

**WORKING MOTHERS' PERCEPTION ON 3-5 YEARS
CHILD SCHOOL READINESS IN DHAKA CITY**

By

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A thesis submitted to Brac Institute of Educational Development in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Science in Early Childhood Development

Brac Institute of Educational Development
Brac University
November 2019

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The thesis submitted is my/our own original work while completing degree at Brac University.
2. The thesis does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The thesis does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I/We have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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Ethics Statement

Title of Thesis Topic: **Working Mothers' Perception on Three-Five Years Child School Readiness in Dhaka City.**

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1. Source of population

2. Does the study involve (yes, or no)

- a) Physical risk to the subjects
- b) Social risk
- c) Psychological risk to subjects
- d) discomfort to subjects
- e) Invasion of privacy

3. Will subjects be clearly informed about (yes or no)

- a) Nature and purpose of the study
- b) Procedures to be followed
- c) Physical risk
- d) Sensitive questions
- e) Benefits to be derived
- f) Right to refuse to participate or to withdraw from the study
- g) Confidential handling of data
- h) Compensation and/or treatment where there are risks or privacy is involved

4. Will Signed verbal consent for be required (yes or no)

- a) from study participants
- b) from parents or guardian
- c) Will precautions be taken to protect anonymity of subjects?

5. Check documents being submitted herewith to Committee:

- a) Proposal
- b) Consent Form
- c) Questionnaire or interview schedule

Ethical Review Committee:

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Executive Summary

Research on school readiness in Bangladesh is mostly concentrated to explore general mothers' or teachers' perceptions or relationships between mother and teacher perception. Research indicates the working rate in Bangladesh is increasing with the enhancing of women's education. Since they are working mother they get less time to look after the child. So, it's now a burning question for the working women to secure and educate their child in a sound way. This study aimed to explore working mothers' perceptions of 3 to 5 years of child school readiness. The study was attempted to know working mothers' knowledge practices, attitudes, and actions to promote child school readiness. This study is followed by 3 main research questions such as: (1) what does the working mother understand about child school readiness? (2) what are the working mothers' perceptions (practice and attitude) about child school readiness? (3) what is the working mothers' action toward their child school readiness? For this study, the qualitative research design was formulated. The study selected about 12 working mothers (6 graduate working mothers and 6 non-graduate working mothers). The data were collected with two focus group discussions (FGD): one FGD was conducted with six working graduate mother and the other was conducted with six non-graduate working mothers. And, four In-depth-interviews (IDIs): two IDIs were conducted with two working graduate mothers and tow non-graduate working mothers. The study suggested that working mother's understanding, knowledge, and practice are influenced by maternal education level and socioeconomic status. Since graduation complete mother are privileged by educational level and socioeconomic status so they have shown more advanced knowledge and understanding about their child school readiness than non-graduate mothers. Mostly graduate working mothers acknowledged the importance of child school readiness with clear understanding and intentionally they translate into their practice. On the other hand, non-graduate working mothers also acknowledged the importance of school readiness but for having ambiguous knowledge about school readiness often they do not translate into their practice. Despite having a time constrain, different educational levels, and socioeconomic status there are no major differences in the mothers' role.

Keywords: Parent Perception, School Readiness, Focus Group Discussion, Graduate Mother, Non-graduate mother.

Dedication

**This thesis is dedicated to my beloved father and mother for their love and
support**

Acknowledgment

First and foremost, I am proud to express my earnest and heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to thank my supervisor, **Mohammad Safayet Khan** for his guidance and advice throughout this dissertation.

Last but not least, I need to thank my parents and family members who helped me a lot unconditionally throughout my life. I would like to thank my parents **Abul Hossain** and **Mst Arzuman Banu Begum**, my elder brother Abdulla Al Imran, my family members, teachers, and friends for encouraging me and believing in me in every single step. Endless support, sacrifice, and encouragement from my husband, **Md Shamim Ahamed**, is highly acknowledged. Without his support, I might not have been able to finish this research work. Thank you, my sweet and lovely son, **Saifan Ahamed**, who brought a notable change in my life with lots of happiness.

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List of Acronyms

BIED	BRAC Institute of Educational Development
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
IDI	In-depth-interview
ILO	International Labor Organization
NHES	National Household Education Survey

Chapter I

Introduction & Background

This chapter presents the background information about the research topic especially about school readiness and their importance for the better development of children at school. Then, the chapter also describes the statement of the problem and the significance of the research for the society as a whole for the country. Finally, the objectives of the research include in this chapter along with the selected research questions for the study.

1.1 Introduction

School readiness is the key indicator for the child's educational development in their early stage of development, which indicates the particular factors that contribute to a student being successful in school. It includes many child skills showing at the early stage, which are developed over time from a child's birth through the school entrance age. School readiness includes the areas of social-emotional, cognitive, language and literacy, and physical development. Another important part of school readiness includes a child's ability to maintain focus on a task and show interest and curiosity in learning (Nix et al., 2013). It is the responsibility of schools to be ready for all children from different levels of readiness (High, 2008). Appropriate communication is a fundamental part of a child's school readiness and can be developed in several ways. Listening to children and encouraging them to listen to others is very important to increase communication development as well as conveying their needs to others (Baldwin, 2010). It is well established that parents and early childhood environments play a critical role in the preparedness of children entering school (Booth & Crouter, 2008). DeRousie and Durham (2008) concluded that the family especially parents is an essential component for the development of a child's school readiness, and the differences do exist due to parent's abilities. However, all parents can provide the essential experiences to aid the child

school readiness, whether those differences are related to education level, parenting skills, or social and economic class.

Bangladesh is a developing country that has been showing significant progress to become a developed country. It is essential to have substantial improvement in the education sector for building a skilled workforce for sustainable economic development. However, the growth in the educational area could not progress up to the expectation level because of having several limiting factors in our country. The factors influencing children's school readiness could be categorized as external (sourced from outside of individual self) factors and internal factors. The external factors are usually linked with ecological concepts that involve the influence of family, community, school, service on children's school readiness (Bronfenbrenner, 1999). All these external factors contribute to the evolving children's school readiness. However, most of these external factors, except family factors are mostly related to the government's responsibility and policy, which are difficult to change or intervene. Therefore, the demands of school readiness emphasize more on internal factors due to their possibilities to intervene. The lack of knowledge about the importance of child school readiness among the parents is one of the significant internal limiting factors for educational development at the early stage of childhood development. In general, the differences in the children's school readiness among ethnic and social class groups is a very obvious existing problem in Bangladesh. Some pieces of evidence are supporting that parental social class is a factor related to the discrepancy in the children's school readiness (Dotterer et al., 2012). In the present time, a large number of mothers especially those who are living in the city area, work in different professions. It is very important to know the understanding of school readiness among mothers from different socio-economic groups and also acquire knowledge about parents' attitudes and practices related to the preparation of their children entering school. Therefore, the purpose of this study

is to explore working mothers' perceptions of school readiness and how closely the attribute school readiness linked with their children's current abilities.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Human demand for material aspirations and the necessities of daily life often require both parents to work. In Bangladesh, women are traditionally involved in household work and take care of their families. In present, a qualified woman is usually involved in work to maintain an effective career and be financially independent. According to ILO reporting 2017, the female employment rate is about 71.7% in Bangladesh. Therefore, a large number of women are currently working who are not being able to ready their child properly for pre-school. Like Bangladesh most Asian countries, and in many joint-family systems, the grandparents and other nonworking family members usually support childcare, and they take over the job of childcare when the mother is at work. However, this can sometimes be a challenging option, thereby; they have to choose the option of hiring caregivers or to send daycare to take care of their children. However, certain common problems occur for most working women, most importantly stress and mental health conditions, because housework is still considered the woman's domain. Career responsibilities may also conflict with their maternal duties, which results in fewer hours of contact with their child. So, it is often difficult for them to find a balance between work and motherhood. Especially for having a time constraint working mother can't promote school readiness properly. Therefore, it is important to know the understanding of parents' perception (especially working mothers) of school readiness for better child development, and necessary action could be taken for supporting the mothers for making their child is ready for school.

1.4 Significance of the study

A range of important social indicators has rapidly improved in Bangladesh, including access to the quality of schooling. However, a significant number of children in Bangladesh are not being developed effectively because of the parent's wrong perception of school readiness. The effective learning at the early stage is now seen as a promising way to overcome the current “loss of developmental potential” affecting over 200 million children in developing countries like Bangladesh (Engle et al., 2007). The school readiness is linked with effective learning for children at the early stage of their life, and parents' perception plays a vital role in the productive development of their children. Therefore, this study could provide significant evidence about working mothers' perception of school readiness and the necessary actions which could be taken based on the research outcomes for improving or developing the awareness of child school readiness among the working mothers in Bangladesh. Thereby, parents could prepare their children for schooling, and their children will get a better outcome from school, ultimately the nation will get the productive and efficient manpower for their economic development.

