

Perception of Parents of Their Involvement in Children's Learning Activities in Preschool

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Abstract

Early childhood development is a significant issue in the global aspect as well as our national context. In order to achieve SDG target Bangladesh Government has taken many initiatives regarding early childhood development. It is widely believed that quality early childhood development is associated with parental involvement in children's learning activities. Researchers and educators have found significant relation between Parental involvement and children's academic success. As Epstein (2011) mentioned that there is a link between parental involvement and children school success. In Bangladesh perspective Comprehensive Early Childhood Care and Development Policy 2013 has emphasized on family and community involvement in early childhood development. Considering the importance of parental involvement in children learning activities in preschool this study was conducted to explore the perceptions of parents regarding this issue as well as to know parents roles and their barriers of involvement. Parents of 5 to 6 years old children and preschool teachers were the population of the study. 16 parents and 2 teachers were selected as sample from two different preprimary schools (one government preprimary school and one non government preprimary school). This study is followed by four main research questions. Study reveals that there is a variation of parents understanding towards early childhood development. Many parents' belief that children's early development begins from age 5, however few parents think that their main role is to drop and pick up their children from school. Regarding their role many parents mentioned that they have no opportunity to play any role in the classroom activities. They communicate with teacher to know information regarding their children's study and learning progress. They attend PTM to discuss children's study related issues and also they participate various school functions to encourage their children. Study reveals that the main barriers of parental involvement in learning activities are business with work, lack of awareness and poverty however many parents reported that lack of opportunity to involve is also an obstacle for them. Regarding parents involvement interviewed teachers think that parents' involvement is significant in children learning activities. In order to provide them idea about children's learning activities it is important to provide them opportunity to observe classroom activities. They also stated that the engagement of parents in work and lack of awareness are main challenges for parents to involve in school activities. They think teacher- parent relationship and parents' awareness need to promote to overcome these challenges. The study recommends that a country wide sensitization campaign program need to implement for school and communities showing the importance of parental involvement in children learning activities. There is a need for advocacy at administrative and different level for policy development and implementation. A guideline need to be prepared on how to provide opportunity for parents to involve in children's learning activities in school. A collaborative approach between teacher and parent also need to ensure parents engagement in school learning activities.

Key words: Parents Perception, Involvement, Children's Learning Activities, Preschool.

I. Introduction:

Preschool education promotes children's early development which will also have positive benefits to the nations (UNICEF, 2012). Preprimary education supports children's school readiness and later academic success. A high- quality preschool education must promote not only Cognitive development and academic learning, but also socio-emotional skills (Anthony et al., 2005). Quality early childhood care and education is associated with parental involvement in early learning activities at home and in school. Yoder & Lopez (2013) explain parental involvement as an element in children's education by which children's academic achievement can be enhanced at the same time as positive behavior is promoted. Research shows that children are more likely to succeed academically and are less likely to engage in violent behavior if their families are involved in their education (Linda Starr, 2017). Preprimary education becomes more effective when Parents as well as community involve with pre- school activities. When school, parents, family and communities work together to support learning

student tend to earn higher grades, attend school more regularly, stay school longer and enroll in higher level program (NEA, 2008). Majority of research focuses on enhancing and supporting parental involvement in educational settings. When schools build partnership with families that respond to parent concerns, honor their contributions, and share decision-making responsibilities, they are able to sustain connections that are aimed at improving student's achievement.

Moreover creating a partnership between schools and parents can have a significant impact on students' achievement (Center for Public Education, USA, 2011). Without a partnership between parents and school; parents miss out on vital sharing of information about a child's academic strength and challenges. Parents are the number one advocate for their child. When parents take an active interest in their child's learning activities and play a variety role in schooling activities student show a more positive attitude towards school and learn best. Research and field work show that parents-school partnerships improve schools, strengthen families, build community support, and increase student achievement and success. Parents' involvement can make a difference in a child's education (Center for Public Education, USA, 2011). When parents take an active role in their child's education the child understands that education is important to their family. When parents are involved in their children's education, children benefit emotionally, socially, spiritually, and intellectually. Children also realize how significant they are when parents become more involved in school related activities. Parental involvement is significant because teachers / educators are not the only people a child can depend on for a good education or even becoming a better person. Vellymalay, (2012) states that in many countries, various recent educational developments have shown the growing importance of the concept of parental involvement in the school. This paper is organized in four chapters includes Introduction and Background, Literature Review, Methodology and Findings and Discussion of the study. Chapters are organized as Statement of the problem, Significance of the study, Justification of the study, Research objective, Research questions, and Operational definitions.

