

WORKING MOTHERS' PERCEPTION ON THE SOCIO-EMOTIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR CHILDREN AGE 4-6 YEARS

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  
December, 2021

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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.

**Student's Full Name & Signature:**

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## Approval

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of Fall,2021 has been accepted as satisfactory in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science in Early Childhood Development on 19<sup>th</sup> December, 2021.

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## **Ethics Statement**

Title of Thesis Topic: “Working Mothers’ Perception on the Socio-Emotional Development of their Children Age 4-6 Years”

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1. Source of population: Participants were selected purposively from my office colleagues and friends and their circle.

2. Does the study involve

- a) Physical risk to the subjects(no)
- b) Social risk(no)
- c) Psychological risk to subjects (no)
- d) discomfort to subjects(no)
- e) Invasion of privacy(no)

3. Will subjects be clearly informed about

- a) Nature and purpose of the study (yes)
- b) Procedures to be followed (yes)
- c) Physical risk(N/A)
- d) Sensitive questions(yes)
- e) Benefits to be derived(yes)
- f) Right to refuse to participate or to withdraw from the study (yes)
- g) Confidential handling of data (yes)
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4. Will Signed verbal consent for be required

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

5. Check documents being submitted herewith to Committee:

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

### **Ethical Review Committee:**

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## **Abstract**

Young children learn socio-emotional skills such as managing emotions, collaborating with others, and following directions during their first few years of life. These capabilities serve as a basis for the development of literacy, numeracy, and other intellectual abilities that are necessary for academic and personal success. Nurturing and responsive connections with family members and other caregivers, specifically those who provide care in early learning settings, are essential for positive social and emotional development (Palmer, 2019).

This research ventured to explore the working mothers' perception about the socio-emotional development of their children in the early years (4-6). Data were collected through in-depth interviews and focus group discussion.

The study revealed that working mothers have the understanding of socio emotional development and they also understand the importance of socio emotional development of their children. Working mothers less time that they get to spend with their children has both positive and negative effect. Children struggle with working parents' busy schedule due to lack of mothers' time to spend with their children and their children do not feel emotionally connected with the working mothers and this leads to their children behaving rude, feeling depressed, tired and stressed. On the other hand, children were found to be happy when they can spend time with their mothers, when they get along with other children and even when they get engaged with extracurricular activities. The responsibility to build these skills among the children should be a combined responsibility where family and society should work together.

**Keywords:** Working mothers' perception; working mothers' understanding; practices; children's struggle; socio-emotional development.

## **Dedication**

This research is dedicated to my respected parents, who have been my great supporter till the end of my study. I specially dedicate this research to my loving mother, who was a working woman and wonderfully balanced both the work and family life as well as managed spending time with me.

## **Acknowledgement**

All praises and thanks are given to Almighty Allah, the most gracious and the most merciful, for blessing me with good health and all the opportunities to complete this Master's degree.

I would like to offer my heartfelt gratitude to Ms. Areefa Zafar, my research supervisor for the constant support regarding my research. In every step of this thesis, her dynamism, insight and sincerity have inspired and driven me to achieve better. Her detailed knowledge, enthusiasm and patience helped me to on track and complete writing the paper on time. Without her direction, I would not be able to construct this paper. I sincerely thank all of the BRAC IED faculty members for their guidance, suggestions, and cooperation.

I cannot begin to express my deepest appreciation to my family member for their unwavering support, without their assistance the completion of my dissertation would not have been possible. I am extremely grateful to my parents for the love, care and the sacrifices she has made throughout my life for my education and future. They are the reason for which I have come this far.



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# **Chapter I**

## **Introduction & Background**

### **Introduction**

The series of physical, language, mental, emotional changes that occur in a child from birth to the beginning of adulthood is referred to as child development. During this process, a child moves from dependent on their parents/guardians to increased independence. Child development encompasses the whole range of skills that a child acquires during lifetime, with socio-emotional development being one of the key areas (Buttfield, 2019). Children's social and emotional development refers to how they learn about themselves, their feelings, and what to expect while interacting with others. It is the development of the ability to establish and maintain social relationship, expressing and managing emotions in a variety of ways and, investigating and interacting with the natural world (Help Me Grow, 2021). Four main areas of children's socio-emotional development include: a) Temperament- the ability of children to adjust and respond to a variety of situations, b) Attachment –the ability to establish connection or emotional bond, c) Social skills – the ability of getting along with peers, and lastly d) Emotional regulation – the ability to control emotion and reaction in a variety of contexts (VA Infant and Toddler Specialist Network, 2021).

According to National Education Goals Panel (1995) and Thompson and Lagattuta (2006), researchers and practitioners have worked for decades for the better understanding and to support children's social and emotional development. Social and emotional competencies are increasingly being viewed as crucial for children's success, both in school and other settings as well as later stages of life into adulthood (Darling-Churchill & Lippman, 2016).

Since 1970s, governments in the United Kingdom, France, and the Nordic nations have aimed to increase the number of working women in workforce (Inman, 2019). According to new data issued by the Office of National Statistics (ONS), more women in U.K are employed currently than ever before (72.3%). Reasons are, the retirement age for women has risen and women are more focused with working rather than caring for kids or others (Ridout, 2020). In Bangladesh, 70% of foreign exchange comes where women work in export-oriented industries in the formal sectors. A large number of women are engaged in working as teacher, lawyer, journalist, government employees and also for non-government organizations where some of them are also mothers of young children (Working Mothers Act in Family and Workplace, 2021). Working women can have both negative and positive impact on their children's socio-emotional development. They can teach important life skills as well as their child can also feel neglected at times (Metilda and Maheswari).

## **Operational Definition**

As reported by Cohen et al. (2005), social-emotional development embodies the child's emotional experience, articulation, and governance including the tendency to construct satisfying and enjoyable connections with others (Social-Emotional Development Domain, 2021). According to Darla Ferris Miller (2013), "A child's positive relationship with trusting and caring adults is the key to successful social and emotional development."

In agreement with the National Scientific Council on the Developing Child (2004), the ability to detect and recognize one's own emotions, precisely read and comprehend emotional states in others, manage intense emotions and their affirmation in a constructive manner, regulate own behavior, develop empathy for others, and maintain connections are all core features of emotional development (Social-Emotional Development Domain, 2021).

## **Statement of the Problem**

A study conducted in the University of Kashmir, Srinagar discovered that, in comparison to children of non-working mothers who are socially adjusted, children of working mothers are socially maladjusted. Working mothers' children do not have enough time to spend with them; as a result, these children are more likely to be isolated, which impairs their social adjustment. Children of non-working mothers receive adequate attention from their mothers, which is a key necessity for socialization. Working mothers' children are emotionally unstable, whereas non-working mothers' children are emotionally stable. As working mothers execute multiple roles as household and occupational responsibilities, these results as a stressful and strained home life. While non-working mothers have just a single function to play, they get sufficient time to provide emotional support and a pleasant environment in their homes. For this reason, these children are emotionally stable and can manage their emotions easily (Syed and Khan, 2018). Full-time working mothers spend less time with their children, but they tend to trade quantity of time for better quality time (Ordway, 2018).