1.5 Objectives

The goal of the proposed research is to explore working mothers' perceptions of child school readiness. The following are the specific objective of the study:

1. To know working mothers' knowledge on child school readiness
2. To know working mothers' attitudes and practice on child school readiness.

1.6 Research questions

Based on the above-described objectives, the following are the research questions:

1. What are the working mothers understanding about child school readiness?
1. What are the working mother perceptions about (attitude and practice) child school readiness?
2. What is the parents' action towards their child's school readiness?

Chapter II

Literature Review

This chapter contains a review of related literature to provide an overview of school readiness and the parent's perception of school readiness. The first part of this chapter focused on the theory and understanding of school readiness. I also include previous studies focusing on the importance and differences of parental perceptions towards school readiness. Finally, I conclude this chapter by reviewing related studies done in developing countries like Bangladesh.

2.1 School readiness

School readiness indicates the readiness of the individual child to enter school, and also the condition in which a child is ready for learning experiences at school. School readiness could refer to the maturation of children's nervous system letting them develop various skills based on the received spur (Janus, et.al, 2007). In a broad sense, it is the complex concept that the researchers have more recently organized into the following five main domains (Pianta, 2002; Wynn, 2002):

1. Physical well-being or health and physical development,
2. Emotional maturity or social and emotional development,
3. Social confidence sometimes referred to as approaches to learning,
4. Language richness of the communication, and
5. Thinking and general knowledge

Each of these domains is an essential part of the overall school readiness of a child, which is influenced by multiple factors. Health and physical development are a crucial component of school readiness because it provides the ability to concentrate on school while having a suitable capability to be successful in the school. The factors which contribute to the child's readiness

in health and physical development include a healthy diet, appropriate routine for bedtimes, regular physical check-ups, up-to-date immunizations, and providing the child with ample facilities to use and develop the motor skills (Wynn, 2002).

The social and emotional component is considered another important component because if the children enjoy being with others, feel good about themselves, and confident in their capabilities, then they would be more likely successful at school, and also enjoy the schooling experience at their early stage. The major factors that contribute to this component include being friendly with other children in both group and individual settings, practicing skills like turning and following directions, learning to dress themselves independently. Also, if the children are provided tasks that provide appropriate encouragement and appreciation for completion, then they become more confident in their skills (Wynn, 2002).

The child's approach to learning is the third core domain of school readiness, and it is important to explore their curiosity. They also need a chance to be creative and learn basic problem-solving skills, so encouraging children to express their thinking and feeling about their work will help them take responsibility for their learning. The communication skill is the last fundamental part of a child's school readiness which can be developed in several ways. For example, listening to children and encouraging them to listen to others is the critical skill to convey their needs to others. Also, telling children their own stories could be helpful to develop communication skills (Wynn, 2002).

Child's level of preparedness during pre-schooling in cognition, linguistics, behavior, and emotion are drastically affected by the resources and interactions available at the school (Ramey & Ramey, 2004). Vandivere et al. (2004) used the nationally representative study to evaluate the variation of school readiness among socioeconomic and demographic subgroups. The data for the research was collected by the National Center for Education Statistics and included information about 20,000 children who attended kindergarten in the 1998-1999 school

year. The information was also periodically collected through 2004 for direct assessment of children and teacher, parent, and school administrator interviews. The results showed that regardless of socioeconomic status and ethnicity, usually all children made gains in school readiness indicators within the first two years of schooling. Lareau and Weininger (2008) performed a study with 88 families using the qualitative approach as well as detailed observations of 12 families to assess social class differences for their child school readiness. The researchers found that middle-class families usually tend to have a hectic pace of life mainly because they are typically involved in a number of activities. However, children from middle-class families tend to be exposed and have greater opportunities to participate in activities that promote cognitive and social development. In contrast, working-class and poor families were found to live in a more relaxed pace of life and their children usually played outside and/or watched television for long periods of time. The researchers found that little focus was placed on enhancing their child's skills through structured activities when parents in this social class did have free time. Welsh et al (2010) studied the development of cognitive skills and gains in school readiness for children from low-income families. About 160 kindergarten children (44% African American or Latino; 57% female) were followed longitudinally for the working memory and attention control growth in emergent literacy and numeracy skills. The study reported and discussed the reduction of school readiness gaps associated with socioeconomic disadvantage. Anasari and Winsler (2012) examined the school readiness among low-income, Latino children attending in the family childcare versus the center-based childcare. The sample size for the study was about 6929 low-income Latino children (52% male); the sample children were four-year-old between the years of 2002–2007. Although there were no demographic differences among the family status who attended in the family childcare versus the center-based childcare, the children in center-based daycare showed improved cognitive, language, and social skills, whereas the children in family-based daycare

lost ground in these areas over time. Dotterer et al. (2012) studied the link between socioeconomic status and school readiness, testing whether parenting and financial stress affect this link. The study included about 164 mother-child from African American and European American families. The results from the study indicated that the effects of parenting behaviors on school readiness could vary by racial groups. The study also stated that the findings obtained for European American families could not be assumed applicable to ethnic minority families as well. Ip et al (2016) studied the effects of socioeconomic status on the school readiness of preschool children in Hong Kong. In the study, about 69 teachers from 20 kindergartens from rich and poor districts in Hong Kong evaluated the school readiness of 567 preschool children. The results indicated that children from higher socio-economic backgrounds families are very ready for school than those children from lower socioeconomic status.

Some research reported that most parents consider the ability to understand and follow instructions is the main characteristics of children's school readiness. On the other hand, teachers consider the manipulative skills and self-control capability are more important rather than the importance of numeracy & literacy skills (Zhang, Sun & Gai, 2008).

Brooks-Gunn and Markman (2005) conducted a literature review to further understand ethnic and racial gaps within school readiness. They found supporting evidence among the literature that the children in families with high socio-economic backgrounds engage in significantly more conversations and have larger vocabularies than children in middle and low-class families. And, these differences tend to accelerate during the early years of development which results in a broad gap by the time children enter into the school; leaving children behind in school who are economically disadvantaged. Overall, there are many factors within a child's environment related to ethnicity and social class that contribute to the children's development and consequently their readiness to enter school.

2.2 Parents perception

The personal characteristics of parents including their perception about the needs of their children regarding their development and school readiness are typically linked with parent behaviors (Landry & Smith, 2008). West et al. (1995) studied the possible differences between kindergarten teachers and the parents' belief, which is essential for child school readiness. The content of each survey was broken into two groups, such as behavioral and school-related items. The study reported that only 42 percent of teachers considered paying attention is a very important skill for school readiness, whereas about 80 percent of parents believed this as an essential ability for their children to possess. McBryde, Ziviani, and Cuskelly (2004) studied parent perceptions in relation to teacher perceptions of school readiness. About 215 children and their families from various levels of socioeconomic status and 75 preschool teachers and childcare workers were recruited to participate in the study. A variety of assessment tools, including interviews, observation, questionnaires, and standardised measures, were used to collect data on each child's behavior, temperament, and readiness for school, as well as the perceptions of both parents and teachers. The study concluded that several factors play into the perceptions of parents and teachers, which are not necessarily solely related to academic types of behaviors and skills. Similarly, a few studies investigated the differences in parents' perceptions and attitudes about school readiness among different groups (Diamond, Reagan, & Bandyk, 2000), between the parents and the teachers (McBryde et al., 2004; West et al., 1995), and among different income level of family members in African American families (McAllister, Wilson, Green, & Baldwin, 2005). A few studies also examined how these differences influence parent attitudes that influence their children's school readiness. Using the dataset from the National Household Education Survey (NHES) conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics Diamond et al. (2000) studied to find the parents' understanding of school readiness and the link to ethnicity and child development. The survey was conducted

to households nationwide using random-digit-dialing methods and the data were collected through computer-assisted telephone interviewing. The study reported that Black, Hispanic, and other parents of color are more concerned about their children's readiness for school than White parents. The study also reported that parents engage their children in home and community activities regardless of ethnicity.