II. Statement of the problem:

Although several researches have shown that parent's involvement is important for children's behavior, academic success and other achievements but it is a big challenge to involve parents at home and in pre-primary schooling activities. Parents who work a lot or away from home and disconnect from teachers or schooling activities their children perform poorly at school. Parents are sometimes hesitant to become involved because they don't have extra time or don't know how to be involved Lack of Parents- teachers' good relationship is another cause. Sometimes teachers don't allow parents to involve in schooling activities. Socio-economic factors strongly prevent parents to involve in schooling activities. When parents do not involve in children's early learning at home and school physical, cognitive and socio-emotional development might be delayed. The current challenge for ECEC services is to embrace the crucial role of parents in young children's development and involve them in the services as much as possible (OECD, 2006).

According to National Education Association (NEA), 2008 too many policy maker, community leaders and parents still view school and student learning as the sole responsibility of educators. While educators take their professional responsibilities seriously, they also recognize that they cannot do it alone. They need and depend on the support from parents and community members. In fact, the lack of parental involvement is viewed by teachers, administrators, the public and even parents of school age children, as the single biggest problem facing our nation's schools. Education Testing Service (2007) struggles in knowing how best to communicate with parents, are often anxious about it and reluctant to do it.

III. Research objectives:

The specific objectives of the study are –

1. To explore perceptions of parents of their involvement in children's learning activities preschool
2. To know how do parents get involved in children's learning activities in preschool
3. To understand the barriers of parental involvement in pre-schooling activities

IV. Research questions:

1. In urban Bangladesh, how do parents perceive about their involvement in children's learning activities in preschool?
2. What are parents' roles in preschool activities?
3. How do parents get involved in children's learning activities in preschool?
4. What challenges do parents face in engaging children's learning activities in preschool?

V. Literature review:

'Parental involvement in schooling' phenomena and its relation to child development, systematic literatures have been reviewed. Several studies have shown that parental involvement in pre schooling activities has positive effect on children's early developmental process. Research has advanced from a search for specific

“parent involvement” activities that will produce better child outcome to a recognition that often subtle relationship variables between parents and children and between parents and teachers strongly influence both parents decisions to become involved (Green et al., 2007) and the outcomes achieved through family-school engagement (Jenny, 2011). There is emerging evidence that the quality of the parent- teacher relationship influences parents’ efforts to engage their children in discussions of academic success, which in turn produces improved academic achievement (Hughes & Kwok, 2007). Some researchers have claimed that the direct cause for students’ high scholastic achievements is parental involvement confined to the home, which includes discussions with the children about their experiences at school and about the importance of studying (M. Ingram et al., 2007). Although parent involvement is regarded as important, there may be some misunderstandings regarding its extent. Parents may tend to perceive parent involvement as merely helping their children do their homework. However, parents can actively participate in the educational activities maintained in school. They can observe children, support the teacher, and take part in school’s decision – making process (Carlisle et al., 2005).

According to Mc Wayne et al., (2004) Parent participation practices can include attending parent –teacher conferences, participating in extended class visits and helping class activities. The frequency of parent-teacher contact in these activities affects the child’s preschool performance. Parents who maintain direct and regular contact with the early educational setting and experience fewer barriers to involvement have children who demonstrate positive engagement with peers, adults and learning. The quality of parent-teacher relationship also appears to be a factor in the success of interventions designed to develop pro-social behaviors among young children with behavior problems (Sheridan et al., 2012). The federally funded Chicago parents center’s Program in the United States has been cited as evidence that parents participation has a major impact on children’s academic success and social development, and that is an effective strategy for reducing the dropout rate.

Quality of early education is associated with parental involvement. Study shows that - the community and parents have important roles in ensuring the quality of education in schools and such involvement makes a difference (as cited in Alam2015, p.1). Parents can involve different types of school based activities. According to Epstein & Sandars, (2002) school –based engagement includes such practices as communicating teachers, helping in the classroom, attending school events, participating in parents- teacher conferences, and being involved in a parent – teacher organization. Family and community engagement promotes students growth and school success at every grade level, schools can help families understand the critical role they play in supporting students learning and achievement of school improvement goals. For example, family members can serve as volunteers, participate in school decisions, set learning goals with their children, and participates in other curriculum related activities (Van Roekel, 2008).