As Gottman et al., (1996) asserts that, one of the parenting styles includes how the parents respond to their children. But overall parental norms have not found to be major predictors of children's emotion-related responding (as cited in Fabes et al., 2001, p. 907). When parents are emotionally upset, they are more unlikely to see their children's bitter attitudes. Parents who consider their children's negative emotions as undesirable, according to Gottman (1997), they tend to penalize or minimize the negative emotion in order to rapidly halt their expressions.

Working parents who prioritize family time and are dedicated to their child's development are just as capable of forming a strong relationship with their children as non-working parents. A child's socio-emotional development, as well as his/her capacity to bond with the working parents may be impaired by certain circumstances. According to the "Michigan Family

Review" published in 2009, factors such as nonstandard work schedules and financial stress may have a negative impact on a child's social, emotional and behavioral development. Despite the possible potential drawback of having working parents, children may reap certain benefits. According to Healthy Children.org, children who have working parents may perceive the world as a less worrisome place and may feel a sense of pride knowing that their parents have careers (Miller, 2018).

Socially withdrawn children demonstrate inadequacies in social and emotional development, have low self-esteem and identity, are more likely to be ignored and mistreated by peers, and are more likely to internalize challenges such as loneliness, depression, and anxiety. They are less able to fix obstacles, cope with change, and persevere in overcoming barriers if they lack the required socio-emotional skills (Booth-LaForce & Oxford 2008; Rubin et al., 2009). Hence, they are less likely to prosper from schooling and as a result, attain lower efficiency of growth and health than they could with a formal education (Bangladesh ECD Network, 2020).

Though the poverty percentage in Bangladesh dropped from 44% in 1991 to 15% in 2016, based on the international poverty line of \$1.90 per day (using 2011 Purchasing Power Parity exchange rate), the COVID-19 pandemic has a significant impact on Bangladesh economy. Aside from the impact on health, GDP growth slowed and poverty increased. At the moment, majority of the Bangladeshi mothers are willingly engaged in jobs or business to help and support the family expenditure. Working parents may have their own beliefs about their children's socio-emotional development, along with different patterns and practices for preserving family time. This study will aid in the exploration of working mothers' perceptions of the socio-emotional development of their children aged 4-6 years.

## **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to know the perception of working mothers on the socio-emotional development of 4–6-year-old children to explore their thoughts and beliefs and how they manage their time and contributing to their children’s socio-emotional development. A study was conducted in Khulna city of Bangladesh where Weighted Mean Index (WMI) was used to capture the impact of working mother on the socio-emotional development of their children for different indicators. Children of working mothers doing religious activity gained the highest WMI value (2.57) and children showing respect gained the second highest WMI value (2.6) among the 11 indicators that includes- following elders, following daily routine, taking challenges, enjoying and willingness to go to school etc. (Mohsin, et al., 2019). A study indicates that, extended periods of full-time employment by mothers when their children were preschoolers had a negative impact on children’s academic achievements due to the reduced time available for the mothers to invest with their children during these formative years (Ermisch and Francesconi, 2001). Flexible arrangements both in working life and daycare services may help to promote children's socio-emotional wellbeing (Ronka, et al., 2017).

## **Significance & Justification of the Study**

Early childhood is the time when a child’s social-emotional development is at its peak. Social competence encompasses not just the capacity to work cooperatively with peers, but also the ability to show empathy, convey feelings, and willingly share (Cherry, 2019). The importance of appropriate social and emotional development cannot be overstated. As the most stable relationship for a child is provided by the parents, they play an essential role on child’s social and emotional development. Self-confidence, sensitivity, tendency to develop meaningful and lasting friendships and relationships, and a sense of value and importance to those around him/her are all shaped by the socio-emotional development. Besides, all other aspects of a child’s growth are impacted by social and emotional development (Help Me Grow, 2021).

AsHyson (2004) &Kostelink, et al., (2015) assert that, children with social and emotional difficulties have a hard time following commands and participating in educational activities. They are more likely to be rejected by classmates, have low self-esteem, perform poorly in school, and get dismissed when compared to their healthier classmates (Ho & Funk, 2018).

As Durlak&Weissberg (2011); Fetting, Santos, &Shaffer,(2012)asserts that, promoting socio-emotional development in early childhood is essential that includes the skills of problem solving, turn-taking, sensitivity, judgment call, and establishing connection (as cited in Dr. Syed, 2019, p. 3).Successfully building and maintaining social relationships, responding correctly in social circumstances, being responsive to other's feelings, and effectively controlling one's own emotions are all indicators of socio-emotional proficiency. Emotional regulation (ER) is a crucial component of social-emotional competence and it is viewed as the technique of changing, regulating, evaluating, and monitoring internal feelings and reactions in order to enable and individual to autonomously respond to provoking situations in order to attain individual goals (Clay and Wall, 2013). Children who are securely attached to parents and others are more likely to be emotionally expressive, have better knowledge of emotions, or be able to regulate their emotion than the insecure children (Scharfe, 2000). With growing number of women in the workforce, this study will be helpful in understanding the perspectives of working mothers on the socio-emotional development of their children which could create platform for further study in the context of Bangladesh.

## **Research Topic & Research Questions**

Working Mothers' Perception on the Socio-Emotional Development of their Children Age 4-6 Years.

- What is working mother's knowledge/perception on the socio-emotional development of their children?

- What are the practices they follow to support children's socio-emotional development as working mothers?



## **Chapter II**

### **Literature Review**

According to Hargraves (2004), in a family where both the parents are engaged in working is known as a working family. A working family is defined as one in which total number of hours worked by all adult members of the family is 20 or more hours per week (Work+Family Researchers Network, 2018).

According to Carter (2016), the socio-emotional development is the incorporation of social and emotional intelligence. Carter (2016) & Stanberry (2019) claim that, it relates to a child's ability to have self-assurance, trust, and empathy (Sanchrez, 2017). It also entails the right to express oneself through language and cognitive curiosity (Bohlin & Hagekull, 2009; Carter, 2016). The main elements influence socio-emotional development: biology, which includes genetics and temperament, environment, which includes socioeconomic position and support, and relationships. Genetics and temperament are examples of biological influences (Bohlin & Hagekull, 2009).

During the preschool and kindergarten years, socio-emotional development is critical (Reschke, 2019; Stanberry, 2019). It has been connected to healthy intellectual development and is expected to lay the groundwork for future academic achievement (Bohlin & Hagekull, 2009; Stanberry, 2019). Weak socio-emotional development can lead to riotous behavioral complications that studies have discovered to be extremely consistent across childhood and adolescence (Bohlin & Hagekull, 2009).