Barbarin et al. (2008) studied the parent beliefs of school readiness and the link between all three variables (ethnicity, socio-economic status, and child ability). The research findings suggested that parents perceive very nominal knowledge, such as they consider knowing letters and numbers as more important for school readiness than inferential thinking like complex cognitive skills. Also, the findings showed that parental perceptions were not linked to socio-economic status and only minimally linked to ethnicity. Puccioni (2015) studied the relationship among parents' school readiness-related beliefs, transition practices, and children's academic development direction in reading and mathematics using data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Kindergarten Cohort, and the total sample of the study was about 12,622. It is usually believed that the parents' school readiness-related beliefs and expectations influence children's early development at school. The results also showed that the parents' school readiness beliefs were positively linked with children's achievement in kindergarten at an early stage and their growth over time. It indicates that the parents who place more value on school readiness have their children with higher average scores at school and also experience more rapid rates of growth. Another important finding was that parents' transition practices were also positively linked with children's performance at early school in reading and mathematics. The parents who indicate involving in more transition practices resulting in achieving higher average scores at the onset of kindergarten. Jung (2016) studied the relationship between parental perception about school readiness, family involvement in home learning activities, and the children's attitudes in kindergarten. The findings from the

study suggest that higher engagement in shared parent-child activities could be an important focus for intentional efforts. Therefore, early childhood educators and family practitioners should encourage parents to participate in different activities with their children.

Overall, there are several questions that have been answered clearly through previous research. Most studies commonly concluded that school readiness is very complex and multidimensional. Previous research has also revealed that even after gaining the understandings of factors contributing to school readiness, but the ethnicity and social class discrepancies still exist in children's preparedness to enter school. Researchers have pointed out that not only the parental characteristics influence the child's school readiness, but also these characteristics vary depending on the cultural backgrounds (Brooks-Gunn & Markman, 2005). Furthermore, parental perceptions regarding school readiness are correlated with parent behavior (Landry & Smith, 2007). However, these research findings derived from studies at different cultural backgrounds could be different for developing countries like Bangladesh.

2.3 Research gaps

Momen (2010) evaluated the preschool teachers' knowledge of early childhood development and educational practices in Metropolitan Dhaka, Bangladesh. The research findings revealed that preschool teachers have very superficial knowledge about early childhood education and its implications for classroom engagement with toddlers. Aboud & Hossain (2011) studied the impact of the pre-primary school on primary school achievement in Bangladesh. The quality of about 30 pre-primary schools in rural Bangladesh was evaluated using the ECERS-R (Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised) and ECERS-E (Extension). The study indicated that the overall quality in education improved from 3.50 in 2006 to 5.24 in 2008. The research findings support efforts to expand high-quality pre-school programs in developing countries like Bangladesh to help children succeed in the early primary grades. To our best

knowledge, no studies were found about the working mother's perception of the child's school readiness in Bangladesh. In this aspect, this research is conducted to find the gap.

Chapter III

Methodology

Chapter 3 provides a brief overview of the research design used for this study. This chapter is divided into five different sections. The first part has described the research approach considered for the study, and thereafter the site and sample of participants. The description of the methods of data collection was presented in the third section. The fourth section provides a description of the research ethics, and the last section includes the limitation of the study.

3.1 Research approach

To explore “working mothers’ perception of school readiness of “3-5-year child”, phenomenology, which is a qualitative research approach has been followed. A phenomenology is a common approach in the qualitative research approach which has its root in the 20th-century philosophical movement based on the work of philosopher Edmund Husserl (1859-1938). Phenomenology is a qualitative research method that is used to describe how human being experiences certain phenomena. A phenomenological study attempts to set aside biases and preconceived assumptions about human experience feelings and response to a particular situation. It allows the researcher to derive into the perception, perspective, understanding, and feeling of those who have actually experienced or lived in the situation of interest by studying the perspective of multiple participants a researcher can begin to make generalizations regarding what it is like to experience a particular phenomenon from the perspective of those who have lived experience. Therefore, a phenomenological qualitative research approach will be used in this study; the research has tried to gain an in-depth perception of “working mothers’ perception of 3 to 5 years of child school readiness.

In fact, to know the research subject’s (mothers) knowledge, practice, attitude, and role, the in-depth-interview (IDI) and focus group discussion (FGD) was carried out in a structured way.

3.2.2 Study Sample

Twelve working mothers who have children aged between 3 to 5 years were considered (6 graduate mothers who work in a corporate sector and 6 non- graduate mothers who work as a garments worker) as the sample participants for this study. The participants were selected from different socio-economic backgrounds for the purpose of making a generalisation from the study. The study was conducted among the participants from a corporate office in Gulshan, and a garment factory in Mirpur, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

3.2.3 Sampling

A purposive sampling method was used in this study. The selection of the purposive sample method is fundamental to the quality of data gathered for ensuring the reliability and competence of the informant (Tongco, 2007). The purposive non-probability sampling technique was used to conduct this research because this method has a specific purpose for sampling selection to reach the target sample. The following are the inclusion criteria for sampling:

- Mother should have a child aged between 3 to 5 years,
- Participants are from the different socio-economic class background, and
- Participants need to show interest in voluntary participation to provide information.

3.3 Description of the data collection method

Qualitative data collection methods are exploratory in nature and mainly concerned with gaining insights and understanding of underlying reasons and motivations. The data collection method for qualitative research is typically time-consuming; therefore, data were collected from a smaller sample size. The benefits of the qualitative approach are that the information is richer and has a deeper insight into the phenomenon under study. The popular qualitative data collection methods used in social science studies include interviews, focus groups, observation,

and action research (Yamagata-Lynch, 2010). However, in this study, the in-depth-interview (IDI) and focus group discussion (FGD) methods were applied to collect qualitative data. The detailed description of these two methods has been described in the following subsections.

3.3.1 In-depth-interview (IDI)

Some initial data were collected using intensive and in-depth interviews by posing structure or semi-structured questions to collect some specific information about working mothers' perception of 3-to-5 years of child school readiness. As a researcher, I have chosen the interview method for data collection because it is a two-way process where the researcher can be involved in the discussion with the interviewees and also gets the opportunity to clarify any points of confusion instantly as they arise. In this regard, Robson (1993, p.228) states, "An interview is the best tool to use in conducting research of a small-scale inquiry. The interview is the flexible and adaptable way of findings things out. It is a kind of conversation with a purpose." I have conducted four IDIs with selected two graduate and two non-graduate mothers at their homes during a convenient time. The study samples were selected based on who wanted to participate willingly.

The questionnaire for IDI was developed and thereafter reviewed by my thesis supervisor. Translation, back translation, and synthesis were also done. The questionnaire was modified and edited several times on the basis of feedback received from experts. Then it was thoroughly tested two times in the field before finalisation. The questionnaire contains two sections (Appendix-A). The first section includes questions related to the demographic profile of the participants such as name, age, academic qualification, family income, child's age, etc. The second section includes eighteen (18) questions related to parental perceptions, knowledge, attitude, practice, and role to promote child school readiness. I administered the Bangla version of the questionnaire (Appendix-B) in the study. The in-depth interview was scheduled in the participants' residences as it was comfortable for them. The IDI's were conducted during the

weekend as the participants were free during the weekend and each day one in-depth interview was conducted. The length of each interview was about 40 to 45 minutes.

During the in-depth interview, clear and open-ended questions were asked so that participants could answer flexibly in their own words and sensitive and misleading questions were avoided. All questions for the interview were semi-structured. All interviews were conversational according to the feature of the in-depth interview in a qualitative approach. The responses were recorded with audiotape and written notes (field notes) as much as possible. The researcher's views and feelings were recorded immediately after the interview. All journals and analytical memos without delay were maintained.

Before starting the interview, the written consent was taken from each participant. As a researcher, I introduced myself and given a clear idea about the purpose of the study at the beginning of the interview. The rapport with participants was built and participants talked freely and openly. All the participants were treated as experts and the researcher addressed all questions listed in the interview guideline. The follow-up questions were asked in order to elicit participants' complete knowledge and experience related to the research topic. The researcher observed and documented participants' nonverbal behavior and contextual aspects of the interview as part of her field notes. At the wrap-up session, the researcher thanked and appreciate participants for their time and sharing.

3.3.2 Focus groups discussion (FGD)

The focus group discussion (FGD), is used to solicit participants' perceptions of the 3-to-5-year child school readiness. Two focus group discussions were conducted: one FGD was conducted with a graduate mother who has a 3-5-year-old child. Another FGD was conducted with non- graduate mother who has also 3-to-5-years old child. The participants are typically selected to participate in this qualitative research based on transparent criteria, such as female,

educational qualification; six mothers were graduate and the other 6 mothers were non-graduate and had children ages between 3 to 5 years.