According to the National Parental Information and Resource Center, USA, “Research over the past 30 years has shown that engaging families in their children’s education increases student achievement and decreases dropout rates. Effective family engagement is not a one -time program or choice of a good school, but rather a set of day- to day practices, attitudes, beliefs and interactions that support learning at home, at school, after school and during the summer. To ensure that the students of today are ready for the carriers of tomorrow, families, schools and community groups need to work together to promote engagement that is systemic , sustained and integrated into school improvement efforts.” Anderson and Minke, (2007) stated that parent’s first responsibility is to make children go to school and keep them safe. Parents are also required to help their children to increase their academic functioning. Research over the past several decades has documented a positive link between parental involvement and children school success (Epstein, 2011). The role of parental involvement plays in the academic performance of children has been a subject of keen interest to educators for at least the past four decades (Bower & Griffin, 2011).

The Epstein model emphasized six specific types of behavior on the part of families that were assumed to promote children’s achievement in school: (a) Positive conditions in the home, (b) Communication between parents and children about schoolwork, (c) Parental involvement in school, (d) Learning activities at home, (e) Shared decision making with the school, and (f) community partnerships between parents and school personnel (Epstein et al., 2009). Rafiq et al., (2013) described four types of activities as parental involvement: helping children in reading, encourage them to do their homework independently, monitoring their activities inside and outside the four walls of their house, and providing support for their learning in different subject. Grace et al., (2012) refer to helping with homework, talking to teachers, attending school functions, taking part in school governance as parental involvement activities. According to Australian Research Alliance for children & youth for the Family –School and Community Partnerships Bureau (2012) considered broadly, parental engagement consists of partnership between families, schools and communities, raising parental awareness of the benefits of engaging in their children’s education and providing them with the skills to do so. As Muller (2009) states ‘Family-school and community partnerships are redefining the boundaries and functions of education. They enlarge prenatal and community capacity; they create conditions in which children learn more effectively.

Schools with strong family engagement were four times more likely to improve student reading over time and ten times more likely to improve student learning gains in mathematics (Bryk et al., 2010). According to OECD

the involvement of parents in young children's education is a fundamental right and obligation. Parents are more likely to talk directly with the practitioner and be better able to help their children at home with learning and homework (Corter et al., 2006). Parents in the family have been regarded as "first teachers" preschool teachers as "second teachers" and environment as "third teachers" (Klein, 2002). Several research findings show that parental involvement in children learning activities has positive impact on children overall development, however not all parents are equally involved in their child schooling due to some barriers. While parents and guardians are increasingly expressing the desire to become more involved in their children's education a number of barriers hinder parents' ability to be involved, particularly in the more traditional and visible forms of family involvement such as volunteering at school events and attending parent-teacher conference each grading period. One barrier noted by parents/guardians is a lack of or the poor timing of communication between the school and home (as cited in Barker et al., 2016, p.164).

Barriers can also arise when parents' negative experiences in schools, either as a child themselves or previously with older children, as well as parents' level of education, lead to feelings of inability to help their children academically, which may cause parents to feel inferior to school personnel (as cited in Barker et al., 2016, p.165). Parents are most likely to be motivated to be involved when they have confidence that they have some degree of control and influence over the child learning (Hoover-Dempsey, 2011). Logistical issues may limit a parent's ability to attend school activities or events. Participation in events such as parent-teacher conferences may be hindered by a range of practical constraints such as lack of transportation, work schedule or the need for child care (as cited in Barker et al., 2016, p.164). In Bangladesh context early childhood development has become a significant issue in different level. Government of Bangladesh already has given emphasized to promote preprimary education as well as parent involvement in educational setting. According to UNESCO (2015) Bangladesh introduced two measures in this regard: 1) the Pre-Primary Education (PPE) initiative which aim is to provide all children aged between 5 and 6 with one year of pre-school and focuses attention on preparing children from disadvantages home environment for formal school and the School Learning Improvement plan (SLIP) initiative, which supports schools to address specific local constrain and improve school operation by engaging school management committees, teachers and parents.