Erikson's stages of Psychosocial Development is a theory formulated by psychologist and psychiatrist Erik Erikson during the 1950s (Orenstein & Lewis, 2020). Erikson's eight-stage theory of psychosocial development emphasizes how people grow and change throughout their life with a focus on social interaction and conflicts that arise at certain phases of development.

Erikson noted that social connection and experience plays decisive roles. The 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> stages of the theory are related to this study topic as per the children's age. The 3<sup>rd</sup> stage of Erikson's eight stages of psychosocial development begins during the preschool years when children are between 3-5 years old. Social connections, as well as organizing and starting play and other activities can help children develop initiative. Feelings of self-doubt and regret may occur if the child's activities fail or are criticized. Purpose is a basic attribute that has been developed in this stage. Between age 5-12, the 4<sup>th</sup> stage begins and children learn to compare themselves to classmates around this time. They develop a feeling of accomplishment and pride in their scholarly work, sports, group events, and home life as a result of learning to be productive and receiving the assessment of their efforts. Feeling of inferiority or incompetence may develop if a child believes he/she do not match up. Competence is a basic virtue that has been established in this stage (Online MSW Programs, 2020).

According to psychosocial theory, human experience eight stages of development over the lifespan, from infancy through late adulthood. At each stage, there is a crisis or task that we need to resolve and a successful completion of each developmental task will result in a sense of competence and a healthy personality (Amidon, 2018).

Research Findings on the effects on socio-emotional development of children of working parents (Include mother):

Some positive and negative effects on the socio-emotional development of children of working parents have been described by Anisha Nair on the 'Impact of Working Parents on Child Development' in 2018. Because both parents have to work, they only have few hours to spend with their children at home. This teaches children the value of time and they become aware of the importance of time. Children of working parents learn to take their own decision at an early age since they realize that their parents are at work and may be able to deal with a particular

situation. This makes them independent and confident decision-maker. When children notice how their parents are balancing both work and family, it makes them more respectful towards their parents and thus they learn to cope up with their own stress better later in life. On the other hand, when parents have to hire nannies for their children in a nuclear family, it affects children psychologically. Working parents must make at least 1 hour of spending quality time with children otherwise they will feel restless and behavioral changes, stubbornness and random mood swings will occur. Giving less time also affects in establishing bonding between the parents and children.

Some ways that parents' can practice to foster their children's socio-emotional development have been explained by Kendra Cherry on the "Social and Emotional Development in Early Childhood" in 2021:

**Model Appropriate Behaviors** – For learning new things, observation plays an important role. When children will observe their parents sharing, expressing gratitude, being helpful they will learn and will have a good understanding of how to communicate with people outside home.

**Reinforce Good Behavior** – Praising children when they demonstrate good social behavior will help them to feel good about themselves and it develops a sense of empathy and emotional competence. Children will become more generous and thoughtful if a positive climate can be created around them.

**Teaching Empathy** – Parents can help their children to develop empathy and emotional sensitivity by encouraging them to consider other people's feelings. By responding to questions on emotions, children will start to consider how their own actions could affect the feelings of others around them.

**Teaching Cooperation** – Cooperation is the ability that greatly improves from firsthand experience. One of the most effective ways to teach children how to interact to others is to

allow them to engage and play with other children. When children will find playing with peers challenging at times due to lack of patience and ability to share, with age and experience things will gradually improve.

Professors Jeff Greenhaus and Stewart Friedman studied on how important job and family were to parents. They discovered that regardless of how much time working parents spend at work; children's mental health is greater when both parents believe family comes first (Desai, 2020).

## **Chapter III**

### **Methodology**

#### **Research Design**

The study was a qualitative research. A researcher who is interested in doing a narrative research must settle on, whether he or she has enough time, admittance, familiarity, personal style, and assurance to carry out the particular approach of any on-site research. Once the conclusion is made, the researcher can begin setting up the study. Each study will have exclusive requirements, and the steps that follow are intended simply as guideposts, but one should detect a matching between the steps and the summary for writing a qualitative research proposal (Gay, 2012). To grasp concepts, opinions, or experiences, qualitative research entails gathering and analyzing non-numerical data (e.g., text, video, or audio). It can be utilized to gather in-depth knowledge of a topic or to develop new ideas for research (Bhandari, 2020). As Denzin and Lincoln (1994) assert, the aim of qualitative study is multi-method with an explanatory, naturalistic approach to a specific topic. This indicates that qualitative researchers examine phenomena in their normal contexts, with an aim to understand or analyze phenomena in terms of the significance individuals convey to them (as cited in McLeod S., 2019). As this was a qualitative study which was conducted to understand the perception, opinions, thoughts of mothers and their practices on the socio-emotional development of their children.

#### **Research Site**

The study has conducted in the settings in Dhaka city where the participants work. The probable sites are Bangla Medium Schools and Business Companies of Dhaka city.

## **Research Participants**

The study population consisted of the working mothers having children aged 4-6 years who are engaged in different services. The homogenous group of working mothers having 2-3 or more years working experience was the participants of this study. The work experience helped to understand that the mothers have been in service for quite a significant period of time and with time how they have perceived socio-emotional development of their children.

## **Participant Selection Procedure**

The study has conducted with 12 working mothers from various services having children age 4-6 years old. The snowball sampling method was followed here. Pick a few people who suit a researcher's requirements, then utilize those participants to spot extra participants, and so on, until the study has an adequate number of participants. Here in this study, the first couple of participants were selected purposively and purposively selected participants gave more participants.

## **Data Collection Methods**

As this is a qualitative study, information was collected through In-Depth Interview (IDI) and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). An interview is a determined communication in which one person gathers information from another. Focus group is a data collection technique that includes a few participants who can provide information in line with the research question (Gay, 2012). The researcher developed thematic questions for IDI and FGD related to the objective and research questions of the study. Due to the current COVID-19 situation, online data collection method via phone/zoom/Google meet calls was preferred.

6 IDIs with 6 participants and 1 FGD with another 6 participants were conducted for data collection. IDIs were designed with structured questionnaire. This includes both open-ended

and closed questions. Focus group discussion was conducting using structured and semi-structured questions. According to the participant's convenient time, the data collection procedures will be conducted. Consent of each of the participants was taken through email. The interviews were recorded with the approval of the participants. Before initiating the interview, the objective and purpose of this study will be explained to the mothers as well as their verbal consent on answering the questions will be taken. There was rapport building before starting the formal interview session and same procedure was followed for the FGD. After the rapport session, the main part of IDI and FGD was conducted. At the end, the wrap up part conducted for both IDI and FGD. Duration of the IDIswere60-90 minutes and the FGD took 80 minutes.