One focus group discussion (FGD) with 5 graduate mothers was conducted at BRAC Institute of Educational Development, BRAC University (BIED, BRACU), Niketan, Dhaka to explore their views. The time duration was approximately 60 minutes. The sampling approach was purposive. Information of the participants is attached to Appendix C. The other FGD was conducted with non-graduate mothers at a restaurant in Mirpur on the weekend at a convenient time. The participants were managed by snowball sampling.

FGD checklist was developed by me and thereafter reviewed by my thesis supervisor. Translation, back translation, and synthesis were also done. The checklist was modified and edited several times on the basis of feedback received from the supervisor. Then it was thoroughly tested once in the field before finalisation. The FGD was captured by a researcher from the BRAC Institute of Educational Development. I facilitated the FGD as a moderator, as well as note-takers and as an observer. One friend of mine helped me with a recording device for recording of the discussion. I clearly introduced and addressed the discussion topic during the FGD, and I was open, alert, probing, and encouraged everyone to take part in the discussion. The FGD proceeded as follows:

- Discussion started with an ‘ice-breaker’, e.g. a round of introduction of participants.
- Introduced the main topic by the moderator and ensured that in this FGD, the information they provide will be confidential.
- Asked specific questions listed in the discussion. Some answers led to subsequent questions not included in the list.
- We appreciate all the participants and said good-bye.

The notes are clearly transcribed and formulated in full sentences soon after the discussion by the researcher. An audio recording of the session was also taken by the formal agreement from all participants. The most important points made by participants was written down as field note.

3.3.1 Data analysis

The processing, management, and analysis of data were started from the beginning of the data collection procedure. In this study, data were collected through the in-depth-interview (IDI) and FGD. Every day after coming back from the field, the field notes were reorganized with date and time. Transcription was done shortly without delay and put it on paper without any distorting from the tape recorder. The whole transcript was organized and then reviewed again. Any kind of discrepancy was solved to maintain accuracy.

There is a number of procedures used by qualitative researchers to analyse their data. As data were collected as text (written documents and transcriptions of recorded verbal communications) for the study, the researcher used the approach of content analysis as it categorizes verbal or behavioral data for the purpose of classification and summarisation. In content analysis, researchers examined the written documents or transcriptions of recorded verbal communications. Holsti (1969) defines content analysis as a technique that makes inferences systematically and objectively by identifying special characteristics of messages. Another reason for preferring content analysis in the study was it can be employed to virtually examine any type of communication. This approach involves coding and classifying data for the pupose of making sense of the collected data and to highlight the essential messages, features or findings. The code, issues, and themes generated from data were not predetermined in the study. As it is an exploratory study rather than a confirmatory study, the content analysis was chosen as a data analysis technique.

At the very beginning of data analysis, all research questions and objectives were reviewed again. All the transcriptions and field notes were read to get an initial sense of data. Then data were organized based on different categories (In-depth interview). Thereafter, the data corresponded directly with the research and sub research questions. The themes and issues emerging from data were sorted out then. Afterward, the data were coded in order to identify common patterns and themes. Finally, the data were interpreted and presented in the result section (Chapter 4).

3.4 Ethical Issues

Research ethics refers to a complex set of values, standards and institutional rules that help constitute and regulate the scientific activity. Maintaining the standard of research ethics for human subjects is very important. The potential risks for human subjects involved in the research could be physical, psychological, social, or economic. Based on the American Psychological Association, the following five important research ethics (Smith, 2003) were maintained for conducting the proposed research with human participants:

1. **Discuss intellectual property frankly:** It is very important to disclose the right of the participants for the intellectual property of the research outcomes. The best way to avoid disagreements is to talk about these issues at the beginning of a working relationship, even though many people often feel uncomfortable about such topics.
2. **Fair subject selection:** It is very important to select the participants appropriately for the research. The research participants would be selected fairly and equitably and without personal bias or preference.
3. **Informed the potential risk-benefit:** The potential risks to the research participants would be minimised, and potential benefits would be maximized. The potential risks and benefits associated with the research were informed to the participants, and it was

ensured that the potential benefits to individuals and knowledge gained for society must outweigh the risks.

4. **Informed consent:** The consent process ensures that individuals are voluntarily participating in the research with full knowledge of relevant risks and benefits. The individual participants were informed about the research and provided their voluntary consent before becoming research participants.
5. **Respect confidentiality and privacy:** The research participants were ensured about their privacy protection, their opportunity to withdraw, and their well-being. The participants were ensured about the confidentiality of the information that no identifying information obtained about them would be released to anyone outside of the study.

3.5 Validity & Reliability

The researcher took the utmost care in conducting the study, as validity is an issue in qualitative research to defend the accuracy and credibility of the study. Several strategies were maintained to ensure the validity of this study. To ensure credibility, prolonged participation (almost 3 hours) in the study site was done to overcome distortion. A peer debriefing was also done with a mentor. Member checking was conducted with one research participant. The researcher read out some data from the transcript to check accuracy and meaning with the selected participant. In order to ensure transferability, detailed descriptive data were collected.

For conformability, data were collected using multiple sources e.g. in-depth interviews and FGD to obtain a more complete picture and to cross-check information. The reflective journal was also kept for maintaining conformability and reflexivity practices. The reliability of the study was maintained by formulating the questionnaire clearly. The easy and clear language was used, checked and reviewed and based on supervisor feedback, the in-depth-interview

questionnaire was edited several times. Quiet physical settings were ensured at the time of data collection. Field testing was also conducted with two mothers to test before finalisation of the actual interview questionnaire.

3.6 Limitations of the Study

There are some potential limitations for successful and effective outcomes from the proposed research study. Following are the major limitations of the proposed research:

1. The small sample size was one of the major limitations of the study. Although the sample size was adequate for a small-scale qualitative study, if the sample had been a little large, there would have had more variability and diversity in the opinions expressed by the working mothers. Moreover, the results would have been easy to generalize.
2. Father's perception of child school readiness is also very important for the effective development of child performance in school. However, fathers did not include in the study for a shortage of time which makes the study findings less generalised. So, involving the father in the study could provide better outcomes.
3. The researcher did not get enough literature on working mother's perception of school readiness from the context of developing countries like Bangladesh.
4. Since all participants were working mothers along with 3-to-5 years child, so it was really difficult to match their convenient time for FGD.

Chapter IV

Results & Discussion

Chapter four mainly provides the results and the discussions from this study. The results section presents a brief description of the demographic profile of the participants, then presents the results based on three main themes focused on the study. Finally, the results are discussed and supported by comparing the outcomes from similar previous studies conducted in different countries over the world.

4.1 Results

4.1.1 Demographic profile of the participant

The demographic profile in the study examined the age range of mothers and children, educational qualification, and their socio-economic condition. The age range of the mothers was between 22-36 years of age. Information on the age of mothers shows that there were young as well as middle-aged mothers who participated in the study. All the participants had 3 to 5 years, aged children. Among the 12 mothers participated in the study, six of them had two children each, three of the mothers had four children each, two of the mothers had one child each, and the other mother had three children.

The educational qualification of the mother was also varied. Five of the mothers had completed Master's degree; one of the mothers has completed graduation. The mothers who completed graduation worked in the same office at Niketon, Gulshan, but with different designations- four mothers were research assistants, one mother was accounts officer, and another mother worked as communication officer. On the contrary, the study sample also consists of mothers who were mostly non-graduate. The educational qualification of non-graduate mothers was either secondary or higher secondary pass. All of the non-graduate mothers also worked in different

offices. Two of them worked as floor in-charge, two of the mothers were swing operator, and the other two mothers worked as cutting master.

Most of the graduate working mother's husbands completed a post-graduate degree, and three of their husbands worked at different companies in reputed positions. Husbands of the other two had their businesses. For all the participants, both (husband and wife) are an income source for their family. Both husband and wife's educational qualifications and job empowered their respective families in terms of family income. In Dhaka, the excellent quality of daycare is pretty expensive. Four graduate mothers sent their child to daycare, and another two mothers had highly paid nanny at home to look after their children. The educational qualification of the husbands of the six non-graduate mothers was not as high as the other group. Most of the husbands in this comparatively less privileged group did not complete graduation, and only one was found to complete graduation. Although the daycare in Dhaka is pretty expensive; however, the government-subsidized daycare is affordable. Therefore, two non-graduate mothers in this group sent their child to the government-owned daycare, and the rest of the four mothers' children stayed at home with their relatives.

Despite the differences in socioeconomic conditions, all of the mothers tried their best to provide necessary educational material to their children.