VI. Methodology:

The methodological approach for the study was qualitative (exploratory). Qualitative approach was chosen as the methodology because it provides a deeper understanding of an event or situation as possible. This type of comprehensive understanding is arrived at through a process known as thick description. The qualitative research admits the researchers to discover the participants' inner experience, and to figure out how meanings are shaped through and in culture (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The thorough and appropriate analyze of an issue can be produced by utilizing qualitative research methods and therefore the participants have sufficient freedom to determine what is consistent for them (Flick, 2011). So through this method it was possible to explore parent's perception of their involvement in children's learning activities in preschool within a particular context. The study was conducted in two different location of Dhaka City (Mirpur and Korail). The participants of the study were parents of 5-6 years old children. Total 16 parents were selected purposively from 2 different preprimary schools (1 govt. school and 1 NGO school). Parents were participated in 2 FGD and 4 In-depth interviews. From 16 participants in FGD 4 parents were selected for in-depth interview by the researcher. 2 teachers were interviewed from 2 selected schools to know about the situation of parental involvement in schooling activities. This gave the chance to apply triangulation to validate information revealed by the parents. The sampling method was purposive according to the issue and criteria of the study.

FGD guidelines and In-Depth Interview (IDI) guidelines were used to collect data. The face validity of the instrument was done with the expert help. A pilot testing of the in-depth interview questionnaire was conducted. The researcher translated FGD guideline, In-depth interview questionnaire and teacher interview questionnaire in Bengali and again submit to research faculty team for face validity test. The required changes were incorporated and then the pilot testing was done with two teacher and two parents to check for reliability of the measures. After collecting data, it was analyzed to identify the results. Actually the data analysis was started from the initial interaction with the research participants. Therefore, following data collection, the accumulated data were edited properly. Then it was organized and categorized as per collection processes. Next step research questions were reviewed. After that data were summarized. Then they data were categorized under theme and issues. Under the themes, thought and insights were written.

VII. Findings:

Findings have been shown the light of the collected data from interview and focus group discussion with parents. Findings of the exploratory research are focused on three different objectives: perceptions of parents of their involvement in children's learning activities in preschool, how do parents get involved in children's learning activities in preschool and understand the barriers of parental involvement in pre-schooling activities. In the following write-up research findings have been presented under the headline of demographic information,

perception of parents of their involvement in children's learning activities in preschool, parent's roles in preschool learning activities, parents' involvement in children's learning activities in preschool and barriers of parents in engaging children's learning activities in preschool.

Demographic information of participants

In this study, demographic profiles have been examined based on age, educational qualification and socio-economic condition. 16 parents participated in 2 FGD and 4 in-depth interviews. 2 teachers were interviewed to apply triangulation to validate information revealed by the parents. Parents and teachers were selected from 2 different preprimary schools (One Govt. pre-primary school and one NGO preprimary school).

Among the parents 31% were male and 69% were female. 19% parents involved in job, 13% involved in business and 68% were housewife. Their age range was between 22 to 44 years. Highest educational qualification was HSC and lowest educational qualification was class three. Monthly family income range was 11,000–30,000 BDT. Selected teacher's age range was between 20 to 32 years and their educational qualification range was SSC to HSC.

Perceptions of parents of their involvement in children's learning activities in preschool

Early Childhood Development

Participants were asked to mention what they know about early childhood development. Parents express their opinion differently regarding the term early childhood development. Most of the participants think that early childhood development begins from 5 years. During FGD one parent states that "I think children's development occurs from 5 years old." Contrarily one parents reported that "Early childhood development is the readiness before getting enrollment in the preprimary school." Few parents cited that early childhood development is the growth of the children stage by stage. During FGD one parents stated that "In my opinion, early development is the growth of children stage by stage." By summarizing above findings, it is seen that most of the parents were unaware about the age range of early childhood development. However, they know early childhood development occur stage by stage.

Parent's perceptions regarding their involvement in learning activities

Most of the parents mentioned that parents involvement in children's learning activities is significant for children's overall development. They assume that their involvement encourages children to learn. During FGD one parent stated that "In my opinion parents' involvement in children's learning activities is very significant. If parents' follow-up children are learning progress at school, communicate with teachers, attend various school programs then children encouraged to learn." Few parents think that one of their main roles is to drop and pick up their children from school. During FGD one mother stated that "Our important role is to drop and pick up children from school." Few parents stated that they go to school with their children to provide their security.