## **Data Analysis**

After the data collection is completed, data were managed in order to analyze the qualitative data. In a qualitative research, data analysis means summarizing data in a reliable and accurate manner which leads to the presenting of research results in an undeniable manner. The qualitative researcher starts data analysis from the first meeting with participants and continues to interact with them and analyze the data throughout the entire study. Following these three steps is one way to approach analysis: (1) familiarizing with the data and assessing possible themes (i.e., reading/memoing); (2) examining the data in depth to provide explicit details of the setting, participants, and activity (i.e., describing); and (3) categorizing and coding sets of data and clusters them into themes (i.e., classifying). Reading is the initial step in analysis to read and compose memos about all field notes, transcripts, and observer opinions to get an introductory understanding of the data. Describing involves creating detailed and extensive descriptions of the participants, the context, and the phenomenon being studied in order to portray the vast complexity of the research. The descriptions are derived from the information the researcher gathered through the observations, interview, field notes, and artifacts. Lastly,

qualitative data are broken down through the classifying or coding process and then the chunks of data are being categorized. A category is a grouping of ideas or concepts and it is the process of combining the data into themes (Gay, 2012).

## **Ethical Issues**

BRAC University plagiarism policy will be followed for this study. Strict observance of ethical principles is essential to comprehend the conditions under which the research will be carried out.

**Informed Consent:** Before conducting the in-depth interview and FGD, the participants will be informed about the context, purpose and objective of the study and why the researcher will reach to them.

**Voluntary Participation:** In this study, no working parents will be forced to participate. They will have the choice to participate willingly. If any of the participant feel insecure answering question, it will be skipped. Also, if any participant is unable or refusing to fulfill the FDG or IDI, priority will be given to their aspirations.

**Confidentiality:** All participants will be guaranteed to be extremely important to their confidentiality and no personal information will be revealed outside the research. They will be guaranteed that they can rely of the research to offer accurate information.

## **Validity & Reliability**

The level to which qualitative data effectively evaluates what a researcher is intending to examine is referred to as validity in qualitative research. The level to which research data steadily represent whatever a researcher examines is referred as reliability in qualitative research. Triangulation is the technique of utilizing multiple approaches, data gathering methods and data sets to acquire an even more complete context of what is being investigated



and to cross-check information (Gay, et al., 2012). In this study, two methods- IDI and FGD will be used. Validity will be ensured by triangulation and piloting. After the first IDI with 1 participant, more relatable and necessary questions will be added or eliminated from the questionnaire. Thus the piloting will be completed by editing the questionnaire. Then, the rest of the participants will be giving IDI according to the edited questionnaire. The reliability of this research will be ensured with the techniques the researcher used to gather data. Here, FGD and IDIs are using to gather data and if the same techniques are used by others, there is a possibility of getting consistent data over time. Moreover, the questionnaires will be reviewed by experts. It is to be mentioned that the purpose of this research is to find the relevance of the finding of this research. The findings may be applicable or transferable to a similar setting.

### **Limitations of the Study**

As both the research methods- IDI and FGD were conducted online, there were chances of some information loss, shortage of time, electricity and network issues and lacking in observation of the expression and reaction of the participants during the IDI and FGD. Conducting the FGD online was challenging as matching the same time for the 6 working mothers was difficult. That's why it took some days more to manage all the FGD participants and conduct it successfully.

## Chapter IV

### Results & Discussion

#### Results

##### Theme 1: Working mothers' perception on socio-emotional development of children

###### Sub Theme 1: Working mothers' understanding about socio emotional development

All the mothers have told about socially combining with other people when they were asked about their understanding of socio-emotional development. They shared about abiding social responsibilities, helping others in times of need, amity to each other, communicating with people in a good way, showing respect to others, controlling own emotions and expressing them in a balanced way, valuing others, anger management are all the parts of socio-emotional development. One of the participants said it in a way,

*“It is an evolutionary development of one person's controlled reaction to another after a certain action. It is the way a person gets mature from childhood to adulthood”.*

Another one said

*“It is the mental state of someone of expressing his/her inner and outer emotions”.*

In case of children's socio-emotional development, all the mothers commonly emphasized on how a child is combining and behaving with others (peers, parents and other family members, guests), how he/she reacts to any action, how he/she expresses or controls his/her emotions and sharing toys with other children. One of them stated that a child's understanding of his tasks can be done by himself is very important. Another mother shared that, understanding another's situation or feels bad about others when somebody faces any hard situation, growing mentality of helping others and how they are responding to a certain situation after experiencing it are

some of the important elements of child's socio-emotional development. She also added, in school, teachers taught them how to match and adjust with other peers and sometimes they learn it by themselves. Another mother noted that children are in a constant process of learning about socio-emotional development by their surroundings such as- parents, family members and peers and teachers in school. In general, what are they learning from their surroundings and how are they applying those, how they are presenting themselves are the reflection of their socio-emotional development.

### **Sub Theme 2: Importance of socio-emotional development**

Every mother mentioned about the importance of children's socio-emotional development in variety of ways. All gave the highest emphasis on adjusting and mixing with other people in childhood or in educational institutions or corporate world in future life. One of them stated that, children will not be at home for the whole life. She added that they have to go out for education and earning purpose and have to communicate and adjust with various people in various situations. If they do not develop socio-emotionally from the childhood, they cannot learn all these in their adulthood together. Thus, they could not present themselves with others. Another mother shared that from childhood, they will learn gradually by seeing, observing, listening and following which will make a strong socio-emotional developmental foundation. One of the mothers out of 6 focuses on family culture,

*“In which family culture a child is born and brought up is very crucial as it builds a child's behavior and character and it also notifies how good that child would be in future as a human being”.*

She later added whether a child is an introvert or an extrovert, can he/she differentiate between right or wrong depends on his/her socio-emotional development in the early years. Another mother emphasized on immature decision taking due to the lack of socio-emotional

development in childhood such as- spreading rumor and fake ideas about someone on social media, body shaming publicly without thinking about that person's concern. Sometimes these actions can lead someone to take suicidal attempt. So, socio-emotional development from the childhood is very essential according to all the participants.

Some important factors of children's socio-emotional development were mentioned differently by the working mothers. Majority focuses on the family education that what the child is learning from his/her parents, siblings and other family members such as- how they behave with the child and others. According to them, some of the elements of family education are- empathy, well-manner, dividing small responsibilities, considering everyone equally, making them understand about good side and bad side of a specific situation, positive mentality building etc. creating any pressure on them such as- the child has to be first in the academic result, will destroy his willingness of doing something. One mother shared that family environment and social environment are also two major factors. Genetics is mentioned as the most important factor by another working mother as most of the human nature is pre-determined by this. Then, another mother gave emphasis on the environment of the educational institution which plays as a major factor that where the child is learning and what he/she is learning. Another mother stated that a child's friend circle is also a notable factor as he/she can learn from them too. She added that a child can learn a good activity or word by a good friend and in reverse; he/she can also learn unpleasant acts depending on the friend circle.