4.1.2 Theme 1: Mothers understanding of child's school readiness

4.2.1 Sub-theme: School readiness is a combination of some factor and skills

Most of the working mothers had an adequate idea about school readiness. Some of the working mothers especially those who were non-graduate had an ambiguous idea about child school readiness. Most of the working mothers agreed on one thing that school readiness is a combination of some factors and skills, and children should be ready in every way. Among them, one working mother stated that:

“I believe school readiness is a combination of some factor and skills, and child should be ready for school in every way like in academic side-basic knowledge of the alphabet, numbers, knows own name parents name, etc. From the physical point of view: good motor skills, well potty trained, early rising in the morning. Ability to do their own task. Mentally – approach to learning”.

Some working mothers agreed that school creates a platform for the child to be successful in academic life. They believed that perfect schooling could reduce the impact of mothers absence regarding school readiness, one mother has mentioned “

“...Actually, school is a large platform to be successful in life. So, parents should make their children ready with basic knowledge of literacy and also make them ready physically and mentally. Such as their ability to do his/her task and have good communication skills like a child can speak and can understand what is being asked to do.”

Another working mother added something with the previous mother:

“.... Actually, I want to add some I also get very less time. I still try to spend some quality time with my_sons. I have two sons: the elder one is eight-year, and the younger one is three and a half years old. During early time of my elder son, I had no know idea about school readiness but later I realize it is very important for a child, at the time of the second son, I am really very much concerned about school readiness, its seems to me school readiness is a combination of academic social-emotional, physical, mental, and language development. If the child gets ready through this development, its good for the child and his further academic life.”

Few working mothers agreed on “the statement that school readiness means to get their children ready academically. For enrolling into school child should know to count number, recognize the alphabet, able write own name, able to say the address and family member’s name. They

mostly emphasized on academic knowledge. After getting this answer probing was done further to know whether they could say about other skills that might be needed for school readiness.

One of the working mothers has mentioned:

“...Yes, actually this development will be automatically after enrolling in school. But language skill means communication skills which a child should have. And good health is also important.”

Most of the working mothers were familiar with the term “school readiness”. They were very focused and responsive to the discussed topic. However, some working mothers were still not sure about the term “school readiness”. They were (mostly non-graduate mothers) less responsive and felt shy to open up. One of them cited:

“So far, I know, for enrolling in school children should have some academic knowledge. But I really did not know before enrolling school children should learn some certain skills.”

Some of the mothers said that they practiced these skills at home but without knowing that these would promote school readiness. They believed that as human beings’ child should know these skills.

4.2.2 Sub-theme: Required skills to be ready for school

4.2.2.1 Physical skills

Most of the working mothers especially graduate mothers said that to be ready for school, some physical skill is required such as –ability to do own task, proper toilet training, able to run, jump, and early rising in the morning. Especially most of the working mothers faced difficulties to get them (child) ready in the early morning for school and for using the diaper. One of the graduate mothers mentioned:

“I have struggled a lot at my elder son's time. He used to be a diaper baby. After enrolling in pre-school, the class teacher asked me to stop using the diaper. The first few days, my son faced awkward situations, but by the time he becomes okay”.

Another working mother said regarding her child's ability to do their own task

“---Especially at tiffin time child should know to use fork and spoon. If the child has the ability to do own task such as the ability to drink water, able to carry their own bag, it will help the child to be confident in his academic life.”

But few working mothers were accurately concerned about child school readiness. So, from an early age, they maintain a routine for an early bedtime and taught proper toilet training. One working mother said:

“Usually, I don't use a diaper at home it's really expensive, that's why I started potty training from age 6 months. I only use it when I used to go outside.”

4.2.2.2 Emotional and language skills

Most of the working mothers emphasized different domains of a child's emotional and language development, such as the ability to speak properly, capable to understand other thought and instruction, ability to control self-emotion, etc. One of the mothers cited:

“...Crying is a common phenomenon for a child in the first few days of school. But if it takes a longer time then it's really hard for a working mother.”

Some of the working mothers agreed that parents should counsel children from earlier so they would have some idea about the school environment. Otherwise, they could suffer from separation anxiety. Some of the working mothers who had more than one child found to be much conscious about separation anxiety. One working mother cited:

“I was not enough conscious about counseling at the time of elder son, so he was attacked by separation anxiety. But my younger son was fine from the first day of school because he was well known about school rules and environment.”

4.2.2.3 Approach to learning

Most mothers agreed that the child should have an approach to learning. If the child doesn't pay attention to the class and teacher it will hamper a child's academic life. Few working mothers shared that their children are interested to read but not to write. One of the mothers cited:

"... usually at bedtime, I tell the story that's why my daughter loves to listen and read, but when I ask her to write something she refused."

4.2.2.4 Social skills

Most of the working mothers were very concerned about child social skills. Because most of the day the child spends time without mother. Most of the mothers mentioned some social skills such as the ability to adjust in the new environment, the ability to make and maintain peer relationships, etc. Some of the working mothers shared that their children are introvert, so they couldn't build strong peer relationships and feel shy.

4.2.2.5 Cognitive development

Most of the mothers said that cognitive skills are very important for a better outcome from school. They mentioned some skills such as problem-solving skills, quick response to the teacher instruction, the ability to solve any math quickly, etc.

4.2.3 Sub-theme: Sources of working mothers' knowledge of school readiness

Most of the working mothers were very updated about school readiness by means of using social networks. They used different social media such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram, etc. One working mother mentioned that:

"--Actually, during pregnancy time, I used to use the app to get information about pregnancy. At first, I saw the term but at the time of the first baby, I did not understand the importance of school readiness. Although I have taught so many things to promote his study bought fancy books, pens, color pencils, etc., but I was not concerned about a child's separation anxiety, my

elder son cried a lot first few days of school. For the younger ones, I try my best to smooth his transition to school and give him quality time.”

However, some working mothers hardly used any social media. For time constraints, they didn't have much time to use social media. But they got knowledge about school readiness from other sources. One of the working mothers stated:

“At the office during lunchtime, most of the colleagues discuss their children and their well-being. So, one of our colleagues shared her struggles for her child's school readiness. The first few days she used to cry a lot, she could not wake up in the morning, school time was at 8 am but she had to wake up at 7 am to be ready for school. The child also faced difficulties with adjusting to the new environment of the school, teachers, and classmates.”

4.2.4 Sub-theme: For proper child's school readiness daycare is a good option

Most of the working mothers agreed that daycare is a good option for adequate school readiness. At daycare, the child could learn so many things, especially for their social development. One mother said regarding this:

“---Actually, since I am a working mom, I get very little time. What I have done some people will not acknowledge me. Since I was so worried because I don't get enough time to make him properly ready for school. So, at the age of 2 years, I gave him at the daycare, so many basic things he learned from daycare. Eventually, those are helping him to be ready for school. Such as counting numbers, knowing the alphabet, colors, etc. As he is staying a long time at the daycare, so he is being developed socially as well. As a working mother for proper school readiness, daycare is a good option.”

But one of the working mothers disagreed on this and said:

“No, I don't send my child at daycare. I can't rely on daycare. Sometimes we see much viral news on social media regarding safety issues, it really scares me”.

4.2.5 Sub-theme: Required social skills, mental development, emotional development, language development

The social skills such as the ability to adjust new environment and building peer relation; the mental development skills such as how to overcome separation anxiety, approach to learning; the emotional development such as do not cry at school/control tear; language development such as the ability to understand others instruction and ability to express own thought; are necessary for school readiness.

All the graduate mothers agreed for better schooling child should attain some skills. Each of the mothers said about different skills. One mother mentioned:

“Of course, the child should have an interest in learning; my child is okay to read and listen to the story but doesn’t want to write. I keep counseling her and offered some colorful pen and pencil and paper. Gradually she becomes interested. For school readiness, reading writing both important.”

One mother said regarding separation anxiety:

“I just joined my job, so I started to send my son at daycare. At that time when he was 2years old, suddenly he stopped to eat, and he used to cry for a long period of time. Actually, he got separation anxiety, but a few days later when he started to know daycare mates and the caregiver then gradually come out from separation anxiety.”

4.2.6 Sub-theme: school readiness helps to be successful in further academic life and beyond

All mothers strongly agreed that school readiness helps the child to be successful in further academic life and beyond. The child who has early preparation for school readiness will be much easier to adjust at school. One of the working mothers specified that:

“Children should be healthy and fit. If the child feels healthy then he will not miss school and will pay attention to the class eventually he will do a better performance than who sometimes stays sick. So, school readiness helps a child to be a success in academic life and beyond.”

Another mother cited that:

“if the child admits school with some preparation then it will help the child for better and smooth understanding, and the child will normally do good results, and it will continue in further life.”

But few graduate mothers stated about the other side of it. They said that not only the proper school readiness would be helpful for their children to become successful in further academic life, but parents also must be conscious during the next steps of academic life.