One mother reported that "I think, young child sometimes cries, so during class time I stay beside school. This is my involvement." Contrarily many responded perceive that parents have more responsibilities in children's learning activities. Parents need to involve at home as well as school learning activities. Parents need to communicate with teachers, need to know their academic result and also need to know what are they learning at school. They also added that it is important to attend parent teacher meeting (PTM) and other school function. During IDI one participant stated that "I think parent's involvement in school is important. This is why parents have to come to school, contact with teachers, know their academic result and attend various school programs." Based up on above findings, it can be summed up that, most of the parents think that parents' involvement is significant for children's holistic development. Many parents assume that parents have many responsibilities at home and school in their children's learning activities however few parents mentioned that picking up and dropping children to school is their important role.

Parents' involvements encourage and make children interested to learn

Participants were asked to state broadly how parental involvement impacts on children's overall development. Most of the participants think that there is a positive benefit of parent's involvement. It encourages and makes children interested to learn. Respondent also added that parents' involvement is also important for children's physical and cognitive development. During IDI one parent pointed that "If parents involve in children's learning activities they get inspiration and become interested to learn. So they become success in study."

During FGD another parent said "I think parents' involvement encourage children to learn so their overall development occurs." Based on above findings, it has been seen that most of the participants assume that parents' involvement encourages and make interested children to learn.

Parent's involvement makes children regular and attentive to school

Most of the parents think that when parents involve in children's learning activities children become regular in school. They also added that their involvement makes children attentive to school as well as study. During IDI one parents said "If parent involve they perform well in their study and go to school regularly." By summing up above findings it is evident that parents' involvement is significant to make children regular and attentive to school.

Parents roles in preschool learning activities

Regarding parents' role in children's learning activities most of the parents stated that they can play various roles in children's learning activities however those activities are out of classroom activities. They mentioned that they can play their roles through helping in children's homework and study. Communicating with teachers, follow up children's learning progress, picking up and dropping children to school, attending Parent teacher meeting (PTM) and various types of school programs. During IDI one respondent reported that "As a parent I can encourage my child's in study at home, communicate with teachers, follow up my child's study progress and participate parent- teacher meeting and various types of school programs." Few respondents think that the care and teaching of school teacher is not sufficient for children. They have also roles. Besides teachers they can practice them at home because most of the time children stay with them. During FGD one participant said that "Only Teaching provided by teacher is not sufficient, they have to practice them at home." Based on the above findings it can be summed up that parents can play many roles regarding learning activities however they have no opportunity to play any role in the classroom activities. Expectation of parents in playing role in children's learning activities. Many participants mentioned that they need opportunity to observe children's classroom activities. If they get opportunity to observe classroom activities, they will be able to know what types of activities are done in the classroom. It will help them to practice their children at home. During FGD one participant said "We get opportunity to attend children's sports and cultural program in schools but we don't get opportunity to observe children's classroom activities." Based on above findings it can be said few parents are interested to play their role in classroom to know what types of activities are practicing in the classroom.

Parents' involvement

Many parents stated that they involve in school through various types of activities. Most of the participants think that communicate with teachers is important. They mentioned that through communicate with teacher they obtain many information regarding their children study. During FGD one participant reported that "As parents we need to communicate with teachers to know various types of information." One Parent also added that communication helps to develop parent- teacher relationship. Above findings show that communicating with teachers is an important part of parent involvement. It helps to know important information regarding their children study.

Follow up children's learning Progress

Regarding parents involvement many responded mentioned that they go to school to follow up their children's learning progress. They can know their children's learning progress through communicate with class teacher or through exam result. It helps them to take initiatives for their further improvement. During IDI one participant reported that "As a parent I involve many school activities such as, follow up children's learning progress, communicate with teachers and attend school functions."

By summarizing above findings it can be said that parents involve in school to know their children's learning progress because it helps to identify children's lacking area of development. Most of the parents cited that they attend various types of school functions such as yearly sports and cultural program, national day related program (e.g. Independent Day, Victory day). They think if parents attend school functions children will encourage to participate and feel happy. During FGD one participant reported that "We attend various types of school functions to encourage our children." Based on above findings it has been seen that parents attend various types of school function to encourage their children to perform sports and cultural programs. Most of the participants think that parent- teacher meeting (PTM) is an important part of parent's involvement. Through this session they can discuss many important issues regarding children's study. During IDI one parents told that "As a parent I involve in school in various way such as attend parents meeting, communicate with teacher, and attend other school functions." The above findings show that parents consider PTM as one of their important part of involvement.