All the participants agree about the fact that every parent should have knowledge on children's socio-emotional development. Parents are the primary teachers of children. According to them, if parents do not have the knowledge, they cannot teach their children about it. Also, if parents have knowledge on the surrounding and people, creating appropriate environment, controlling their emotions they can develop their children socio-emotionally. One of the working mothers shared, *'I and my husband have disagreements sometimes and we talk loudly in front of our*

*child. Later we notice that our daughter also shouts when she is upset or do not get something that she wants'. She added that, parents should understand that child learns more from what they see and have to act accordingly; otherwise it will have negative impact on their child. Parents also learn things from outside as they go out often and then they teach those. One of the working mothers mentioned about proper training to become better parents for children's socio-emotional development; so that, parents will learn and understand many things and can teach children.*

### **Sub Theme 3: Impact of working mothers on socio-emotional development of their children**

There are some impacts of working mothers on the socio-emotional development of their children. As they cannot give much time, majority have responded that their children feel upset and lonely. When they want their mother to spend time after returning home from office but due to tiredness and stress mothers cannot, they become upset. Some child gets angry and some others get very much sensitive and emotional, and some others get quiet and obstinate. Out of the six working mothers, one mother shared that her child wants to go out but it is not possible except for the holidays. She also stated that her child wants to play and draw picture with her but due to her tiredness, she cannot give much time. That time, her child becomes upset. But she noted that her child becomes fine after some time when she gives affection and make her child understand. She added that tries her best to give time to her children no matter how much tired she is. One (out of 6) of the mother shared, *"I feel like my child feels mentally down. It is happening as I cannot give much time to her."* She also noted that her child says, *"I do not feel good when you are not present."* One mother shared that her child gets angry easily and becoming quiet and obstinate. Her child likes to do things by his own. She mentioned that, after returning to office, when she refuses to play or fulfill her child's desires; he child gets upset. Sometimes, she shouts and scolds her child which makes her feel bad too. She feels, *"We are*

*cheating with our child. We need to keep them busy with study pressure because we feel tired, but these are not putting any good impact on them.*” She also shared that her child says, *“You do not play with me, do not give any time to me.”* The mothers feels that, if she could stay at home and took her child to shopping, he child could learn how to buy things by differentiate between good and bad in a proper price. She also feels that her child is getting obstinate due to her absence. When children are kept to others custody, one mother noticed that her child behaves differently such as - changes in food habit. She stated that, she does not always know what actually is going on her child. She noted, *“What I am teaching her more important than what she is learning from others.”* She mentioned that her child is getting emotional and sensitive. She shared that, after returning from office, if she gets busy with some other works, her child says, *“You do not talk to me”* and cries. Another mother mentioned that her child learns something from the helping hand which she does not like sometimes. Among all, one of the mothers shared differently that she does not notice any change or effect on her child. She keeps her child to her mother.

Majority of the working mothers have agreed that their children are developed socio-emotionally according to their age. Two of them shared that their children are not properly socio-emotionally developed according to their age.

From the FGD, when the working mothers were asked about the understanding of socio-emotional development of children, most of the mothers have focused on how children are combining, behaving, interacting and responding to their surrounding people. One of them has given emphasis on a child’s responses which is very important to determine how a child is developing socio-emotionally. Another mother shared that in any program, she notices children of non-working mothers interacts more easily than the working mothers’ such as- children of non-working mothers easily talks to others addressing them as ‘aunty’. One mother shared different, *“the ability of a child to adjust in any situation is his/her socio-emotional*

*development*". Another mother shared, "*socio-emotional development includes a child's style of eating, dress up, talking, positively responding*". One mother mentioned that, a child's socio-emotional development can be understood by observing whether a gadget dependent child can come out from it and combine with others or not. She also shared that her child does not want mobile phone when there are guests in their house or she plays with her child. She said, these actions also reflect a child's social involvement.

In FGD, when the working mothers were asked why socio-emotional development is important for children, all mothers shared that, it is important so that a child can present himself properly in a society and also maintain the social relationships in future through interacting, adjusting and behaving. Majority of them mentioned about the negative impact in children's later life due to the lack of socio-emotional development in early years such as- problem solving, decision making and behavioral problems. One mother shared, "*What a child is learning in each age is important. If anything is missed in any age, the lacking of that will left impact on the next stage*". Another mother mentioned, "*If we do not care about children' emotions, they will not learn about caring other's emotion in their adulthood*".

Working mothers were asked about the impacts of their work on the socio-emotional development of their children in FGD. Some of the mothers, have shared that their children get obstinate and angry. Their children stay in assistance of their grandmothers'. Among them, one mother shared that she scolds her child loudly with anger sometimes and her child is following that. Another shared that, if grandmother does not allow her child to play whenever he wants, her child gets angry and obstinate. These mothers feel that due to their work they cannot manage sufficient time. If they could do so, their children would be more manageable. One mother notices that her child has a hiding tendency. She shared that if her child falls and get hurt, he easily does not tell it to parents or other family members. When the mother notices and asks, then he shares. Another mother shared that she notices her child sometimes gets moody

after she returns home from office. Her child asks her, *“Do you have office tomorrow?”* If the mothers replies positively then the child gets upset and says, *“Do not go to office tomorrow, stay with me the whole day”*. Another mother shared that her child gets quiet and upset in little matters. She added, her child cries when she cannot fulfill the demands.

## **Theme 2: Challenges to Address Socio-Emotional Development**

All the respondents have pointed out differently about the challenges their children are facing for having working mother. One mother shared that she cannot take her child outside or any relative's home due to her work for which, the child feels uncomfortable and having difficulty in combining and socializing with people like- interacting. She can only manage time in her weekends which is not enough. The mother thinks that if she can do these frequently, her child could have developed more socio-emotionally. Some of the working mother mentioned that their children always feel their absence and getting very emotional. One of them said that a child will go through some mental changes and it has both positive and negative sides. Positive side includes adjusting with the environment by her own as mother is not present and she will feel interested in doing something (job/business) in the future like her mother. As her child had to eat by herself in neighbor's house in absence of mother, the mother mentioned that her child's food habit is getting changed. The child also gets afraid sometimes. The mother states, in neighbor's house, the child learns some new words and habits which are not used in their house and are not good. Besides, the child is facing problem in adjusting with the busy schedules of her working parents. Another mother shared her child is getting emotional day by day. She cries for little matters like when I scold her for not studying she cries, but after some time she stops crying by her own. She thinks that her child is facing difficulty in controlling emotions. She added, *“My daughter is not getting me for the whole day which is creating an empty space in her”*. Another mother shared that, her child stays in her grandmother's house for the whole week. She takes her child at home in weekends. The mother states that her child



has adjusted with the situation but also notices that her child cries and gets upset over little things. There is a change in sleeping habits also. If the mother is busy with household works, the child says, *“You do not give me time, you do not take me outside, I do not feel good.”* Another mother shared that, both her child and she feels bad about not getting enough time for spending with each other. She also notices that her child gets upset frequently when she denies playing or doing anything with the child. Among all the mothers, one mother has shared the complete opposite scenario. She states that she does not notice her child facing any problem. She thinks that a child will face challenges if there are lacking in managing the child and stuffs. She states, *“A child may not get the proper socio-emotional learning from other family members if they don’t know that the child will learn through seeing them doing something. If they say ‘sorry’ for a mistake, the child will learn that.”* According to her, a child can have difficulties in behavior and worth whip.