4.2.7 Sub-theme: Promoting different school readiness skills should be started at different ages

Most of the working mothers agreed that the school readiness skills promoting process should be started at different ages. Different skills developed at different ages; for example, the parent should speak to the child more at an early age for their language development. One of the working mothers mentioned:

“School readiness is a combination of social, physical, mental, and language development. So, all these developments develop at different ages, suppose for language development: more you talk with your child she will learn to speak earlier, and child receptive vocabulary will be enriched. And, I can say about reading, to grow child interest in reading. As a mother, you can start this process since pregnancy or after the baby’s birth. On the other hand, physical skills can be promoted when he is in a physically stable situation such as when a child able to hold and grip by hand and at that time allow him to drink milk and water by himself.”

A few working mothers especially non-graduate mothers stated that they think from the age of three because at this age the child is able to communicate more effectively and able to speak and able to understand everything that is being said.

4.1.3 Theme 2: Mothers perception (attitude and practice) on child school readiness

4.3.1 Sub-theme: Mother's share own school experience

Most of the working mothers said that sometimes they share their own school experience with the children. Thereby, the child gets excited and show curiosity to listen more. One of the working mothers narrated:

“Sometimes I do share my own school experience with my child, but it doesn't do intentionally to promote a child's school readiness. Usually, when I spend quality time with the child at that time, I love to share my golden old days. My daughter also shows curiosity and she enjoy.”

Another mother in FGD added to the previous mother's point:

“actually, it doesn't matter how we share either intentionally or unintentionally basically its promoting child's school readiness. Because the child is getting the opportunity to know some exciting issues about school. For example, on the school premises, they used to play with friends. So, some interest is building into the child's mind about school”. Most of the non-

graduate mother also said they also share their own school readiness. One of them stated:

“I often tell my son I was a good student and usually didn't miss the class. So, you have to be much attentive and good student when you would go to school.”

4.3.2 Sub-theme: Take the child to visit a nearby school

Some working mothers stated that on the weekday's mothers didn't get time for visiting, but on the weekend when they used to outside to hang out, at that time, they showed their children a school and pointed that they would soon be admitted here.

One of the working mothers said:

“Now, my younger son goes to preschool, but he used to drop off his elder brother with his father or grandmother. His father took him to be known about school.”

4.3.3 Sub-theme: Arrange family get together and hangout

All the graduate mothers said that they mostly do hang out with family and sometimes arranged get together events. They believed this could help the child to be social, learn to share and adjust with new people and a new environment. And they also noticed that their child showed a positive and cheerful attitude

One mother mentioned:

“Intentionally I and my husband arranged to get together with family and friends, especially those who have children. So that children can spend quality time with other children. It also helps the child to be socially confident. My child waits for the whole week for the weekend.”

A few mothers said that sometimes on the weekend they used to go outside with their children. Some mothers also said that they usually didn't go outside for hangout but spent quality time with their children at home.

4.3.4 Sub-theme: Teach basic academic knowledge, reading, and writing

Most of the working mothers mentioned that their child went to daycare. At daycare, they were learning basic academic knowledge such as recognizing ABC and counting numbers, knew color names, and sometimes practiced writing as well. After office hours in the evening, some mothers routinely sat with their children to study. One of the working mothers stated that:

“It doesn't matter how I feel and how tired I am. I routinely sit with them for studying so my children can become habituated for the study. And, I also ask how the day at daycare was and what she learned today.”

Some working mothers said they also teach basic academic knowledge and writing at home.

One mother said:

“ I don’t have the helping hand, after coming from office I have to cook and do household chore by myself as well as I try to teach some basic academic knowledge through play, when we climb stair we step up and down by counting, at bedtime, I recite ABCD and 123 with her, etc.”

4.1.4 Theme 3: Working mothers roll to promote child school readiness

4.4.1 Sub-theme: Roll model

Most of the working mothers agreed on that since the mother is closest and emotionally attached to the child, so the mother could be a positive model for the child’s wellbeing. Some of them said they had changed some habits in their life after becoming a mother. One graduate mother stated:

“Normally, as a working mother, I get less chance to teach him something. So, I extremely try to be a role model in front of him because children’s physical and emotional environments affect their behaviorism. Suppose I never speak loudly and rudely in front of the child and try to speak the truth. Eventually, he is learning to speak the truth and to be polite. This behaviorism is needed for school life.”

All working mothers were concerned about their time constraint so they tried to utilize their time in a qualitative way. A positive role of mothers could inspire their children to be positive in their attitude. One mother mentioned:

“As we are working mother, we have to spend major time of the day at the outside of the home but still somehow we are (mother) most close to the child. When I get back from the office, usually, I don’t show the tired face, I listen to her whatever she wants to tell me that’s why my daughter also listens to me. As a result, I listen to her, she also listens to me. Definitely, it will help her in school to follow teacher instruction.”

4.4.2 Sub-theme: Responsive care

Almost all the working mothers viewed responsive care as a platform for building positive behavior and through this attitude child also felt valuable to the family. Most of the working mothers agreed that mothers' warm and responsive care to the child helps the child to feel emotionally secure. One graduate mother stated that:

“A warm and responsive child-mother relationship helps the child to be confident, to grow a strong personality, and be courageous, these social skills is very important for child school readiness.”

Another mother added:

“This responsive care and mother child-sensitive relationship will encourage the child to develop some other positive relationship such as strong peer relationship and the teacher-student relationship. If a child can build strong peer relationships and good teacher-student relationships, then the child will be interested in school and will be more attentive as well as approach more towards learning. Definitely, these are the part of success in school readiness.”

4.4.3 Sub-theme: Mothers active involvement with child

Most of the mothers agreed that the mother should have an active involvement with the child.

One of the working mothers stated:

“Sometimes when I come home from the office, I see my daughter is drawing, and she demands to sit with her, ask me to choose colors. I try to spend some time, especially when she plays with educational toys, and I try to play along with her. I believe this playful interaction such as sometimes she plays with block and shape helps the child in cognitive development. Then, I tell her to build a long tower or short tower sometimes show some sample and tell her to let's build it. These interactions related to vocabulary growth, math skills, and creativity. Definitely, this intelligence is much needed for school readiness.”

On the contrary, some working mothers especially non-graduate mothers said that so much involvement could be harmful to the child because the child could be completely dependent on the mother and they couldn't spare the mother's absence. But few of them disagreed on this issue, one of them cited:

"I can't agree with this opinion. It is true sometimes it can happen. But I believe mothers active involvement help child to become independent; surely you have to counsel to the child."

4.2 Discussion

The aim of this present study is to gain insight into the working mothers' knowledge practice attitude and role on three to five years of child school readiness. A study carried out by Puccioni (2015) showed that the ideas and beliefs parents have about the early schooling process have a positive influence on their parenting practices, and in turn, it has a positive influence on children's outcomes in early education. For the present study, a qualitative research design was followed.

In this current study, 12 working mothers selected as samples. The demographic profile in the study indicates that all participants are educated; 6 working mothers have completed graduation and 6 working mothers are non-graduate. This present study attempted to identify the working mother's knowledge of the child's school readiness. In general, most of the working graduate mothers provided detailed data but some non-graduate mothers felt shy to open up. The study shows that the graduate working mother's idea is more advanced than non-graduate working mothers in terms of school readiness. Findings of the present study indicate that high-level maternal education inspired the mother to be confident, focused, responsive, up and to carry a strong personality. That's why during the time of data collection graduate working mothers were more responsive, confident, and focused on the discussed issue than non-graduate working mothers. The educational qualification has also been found to be related to financial

status as the graduate working mother's financial situation is better than non-graduate working mothers because job position depends on educational qualifications.

Although all mothers were busy in their professional life still they were the primary caregiver in the family. This present study was attempted to identify the working mother's ideas about child school readiness. The findings of this study show that most of the working mothers had a clear idea about school readiness, and they emphasized the child's holistic development (academic, physical, mental, cognitive, and language development). Most of the mothers shared that they get concerned and gathered knowledge about school readiness by using social media such as Facebook, which focuses on positive parenting knowledge and idea, and some Mobile apps such as BABY CENTER, KIDS CARE, etc. Most of the non-graduate mother, however, emphasized on academic skills development for proper school readiness. During the time of interview, mothers were probed further to know about the knowledge of other developmental domains. After probing some of the non-graduate working mothers, however, acknowledged the importance of other developmental domains (physical, mental, language, and cognitive) as well as academic skills development (Recognizing letter, counting numbers, etc.). So, this study indicates the maternal educational background and access to information affect the knowledge of the child's school readiness. Similar studies have been conducted in different countries, which showed similar results that the maternal educational level has been found to be linked to their views on school readiness (Cutcliffe et al., 1999; Cornel, 1993). In fact, Cornel (1993) found that a majority of parents who completed their college study believed that academic skills and language skills and social and emotional behavior were important for kindergarten readiness compared to the majority of parents who had less than a high school education, high school education, or some college, who placed more importance on academic skills. Regardless, parental education level is often a variable considered in studies of children.