Involvement in learning activities at home

Regarding involvement in learning activities many parents mentioned that beside school they also involve in children's learning activities at home. They help their children's homework, encourage in the study at home, provide opportunity to play, sing and dance, and arrange study material before going to school. During FGD one parent stated that "As a parent I help my child's home work." It has been seen that parents can involve in children's learning activities at home as well as school. At home parents can provide them opportunity to play, sing and dance. Participants were asked to give their opinion regarding their opportunities to involve in learning activity in preschool. Many parents mentioned that they get opportunity to involve in some specific areas in preschool such as, communicate with teachers, and participate in parents meeting and various types of school programs. During FGD one parents stated that "I think parents get opportunities to involve in some areas such as communicate with teachers, follow-up their children's study progress at school, attend parents meeting and various school programs." One parent stated that they don't have opportunity to involve in decision making process. Many parents also stated that they don't have any access to involve in classroom activities. By summing up above findings, it can be said that in school parents get opportunity to involve in some specific areas however they want to involve in classroom activities and decision making process. Many respondents mentioned that

parents who engaged in work don't get opportunity to involve in school activities due to their work schedule. They express their opinion about the opportunity for working parents such as parents meeting or school programs might be arranged considering parents' convenient time. During IDI one responded reported that "Meeting or school program can be arranged as per parents convenient time and inform them earlier so that they can involveschool activities." On the other hand, few responded told that in order to involve in meeting or school program working parents can take leave form their work place for a certain time or they can communicate through alternative way (such as mobile phone). During IDI one parent stated that "Working parents can attend in school activities through taking leave form work place for certain time, they can communicate through mobile phone." Based on the above findings it is seen that working parents don't get opportunity to involve due to their work schedule however they think if school authority arranges meeting or program considering their convenient time they will able to involve.

Barriers of parents in engaging children's learning activities in preschool

Parents were asked to give their opinion regarding their barriers in engaging children's learning activities in preschool. Most of the parents expressed similar kind of views. They expressed that engaging in work is their main barrier. During IDI one parent reported that "For earning I have to busy whole day with my business so I don't get time to participate school activities. I think it is my great barrier." The above findings show that business with work is one of the main barriers of parental involvement in children's learning activities. Parents who are engaged in earning they don't able to involve in school activities. During discussing about the barriers of parental involvement in children's learning activities in preschool, few parents pointed that lack of awareness is also a barrier regarding this issue. One parents stated that "I think the barriers of parents' involvement in children's learning activities in school are engagement in work and lack of awareness." Regarding barriers of parental involvement many parents mentioned that lack of opportunity to involve is also a barrier for them. They don't get opportunity to involve decision making processes and classroom activities in school. During IDI one respondent reported that "In my opinion the barriers of parents are lack of opportunities to involve such as decision making process." These findings show that many parents assumed that lack of opportunity to involve is one of their obstacles.

Expectation to increase their involvement

Parents were asked to give their suggestion to overcome the barriers of parental involvement. Many parents suggested that the schedule of meeting or any other school programs need to be prepared by discussing with parents and it can be arranged considering parents' convenient time. During IDI one parents opined that "If the meeting or others programs is arranged in parent's convenient time then parents involvement will be increased." Few parents reported that meeting or programm's date need to inform to parents few days ago so that they can make a plan to participiate. During FGD one parent stated that "I think the date and time of PTM need to inform to parents few days ago." Based on the findings it can be said that if school authority prepares their schedule of meeting or programs discussing with parents and consider their convenient time then parents' involvement will be increased.

Teachers' opinion regarding parents' involvement

Regarding parents' involvements both of the interviewed teachers think that parents' involvement is significant for quality education. They mentioned that parents' involvement includes pick up and drop children to school, contact with teachers, and attend Parent Teacher Meeting (PTM) and various school programs. During interview one teacher stated that "As a teacher I expect they may attend schoolactivities, suchas inquire children's study, attend parent's teacher meeting (PTM) and other school programs." One teacher said that parents need to get opportunity to involve classroom activities. During interview she reported that "I think parents need to get opportunity to observe classroom activities (by rotation) so that they can experience on various types of learning activities." These findings show that parents' involvement is significant for quality education. If parents get opportunity to observe classroom activities, they will get an idea about learning activities of their children.