The challenges that all the working mothers are facing are unlike from each other. Except one, all the five working mothers have come to the same point that managing time for their children is the main challenge they are facing. Majority mothers also mentioned that they feel an emotional gap between the child and the mother which is upsetting them. The first mother shared that her child does not want to study without his mother. But she feels tired after coming home from office and cannot give much time for her child’s study. Only in weekends she can give proper time. But she thinks, this is not sufficient for a child’s study and a gap is created in her child’s daily study. Even her child does not want to study in any home tutor’s assistance. The mother also shared that she does not get enough time for herself as well. Due to tiredness and stress, sometimes she gets angry and talks loudly with her child and later, she feels guilty for that. The second mother shared that she always feels stressed and tensed that what her child is doing, what she is eating etc. She also feels upset and guilty for not giving enough time and not staying close to her child always. As she keeps her child in neighbor’s house, sometime the

child gets upset from their behavior and asks the mother after returning from office, *“What does it mean, why aunty said this to me?”* That time, both the mother and the child feel bad. She also said that, she does not like her child learning something new like- unpleasant words/unhealthy habits which is not good. She is facing problem with correcting these. The third mother shared that, when she comes back from office, her child roams behind her and wants to talk, show the drawing. The mother tires to respond, but she cannot always do that properly as she feels exhausted. According to the mother, as she is short-tempered, she gets irritated when her child does not give the time for changing and getting fresh after coming from office. She states, *“If I can give her sufficient time and teach her how to control emotions, how to understand situations”*. The mother wants to give time to her child, but due to the work stress she can’t properly do that. The fourth mother shared that, *“I got so upset that I need to take mental counseling why there are so many gaps between me and my child”*. She noted that, sometimes she beats and scolds her child when she cannot tolerate the tantrums after coming home from office. But she also feels bad to hurt her child. She cannot accept the gap between her child and her but she makes herself understand that she must go with the flow. She shared, due to work stress and tiredness, sometimes conjugal broil happens with her husband on giving time to the child. She understands this is not right for her mental conditions and most importantly for her child’s socio-emotional development. She feels depressed sometimes that made her think, *“It is an artificial relation between the child and the working parents, and we are just the media to serve our child’s basic needs”*. The fifth mother shared that, she feels the urge to teach her child the social norms and behavior in her way. She also states that, the way she wants to teach her is not growing in her child as she is not present all the time. Lastly, the sixth mother has no challenges with time. But she emphasized on other family members influences on her child’s social-emotional as well as other learning. She faces difficulty for this type of interference often. She explained that, she wants her child to learn and respect every

religion. When she tells her child about 'Durga puja' and explains why they admire fetish, why they go to temple; other senior family members create objections and says that children do not need to know all these. She gave another example. Her son likes Banga Bondhu and he can perform the speech of 7<sup>th</sup> March very well. He performs this in his school function several times. But other senior family members sometimes misunderstood her. She states, she is developing her child but the family members are not getting it rather they are making it in another sense.

The working mothers were asked about the roles on the socio-emotional development of their children. All the working mothers have focused on giving quality time to their children when they are getting it. The shared, in weekend or whenever the mother gets time, going outside (park/relative's house) and eating with the child, making their wish fulfilled, and talking to the child as much as possible in order to enfold the child's loneliness. One mother states that a friendship should be build up between the child and the mother. She also mentioned about training centers. She says, *"If there is any training center in Bangladesh for becoming good mother, it would be very beneficial for the working mothers. We can learn many things"*. Couple of the working mothers have focused on talking to the child as much as possible. One mother between them has shared that; she teaches her child some social norms when she gets time. She says, she talks to her child how the day was and she also shares something so that the bonding will be fine and gap will not be filled. She told her child that, they have to cope up with the situation as they do not have enough relatives in Dhaka city. Another mother between that two shared, *"It is very important to talk for bringing all the thoughts what is going inside a child"*. Another mother noted that, to whoever she keeps her child either in a day care or relative's or neighbor's house, the mother must told them in which areas she gives the most importance. According to her, the keeper must know the does and don't with the children so they can behave like that. If they do so, there will be no gap in child's socio-emotional

development. The second thing she shared that, a mother must establish her rights upon her child after the child birth. She noted that, everyone should understand that mother is the ultimate decision maker about her child.

In FGD, when the working mothers were asked about the challenges of children of working mothers, they shared their opinion differently. One mother shared that she does not feel anything like this. Couple of mothers shared that their children feel insecure. One mother shared that her child feels lonely. Another mother shared, “ *Children miss the psychological support of mother like- whenever a child wants to see mother or wants to be in mothers’ lap; a child cannot*”. Another mother shared that a child faces difficulty in the learning when he/she is kept to others. She added, what language or unpleasant word a child is learning instead of important learning topics is a challenge for a child in absence of mother

The challenges that working mothers are facing were asked in FGD. Couple of mothers mentioned that they are concerned about the environment in which they keep their children. One mother shared that her child is learning some unpleasant words in absence of her. Other mother shared that the expected environment is not there in her absence and she feels an ‘invisible gap’ between her and her child. One mother shared that she feels an ‘emotional gap’ also. She feels upset when she thinks of cannot attend to her child’s parents’ day at school. Another mother mentioned about two fears she feels- a fear about what her child is learning in absence of her, another is if any hatred is created in her child that her mother does not give her time. She added that if it happens, how will she recover it makes her upset. Another mother said that she faces challenges when she needs leave for her child’s sickness but her office does not permit that.

In FGD, working mothers were asked about their contribution on their children’s socio-emotional development. One mother said that, the full concentration should be given to children after working mothers return home. She suggested to observe child’s every activity to

determine whether the development are growing properly or not, whether any gap is there or not and to work for it according to child's need. Other mother also mentioned about management of time. She added, it is important to keep tracks of what the child is doing the whole day. Couple of mothers have mentioned that, it is essential to let the child keeper know about what to do and how to spend time with the child in absence of mother. Another mother mentioned that she wants her child to be busy in creative works in her absence like- drawing, singing, etc.

