between teachers and parents in primary schools" Eurasian Journal of Educational Research Volume 16 Issue 66 2016 page 27-46. Available: <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1149130>

Olcer, N. and Kocer, S. "Organizational communication: A survey on the academic staff at Kocaeli University" Global Media Journal TR Edition Volume 6 Issue 11 2015 page 339-383.

Porumbu, D. and Necşoi, D.V. "Relationship between parental involvementattitude and children's school achievements" Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences Volume 76 2013 page 706-710 Available: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877042813007349>

Rogers, M.A., Theule, J., Ryan, B.A., Adams, G.R. and Keating, L. "Parental involvement and children's school achievement: Evidence for mediating processes" Canadian Journal of School Psychology Volume 24 Issue 1 2009 page 34-57 Available: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0829573508328445>

Williams, V.I. and Cartledge, G. "Passing notes—to parents" Teaching Exceptional Children Volume 30 Issue 1 1997 page 30-34 Available: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/004005999703000106>

Dawson, C. "Introduction to Research Methods: A practical Guide for Anyone Undertaking a Research Project" 4<sup>th</sup>ed 2012 Oxford: How to Books Ltd