Current findings indicate that most of the graduate working mother prefers to send their child either at English medium schools or any reputed Bangla medium school and it's most prevalent when both parents share a good educational background and income status, especially when mothers have a quite sound educational background. From the interview, it has also appeared that most of the mothers prefer to send their children to schools at an early age (between 3 plus years to 4 years), and for promoting school readiness most of the mothers' first choice is daycare since they are able to effort daycare. Although some of the non-graduate working mothers also send their child to the government daycare, they had a hidden desire to send their children in private daycare since they believe private daycare provides high-quality service. Most daycare centers in Dhaka City are very expensive, so it is impossible for less income working mothers to send their children to a private day-care center. On the other hand, some of the working mothers kept the child to their relatives (mother, mother in law, sister, maid, etc.). The research findings from this study show that maternal socio-economic background affects the foundation of the child's school readiness, which affects further academic life and beyond. Also, working mothers have time constraints, so they are unable to spend quality time to promote school readiness. Therefore, the working mothers prefer to send their children to daycare for proper grooming to be ready for school. It is possible for those mothers who are financially solvent However, some working mothers were unable to take proper initiative to promote child school readiness due to their financial constraints. This study concluded that the socioeconomic status of a family has an important role to play in determining school readiness efforts taken by the mothers. In the previous study (Hauser and Robert, 1994), it has been found that children from low socioeconomic families and minority children gave attention to educators in their ability to adjust at school. There are some areas of concern including cultural perspectives, nutrition, language barriers, parent involvement, single-parent families, etc.

Perez-Johnson and Maynard (2007) discussed the concern related to the achievement gaps between children of low income and diverse ethnicity/race as a factor in policy and productivity in the educational system. The study found that early vigorous intervention for disadvantaged children could be the best chance to reduce gaps in school readiness. Duncan and Magnuson (2005) found that increasing family income could be a promising intervention to reduce the achievement gap in school readiness. But, this is related to many other factors, so the government initially could subsidize private daycare centers in Dhaka city to open and run for the children of the lower-income family. Early et al. (2006) found that children from high socioeconomic families had higher academic skills in math and language and fewer behavior problems as compared to their disadvantaged peers.

It's interesting to note that despite the difference in the income status of parents, all the mothers were trying their best to promote school readiness, and all the mothers were conscious of a child's educational development. The time constraint is a vital factor for all working mothers which plays a big role in making their perception towards their children's school readiness. In this study, both groups of working mothers frequently addressed this issue as well as the dilemma they face between the career and the proper childcare. Most non-graduate working mothers faced a hidden crisis to balance their work, family, and child. On top of that, these mothers couldn't afford domestic workers, so they are mainly responsible for their family and child wellbeing. To balance equally between family and job, sometimes it disappoints them which ultimately affects their family life and workplace. On the other hand, most graduate mothers are privileged by having domestic workers in their homes to minimize the time constraint they face to look after their children and to step up in their career. According to a study conducted by Hunt and Samman (2016), caring for children can be a source of joy and satisfaction, but with limited time, it also constrains women's ability to do other kinds of works. In Sri Lanka, less than 11% of mothers of children under five years of age were likely to engage

in the job market than other women (Khight and Gunatilaka, 2014). Interviews with working women who had to quit their job found that they quit their job primarily because of their inability to get childcare support (Madurawala, 2009). In addition, one-third of female employees who interviewed considered quitting their jobs because of difficulties in balancing the costs of childcare with work, while one-quarter had encountered pressure from their husbands or other family members to quit work to look after their child (Madurawala, 2009).

This study also attempted to identify the practices for promoting school readiness. Despite the time constraint, the mothers who stayed at home did various practices such as teach basic academic skills in different unique ways for the development of academic skills. Besides these mothers shared their school experience with their children for the development of mental preparedness, arranged family get-together and hang out with friends who have child for the development of their children's social skills. Mothers were also found to spend quality time through responsive caregiving practices for the development of the emotional and language skills of their children and allowed their children to explore different objects for developing children's cognitive skills (problem-solving skills). The current research findings show that the graduate working mother did this practice with the intention of promoting their child school readiness. The graduate working mothers acknowledged and understood the importance of school readiness for their children to become successful in further academic life and beyond. In addition, the graduate working mothers were privileged by the high socioeconomic status, so it was easy for them to perform the practices. On the other hand, the non-graduate mothers were less educated and underprivileged, so sometimes they were found ambiguous about the importance of school readiness, although more or less they also did some of the practices unintentionally, which promotes school readiness. Some of the non-graduate mothers had some idea about school readiness, but they were apathetic to perform the practice to promote school readiness.

According to a research report published by Bangladesh ECD Network (2019), parenting programs in the rural area of Bangladesh frequently offered to help promote positive parenting practices that helped children develop their full potentials. In Bangladesh, these programs entailed largely the transfer of knowledge to groups of mothers with young children. It was found that mothers acquired knowledge frequently but did not translate it into their behavior. A recent survey found that most of the rural mothers had no education and low socioeconomic status and that most were unconcern of the importance of fostering curiosity and self-confidence in a child (UNICEF, 2001).

Nowadays, mothers are very conscious of children's wellbeing. Most of the working mothers were very concerned about their role for children well being. A mother's role is very crucial for child holistic development. From the day a child is born, his/her first interaction begins with his mother. So, a mother can play an important role to promote a child's school readiness, but it's a challenging job for a working mother. Usually, working mothers get less time to spend quality time with children. The study findings show that both groups of the mother came home with long day tiredness, but none of them showed their tired face in front of the child. Besides household chore, mothers tried to be responsive, actively involved with the child while they were playing and played as a role model. These roles help the child to be confident, disciplined, attentive, persistent, sincere in relationship with peers and teacher, etc. The current study findings suggested that these skills are very important to smooth the transition to the school and to become successful in school life and beyond.

Previous studies also show that warm, sensitive, responsive, and emotionally secure relationships also provide the child with healthy models for future relationships. The children who consistently receive responsive and sensitive care from an early age are more likely to form positive relationships with adults and peers when they enter school (Center on the Developing Child, 2010). Parents especially mothers are an essential player to influence

children's early literacy development (Owocki, 2001). By adopting positive practices in the home such as storytelling at bedtime, introducing books early to children, etc., parents give children an advantage over the performance throughout primary school (Wade & Moore, 2000). Previous studies show that parental sensitive and responsive care in their children's learning positively affects the child's performance in both primary and secondary schools (Feinstein & Symons, 1999; Fan & Chen, 2001). Positive parental engagement also leads to higher academic achievement, greater cognitive competence, more important problem-solving skills, greater school enjoyment, better school attendance, and fewer behavioral problems at school (Melhuish et al., 2001).

Chapter V

Conclusion and Recommendations

Chapter five presents the major conclusions based on the outcomes of the study, and some recommendations been provided for better development of child's social, emotional, and educational skills through awareness on child school readiness.

5.1 Conclusions

School readiness is an important indicator for the child's educational development in their early stage of development which includes the areas of social-emotional, cognitive, language and literacy, and physical development. In Bangladesh, a good number of women are involved in work besides their household chores, but there is a very limited information available about working mothers' perception on school readiness. It is very important to know their perceptions of school readiness for the transition of their children to school and also develop their social, emotional, and educations skills for their successful development throughout their life. The following significant conclusions could be pointed based on the analysis of the results from this study which focused on the perception of working mothers on school readiness:

- Working mother's opinions are significantly different depending on socio-economic status and their educational level. However, most workings mothers are concerned about their children' development especially for their performance in exams.
- The results from the study indicate all mothers have a time constraint, and non-graduate mothers have a financial constraint. However, they try their best to provide support for their child development.
- Although mothers get tired after their work, they try to support their children in every possible way, which helps the child to be competent in school and throughout their life.

- Fathers' perception also very important for getting an effective outcome from the overall parents' contributions to the development of child school readiness. Therefore, a future study is recommended including the fathers' perceptions regarding this issue. Also, a longitudinal study could be performed for getting more concrete perceptions about working mother perceptions on school readiness.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the outcome of this study, the following points have been recommended for creating awareness and supporting the working mothers to understand the importance of school readiness for their child's future development:

- Some kind of arrangement should be made by the employer to support the working mother for making a balance among the job, family, and children.
- Some interventions should be taken to create awareness among underprivileged mothers because they are still ambiguous about school readiness.
- The government should take initiative to promote daycare and ensure high quality in the government run daycare, so that all working mother from different socio-economic background can rely upon the service.
- Occasionally, arrange health camps (counseling sessions) to support the working mother's mental health.