### **Theme 3: Children's Daily Routine and Working Mothers' Contribution in their Children's Daily Life**

When all the working mothers were asked about their children's daily routine, they answered similarly. Most of the mothers have said that they had their breakfast with their children before going to work. Then most of their children pass times by watching TV, playing with neighbor and aunties, watching rhymes on YouTube. One mothers shared that her child has his breakfast with father, and then goes to school. Some working mothers complete their children's bathing before they leave for work where some children take bath by their own. One mother shared that she keeps her child to the neighbors', so she gives boxes of fruits and lunch to them. Except for that, most of the working mothers have said that their children had their lunch with other family members. Another working mother shared that she and her child had lunch together when she could work from home at the time of COVID-19 pandemic. But now, her child completes his lunch with grandmother. After lunch children do different activities such as- drawing, talking to father through phone, playing and confabulating with aunty and grandmother, sleeping and watching cartoon. Then at the evening, couple of working mothers shared that they return to home and have evening snacks with their children. Another couple of mothers shared that, after returning home they talk and listen to their children about everything they do during the whole day. Then some of them mentioned that their children

studies in the evening. After the study, one mother mentioned, *“He draws a picture of an incident that happened during the day and shows and explains it to every family member”*. Another mother mentioned that her child plays hide and seek with her. Another mother mentioned about two scenarios. When her child is at their home, she (child) goes outside with father in the afternoon. On the other hand, when the child is at her grandmother’s house, she plays or passes her time with her grandmother or aunties. At dinner time, some mothers shared that they feed their children, some said that father feed their children, and some others shared that their children have their dinner by their own with father. One mother shared, *“After dinner, he prays with his father sometimes”*. Sleeping time varies from one to another such as- 9:30 to 10:00 pm, 11:00 pm, and 12:00 am.

How all the six working mothers spend time with their children got different responses. They all try to fulfill their child’s wishes whenever they are with their child. Confabulating and playing is common for all. One mother shared that, she tries to be involved with her child in every activity. If her child watches cartoon or draws picture, she involves herself by coming into her child’s level. She stated, *“He stays and help when I fry eggs, he helps me with bringing water, eggs. Sometimes they watch movie together, she mentioned a name ‘Hirok Rajar Deshe’ which she made her child understand. Her child does chitchat with her at the time of her cooking also. Another mother shared that she assists her child in study in holidays as her child do not want to study to anyone. She tries to fulfill her child’s wishes like- preparing her child’s favorite dishes, telling stories during bedtime. She added, her child also help her in kitchen works sometimes. Couple of mothers have mentioned that they listen to their child about the whole day. One of them shared that, they have snacks, take nap, she assists her child in study, confabulates and watches TV together. Another mother shared, “I try to give physical warmth to my daughter by hugging her, then she talks and tell a lot of things and I listen to all”*. Another

mother shared that her child spends more time with father. But she took her child to the rooftop whenever the child wishes to.

When all the working mothers were asked that what kind of activity they do to promote their children's socio-emotional development, three of them gave emphasis on talking and listening to their children. According to one mother, this is the way to teach something or correct the wrongs. Another mother said, "*Basically we talk more as my child loves to confabulate*". She also shared that her child used to play role play with her like- parlor, restaurant but now time cannot be managed. In holidays, her child goes outside with father. One mother gave much emphasis on storytelling. She said, "*I made story by my own based on what I want to develop in my child*". She also shared that, she divides some small responsibilities at the time of her absence like- doing homework by own. She added, pouring milk to every family member's cup in the afternoon in my presence is also one of my child's duties which he does every day after I arrange everything.

The kinds of plays the children play are with a lot of varieties. Majority loves to play with dolls, toy car and haripatil. Other children play ludo, chess, puzzle game, hide and seek, carrom board, cycling, and football. Some of the mothers have shared that their children also like role play. One of the mother stated that her child feeds her dolls, takes care of her doll just like she takes care of her daughter. She added that her child also plays with shopping bag and acts like going to shopping and buys many things. Another mother shared that her child plays role play at school where one of the child act as a tiger in a jungle and others tries to attack the tiger. She added, her child also plays a dramatic play on war with father named 'judhho juddho'. Another mother shared that her child loves to ride scooter.

In FGD, all the mothers were asked about how they spend time with their children and they shared with various answers. Some of them mentioned that they listen to their children about the whole day and spend time according to their child's need after returning from office. One

of them shared that she inspires her child when she (child) does something good, teaches drawing, recites rhymes, sings, confabulate with her child when cooking, teaches and recites Surah before going to bed. She also noted that she took her child outside in holidays. Another couple of mothers have also shared that they took their children outside in holidays where their children can play. Another mother shared that, she teaches songs and tabla to her children and also sings with them in holidays. Another mother noted that she mostly plays and teaches rhymes to her child.

#### **Theme 4: Children's Activity to Support their Socio-emotional Development**

When all the mothers were asked whether their children love to play alone or with others, all answered the same. Their children do not like playing alone; they love to play with others like-peers, parents, cousins, other family members and servant. One mother shared that her child likes to play hide and seek at home with father. Her child also likes plays that has running with the peers.

Except for couple of working mothers, the rest of the working mothers stated that their children can get along with others easily. One mother shared that her child gets scared if any child behaves violently. Apart from it, her child can easily play and communicate with other children as well as adults. Another mother shared that her child combines more easily with the seniors compared to his same age or juniors. Now come to the negative responses. Couple of mothers gave negative responses where one shared that a gap has been created in the socialization process of her child due to the lockdown of COVID-19 pandemic. Overcoming this gap is taking some time. She stated that her child cannot combine easily with others. She added, her child gets happy and wants to communicate when he sees other children or guests but it takes some time to get along with them. Another mother with negative response has also shared the similar experience that her child cannot get along easily with others and it takes time.



All working mothers have shared that their children express their emotions (anger/upset/happiness/excitement) in various ways. Majority shared that their child cries to express anger or sadness. One mother shared that her child gets angry when she tells something to do or buy for her child but she couldn't. Her child also gets upset and angry when he does not get any playing partner. She added, when she takes the mobile phone from her child, it makes the child both upset and angry. But when the child is happy, he thanks her mother and also says, "*Mamoni you are great, thank you*". Another mother stated that her daughter shares more with father when she got hurt by her. She said that her child wants to play more when she is happy. Another mother shared a different experience that her child has a fear of ghost. Her child cannot stay alone in an empty room for a long time. She mentioned that, if she and her child are in a same room and the child goes to any other room and does not get her mother when she comes back, the child starts searching the mother and cries. When the mothers were asked that what they do when their children express their emotion, they all responded similarly. When their children express happiness, they enjoy and appreciate it. When their children express anger and sadness, they try to make their children understand the situation. One mother shared, "*I take my child close to me, hug her and try to make her understand things*". Another mother shared that, she gets angry sometimes and then her child cries more. Another mother mentioned that, sometimes she does not make her child understand when the child cries. She stated that her child stops crying by him after some time which is developing his emotion controlling.