Teachers' opinion regarding parents' barriers to involve

Regarding parents involvement interviewed teachers think that parent's involvement is significant in children learning activities. In order to provide them idea about children's learning activities it is important to provide them opportunity to observe classroom activities. They also stated that business with work and lack of awareness are main challenges to involve parents in children's learning activities in school. They think Teacher-parent relationship and parent's awareness need to promote to overcome the challenge. Regarding the barriers of parents' involvement teachers mentioned that business with earning, lack of awareness and poverty are the main obstacles of parents. During interview as teachers stated "In my view the barriers of parents to involve are engagement in earning and lack of awareness." Teachers expect that, in order to overcome the barriers of parental involvement parents' awareness need to be raised and teacher- parent relation need to be improved. During interview one teacher reported that "In order to overcome the barriers of parents' involvement in children's learning activities parents' awareness need to be raised and parents' teacher relation need to be improved." By summarizing the above findings, it can be said that in order to overcome the parents' barriers we need to increase parents' awareness. Beside this parent- teacher relation need to be promoted.

VIII. Discussion:

Analysis and discussion is an important part of a study. In this section analysis and discussion have been presented based on the findings. As a qualitative study all discussion and analysis are presented as descriptive mode. The references from different books, journals guidelines and research documents have been linked to support the discussions. All discussion points are focused on the objectives. The purpose of the study was to explore the perceptions of parents of their involvement in children's learning activities in preschool. This section first discusses the issue emerged during the study and provides an analysis of the research evidence with reference to the literature review in chapter two. Secondly, this section presents conclusion and some ideas of future research studies, lastly, some recommendations are suggested.

Perceptions of parents of their involvement in children's learning activities in preschool

From the findings of the study, it was revealed there were mixed views in relation to the term of early childhood development as well as parent's involvement in children learning activities in preschool. Regarding the question of early childhood development, it was found that most of the parents think children's early childhood development begins from 5 years old or before enrollment in the preprimary school. Most of parents assumed that parents' involvement in children learning activities is significant for children's overall development. According to their view school involvement activities includes Communicate with teachers, inquire children's learning progress, participate parent -teacher meeting (PTM) and other programs arranged by school authority. In a study it has been seen that school –based engagement includes such practices as communicating teachers, helping in the classroom, attending school events, participating in parents- teacher conferences, and being involved in a parent – teacher organization (Epstein& Sanders, 2002). Most of the participants think that there is a positive benefit of parent's involvement. They assume that their involvement encourages and make children interested to learn. The study also revealed that Parents think their involvement make children regular and attentive to school. Respondent also added that parents' involvement is also important for children's physical and mental development.

Parents roles in preschool learning activities

Regarding parent's role in children's learning activities most of the parents stated that they can play various roles in children's learning activities however those activities are out of classroom activities. They mentioned that they can play their roles through helping with children's homework and study. Communicating with teachers, follow up children's learning progress, picking up and dropping children to school, attending Parent teacher meeting (PTM) and various types of school programs. Most of the parents think that parent's role is very significant for children's development and their academic success. They mentioned that if parents don't play their role properly it badly impacts on children's development. They become irregular in school, loss their attention and encouragement to study and obtained bad result in their exam. Previous study found that the community and parents have important roles in ensuring the quality of education in schools and such involvement makes a difference (Alam, 2016, p.1). The study also revealed that few parents think that study with teacher is not sufficient for the children. They have also roles in the learning activities of their children. They can involve in the learning activities with the children at home because most of the time children stay with them. In a study it has been seen that parents in the family have been regarded as "first teachers" preschool teachers as "second teachers" and environment as "third teachers" (Klein, 2002). Many parents mentioned that they want to play their role in children's class room activities to get idea about children's learning activities.