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Appendix: A

Research Title: Working Mothers' Perception on Three-Five Years Child School Readiness in Dhaka City.

Research Objectives:

- To know working mothers' knowledge about child school readiness
- To know working mothers' attitudes and practice towards child school readiness.

Research Questions:

- What does the working mother understand about child school readiness?
- What are the working mother perceptions about (attitude and practice) child school readiness?
- What is the parents' role regarding the child's school readiness?

Questionnaire

Demographic Information of participants

Participants Name: Participant Age: Education and Occupation:

Child Name and Age:

Date:

Questionnaire for In-depth-Interview (IDI)

The following questions will be asked to working mothers about the perception of school readiness.

1. What do you think about the topic (school readiness) that has brought up here?
2. How many children do you have? how old is your preschooler?
3. What is your preferred time of the day to spend most with your child as a working mother?

4. Do you think school readiness is important for a child's potential benefit in academic learning?
5. Do you talk with your child about the school to smooth the transition?
6. Does anyone of your child already go to school? Do they share their schooling experience with your pre-schooler?
7. Does your preschooler sometimes go to school with his/her siblings?
8. Have you taken him/her to visit a nearby school?
9. Does he/she go to any childcare center?
10. Have you shared your own schooling experience with your children?
11. How does he/she react when you shared about your schooling experience?
12. Do you try to make him understood that school is a big platform for learning?
13. How frequently do you talk to your child about school?
14. What is your thought about a mother's role to make their child ready for school?
15. Do you teach him/her basic literature at home? Does he/she fell interested in literature?
16. Do you teach your children reading and writing of alphabets and numbers?
17. Does he ask anything about school?
18. Do you take him/her to any public gathering place where he can learn sharing, meet and greet with new people?

Questionnaire for Focus Group Discussion (FGD):

1. What do you understand about school readiness?

2. When does a child be ready for going to pre-school?
3. What physical requirements a child should have to attend in pre-school?
4. What are the social and emotional prerequisites for a child to start pre-schooling?
5. What are the skills a child should have for being ready for pre-schooling?
6. What are the benefits of pre-schooling for a child?
7. Do you arrange a family gets together for your child's social development?
8. Do you think the mother's strong role in the family is necessary for child school readiness?

Appendix: B

গবেষণা শিরোনাম: ঢাকা শহরে তিন থেকে পাঁচ বছরের শিশু বিদ্যালয়ের প্রস্তুতি সম্পর্কে শ্রমজীবী মায়েরা উপলব্ধি।

আইডিআই (IDI) এবং এফজিডি (FGD) জন্য বাংলা প্রশ্নাবলী

❖ আইডিআই জন্য প্রশ্নাবলী

১. এখানে উত্থাপিত বিষয় (স্কুল প্রস্তুতি) সম্পর্কে আপনার কী ধারণা?
২. আপনার কতটি বাচ্চা আছে? আপনার প্রাক স্কুল কত বছর বয়সী?
৩. আপনার সন্তানের সাথে শ্রমজীবী মা হিসাবে সবচেয়ে বেশি সময় কাটাতে আপনার পছন্দের সময়টি কোনটি?
৪. আপনি কি মনে করেন যে একাডেমিক শিক্ষার ক্ষেত্রে সন্তানের সম্ভাব্য সুবিধার জন্য স্কুল প্রস্তুতি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ?
৫. আপনি কি আপনার সন্তানের সাথে উত্তরণটি মসৃণ করতে বিদ্যালয়ের বিষয়ে কথা বলছেন?
৬. আপনার সন্তানের কেউ কি ইতিমধ্যে স্কুলে যায়? তারা কি আপনার প্রি-স্কুলারের সাথে তাদের স্কুলের অভিজ্ঞতা আলোচনা করা?
৭. আপনার প্রি-স্কুলার কি কখনও কখনও তার ভাইবোনদের সাথে স্কুলে যায়?
৮. আপনি কি তাকে কাছের কোনও স্কুল দেখার জন্য নিয়ে গেছেন?
৯. সে কি কোনও শিশু পরিচর্যা কেন্দ্রে যায়?
১০. আপনি কি নিজের স্কুলের অভিজ্ঞতা নিজের বাচ্চাদের সাথে আলোচনা করেছেন?

১১. আপনি যখন আপনার বিদ্যালয়ের অভিজ্ঞতার বিষয়ে আলোচনা করেছেন তখন সে কীভাবে প্রতিক্রিয়া জানায়?
১২. আপনি কি তাকে বোঝানোর চেষ্টা করছেন যে স্কুলটি শিক্ষার একটি বড় প্ল্যাটফর্ম?
১৩. আপনি আপনার সন্তানের সাথে স্কুল সম্পর্কে প্রায়শই কী কথা বলছেন?
১৪. সন্তানকে বিদ্যালয়ের জন্য প্রস্তুত করতে মায়ের ভূমিকা সম্পর্কে আপনার ধারণা কী?
১৫. আপনি বাড়িতে তাকে মৌলিক সাহিত্য পড়ান? সে কি সাহিত্যে আগ্রহী?
১৬. আপনি কি আপনার বাচ্চাদের বর্ণমালা এবং সংখ্যাগুলি পড়তে এবং লিখতে শেখাচ্ছেন?
১৭. সে স্কুল সম্পর্কে কিছু জিজ্ঞাসা করে?
১৮. আপনি কি তাকে এমন কোনও জনসমাগমের জায়গায় নিয়ে যান যেখানে তিনি নতুন লোকের সাথে ভাগ করে নেওয়া, সাক্ষাত করতে এবং অভিবাদন শিখতে পারেন?

❖ ফোকাস গ্রুপ আলোচনার জন্য প্রশ্নাবলী

১. স্কুল প্রস্তুতি সম্পর্কে আপনি কী বোঝেন?
২. কোন শিশু কখন প্রাক-বিদ্যালয়ে যাওয়ার জন্য প্রস্তুত থাকে?
৩. প্রাক-স্কুলে জন্য একটি শিশুর কোন শারীরিক প্রয়োজনীয়তা থাকতে হবে?
৪. একটি শিশু প্রাক-স্কুল শুরু করার জন্য সামাজিক এবং মানসিক পূর্বশর্তগুলি কী কী?
৫. প্রাক-বিদ্যালয়ের জন্য প্রস্তুত হওয়ার জন্য সন্তানের কী কী দক্ষতা থাকতে হবে?
৬. একটি শিশুর প্রাক-বিদ্যালয়ের সুবিধা কী কী?

৭. আপনি কি আপনার সন্তানের সামাজিক বিকাশের জন্য পরিবারকে একত্রিত করার ব্যবস্থা করেন?

৮. আপনি কি মনে করেন শিশু বিদ্যালয়ের প্রস্তুতির জন্য পরিবারে মায়ের শক্তিশালী ভূমিকা জরুরি?

Appendix: C

Table 1: Demographic profile of the research participants.

Serial no	Mother's name	Age	Education	Profession	Husband's Profession	Socio economic status	Child name	Child age (Year)
1	Rumon	30	MSC	Research Assistant	University Teacher	Upper middle-class	Saifan	3.0
2	Sabina	28	MBA	Account Officer	NGO Officer	Middle-class	Samara	4.0
3	Nabila	25	M.sc	Research Assistant	Privet job	Middle-class	Tulip	3.5
4	Nisha	26	BSS	Communication Officer	Businessman	Upper middle class	Ilham	4.0
5	Diba	32	MSC	Research Assistant	Businessman	Upper middle-class	Shehzaib	3.0
6	Tuba	25	MBA	Account Officer	Banker	Middle-class	Suherra	3.5
7	Shipa	26	HSC	Floor in-charge	Private Job	Middle-class	Shorna	4.5
8	Shikha	30	SSC	Floor in-charge	Garments Worker	Lower middle-class	Tisha	3.0
9	Munni	32	SSC	Swing Operator	Private Job	Middle class	Rumpa	4.0
10	Narqis	28	SSC	Cutting Master	Security Gard	Lower middle class	Pinky	3.5
11	Tisha	25	HSC	Swing Operator	Garments Worker	Lower middle-class	Koushik	4.0
12	Ringki	32	HSC	Cutting Master	Private Job	Middle class	Rayan	3.5