Parents' involvement in children' learning activities

The study found that regarding parents' involvement in children' learning activities many parents stated that they can involve children's learning activities in school as well as at home. Many parents mentioned that in school they want to see children's learning progress and exam result and communicate with teachers regarding children's study issue. They also added that they attend PTM, sports and cultural program. Similar findings have been seen that previous researchers mentioned that school –based engagement includes such practices as communicating teachers, helping in the classroom, attending school events, participating in parents- teacher conferences, and being involved in a parent - teacher organization (Epstein & Sanders, (2002). On the other hand, at home they help their children's homework, encourage to study, provide opportunity to play, sing and dance arrange study materials before going to school. Many parents told that school authority don't provide them opportunity to engage in classroom activities so they cannot involve there. If the school authority provide them opportunity to observe classroom activities they will be able to know what type of activities are done in the children's classroom and they can practice them at home. Most of the responded stated that working parents cannot be involved due to their work schedule. One parents stated that they have no opportunity to involve decision making process .

Barriers of parents in engaging children's learning activities in preschool

Data analysis explored that parent face some challenges in involving children's learning activities in preschool. Most of the parents viewed that business with work is their main barrier. In order to earn for their family the have to busy with job or business so they can't provide time in children's learning activities in school. It has been seen that one barrier noted by parents /guardians is lack of or the poor timing of communication between

the school and home (ascited in Barker et al., 2016, p.164). Parents from low income families have to maintain tight work schedule for their earnings. So it is very difficult for them to manage time to go to school and attend meeting or school functions. In a research it has been found that participation in events such as parent- teacher conferences may be hindered by a range of practical constraints such as lack of transportation, work schedule or the need for child care (Barker et al., 2016, p.165). Few parents mentioned that lack of awareness is also a barrier regarding this issue. Because many parents are unaware about the benefit of parental involvement. So most of the time they don't feel interest to involve children's learning activities in school. On the other hand many parents stated that lack of opportunity is also a barrier for them to involve.

Teachers' opinion regarding parents' involvement

The study revealed that teachers also acknowledge the importance of parents' involvement in children's learning activities. Both interviewed teachers think that parents' involvement is significant in children learning as well as quality education. They also added that in order to provide them clear idea about children's learning activities it is important to provide them opportunity to observe classroom activities. Carlisle et al., (2005) found that parents can observe children, support the teacher, and take part in school's decision making process.

Teachers' opinion regarding the barriers of parents' involvement

Teachers stated that engagement with work and lack of awareness are main challenges of parents' involvement in children's learning activities in school. They think Teacher- parent relationship and parents' awareness need to promote to overcome the challenge. In a study it has been seen that the quality of the parent- teacher relationship influences parents' efforts to engage their children in discussions of academic success, which in turn produces improved academic achievement (Hughes & Kwok, 2007).

IX. Conclusion:

The present study intended to reveal the perceptions of parents regarding their roles, involvement and barriers in children's learning activities in preschool. The study explored the parents' understanding regarding their involvement in children's learning activities from different view. The study found that parents consider preprimary education as an initial development stage for children. They think their involvement in children's learning activities in preschool helps to promote children's holistic development. They also assume that they have many responsibilities in school activities as well as home. Study also revealed that parents' involvement in school and home encourage and make children interested to learn. Children also become regular and attentive to school if parents involve in their learning activities. Study found that parents get involve in school activities through various way such as attending parents meeting, communicating with teacher, follow up children's learning progress, attending various types of school programs. At home parents involve in children's learning activities through helping in their homework and study, providing opportunity to play, sing and dance. The study explored that parents get opportunity to involve out of class room activities. They expect to involve in classroom to experience about children's learning activities. Study found that engagement in work, lack of awareness and lack of opportunity to involve are the main barriers of parents in engaging in children's learning activities in school. To sum up from the analysis it can be concluded here that in the urban context parents perceive that their involvement in children's learning activities is significant for their children overall development. Considering this they can play their role in involving various types of learning activities in school and home.

X. Recommendations:

Based on the findings and considering the reality of the context of Bangladesh the followings may be recommended to address the existing situation:

- Further study is required including different setting in order to generalize the findings.
- A country wide sensitization campaign program may be recommended for all schools and Communities showing the importance of parental involvement in children's learning activities in schools.
- There is a need for advocacy at administrative and different level for policy development and implementation regarding this issue.
- A guideline needs to be prepared on how to provide opportunity for parents to involve in Children are learning activities in preschool.
- A collaboration approach between teacher and parent also need to ensure parents engagement in preschool learning activities.

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