The working mothers were asked whether their children are involved with any co-curricular activities. Most of the mothers answered that their children are involved with this sort of activity at home such as- drawing pictures, writing poems by own, dancing with TV music, and playing. One mother shared that her child likes watching YouTube drawing tutorial videos and tries to draw like that. She also stated that her child follows the elder siblings and learns

Arabic. Another mother shared that her child likes to participate in school programs. Her child likes to participate in drawing, singing, and reciting at his school functions. The mother added, *“We took him to distribute his small warm clothes to the needy people in winter, when he gives them by his own he feels good”*.

All the working mothers have agreed to the fact that co-curricular activities have huge contribution on children’s socio-emotional development. Majority have shared that co-curricular activities will help children to combine with others comfortably. One mother mentioned that mental healthiness of children will be ensured by involving in co-curricular activities. Couple of mothers have emphasized on learning discipline when their children will see that specific rules are followed. One has mentioned about growing the leadership skills in children where another mother gave focus on communication and behavior development through co-curricular activities. One mother stated, *“I told the context of any movie or song before I watch it or teach it to my son which expands his thinking I think”*. She also noted, her son becomes very excited before any school program and chooses his and his mothers’ outfits. Also, the child selects the songs and poems he wants to perform and then rehearse in front of his mother. So, the mother thinks this is building a decision making skill in her child with more confident and less fear.

In FGD, when all the working mothers were asked whether their children like to play alone or with peers; every mother responded that their children love to play with peers or others. The mothers were also asked whether their children express their emotions like-anger/happiness/sadness. Except from one mother, all five working mothers have responded that their children share their feelings. In case of sadness or anger, the mothers tries to make their children understand the situation. One mother shared that her child has a hiding tendency and he does not want to share willingly. The mother added, when she notices and asks then her child shares.

All the working mothers were asked in FGD, if their children are involved in any co-curricular activities which are connected to their socio-emotional development. Most of them mentioned that their children like singing. One of them shared, she assigned a singing tutor for her child, there are also Hujur and drawing teacher is assigned for her child. Another one shared when the singing tutor of her brother comes, her daughter sits with him always. Another one mentioned that her child learns and play tabla. Other mothers shared their children make handmade cards, dances, draw pictures. One similarity is that, every child is doing or learning these activities at home.

### **Theme 5: Practice to Support Children's Socio-emotional Development**

Different opinions were shared by all the working mothers when they were asked about practices to support their children's socio-emotional development. Among them, half of the working mothers give much emphasis on managing time, and fulfilling their children's desires. One mother gave much importance to making friendship with the child. Another mother gave importance on keeping the child busy with other activities like drawing apart from the school. She shared that a home tutor can be hired to teach the child about socio-emotional matters in the absence of mother. Another mother shared that a working mother should understand her child and also makes the child understand the situation whenever she gets time. She added that, she instructs her child when she keeps the child in neighbor's house like- "*Eat your meal timely, do not disturb your aunty when she is busy*". One mother mentioned about community build up to share working mothers opinions and experiences like- what practices or methods they are following to promote child's socio-emotional development and what are the results. She noted, if anything feels right to anyone, then the mother can follow that. She also added, it would be very worthy if the working parents could get training on this after the community building. Another point she noted that, creating scope for the child to learn from others is also important.

In FGD, all the working mothers were asked what else they can do to promote socio-emotional development of their children and they replied differently. One mother suggested teaching religious matters. Another mother suggested keeping the child busy with co-curricular activities. Another mother mentioned about encouraging and complementing children in their good works to grow positive thinking in them. Another mother focused on making the children understand about the mistakes they did. Another mother said about teaching children to do their own stuffs like- brushing teeth, eating, organizing own study table etc. The last mother agreed with all of them.

## **Discussion**

### **Theme 1: mothers' perception on socio-emotional development of children**

When the researcher tries to explore about the understanding of socio-emotional development of working mothers', most of the mothers related it with communication with people in a good way, managing own emotion. From a child's point of view, they pointed out understanding mothers situation, be empathetic with others meaning a child is socio emotionally developed. The mothers also mentioned that in everyday life a child go through a development process of socio emotional development.

When the researcher wanted to explore the importance of children's socio-emotional development, most of the mothers responded it with adjusting with people in both childhood and adulthood, presenting thy self, behavior build up and fair decision making. They also mentioned some important factors of children's socio-emotional development- family education, genetics and friend circle. All of them were agreed about the fact that every parent should have knowledge on children's socio-emotional development as parents are the primary teachers of children.

When the researcher wanted to discover the impacts of working mothers on the socio-emotional development of their children, they responded that their child feels lonely, upset, obstinate, getting quiet, emotional and sensitive. Most of them shared that their children are socio-emotionally developed according to their age.

### **Theme 2: Challenges to Address Socio-Emotional Development**

About challenges the working mothers face in developing socio-emotional development of their children, most of the mothers mentioned that there has been huge impact on children's socialization, children struggle with working parents' busy schedule due to lack of mothers' time to spend with their children. Most of the mothers also shared that children do not feel emotionally connected with the working mothers and this leads to their children behaving rude, feeling depressed, tired and stressed. Mothers feel guilty for not giving time to their children. Sometimes situation does not support e.g. when the mothers want to take day off for their children's need they cannot.

One of the mothers had to take mental counseling due to depression. When the researcher wanted to discover the roles of working mothers' on the socio-emotional development of their children, they focused on time management, keeping track of children's daily activity, keeping children busy with creative works, giving quality time whenever they are getting it, talking and listening to children, building friendship and fulfilling children's desires.

### **Theme 3: Children's Daily Routine and Working Mothers' Contribution in their Children's Daily Life**

Mothers' busy schedule and lack of time has influenced on their children's daily routine. When mothers are away their children spend time by watching TV, cartoons or YouTube. It has also found that children also spend some time that is helpful to develop them socio-emotionally e.g. children play with the neighborhood children and other family members, talk with the parents

over phone or they draw. In daily routine, when mothers get time they spend time with their children by playing, watching cartoon together, reciting rhymes, singing, drawing and going outside. Some mothers were found to be engaged their children in every activity that they do when they are home.

#### **Theme 4: Children's Activity to Support their Socio-emotional Development**

Is has also found out that through the children lacks quality time from their mothers but they love to play with others and can get along with other children easily. It has also found that children understand their emotions and they can express their emotions through crying, showing anger, becoming quiet when they are angry and when they are in good mood they complement their mothers. All the mothers shared a common issue that co-curricular activities e.g.drawing, dancing, making handmade cards, singing and acting in school program have been helpful in developing socio-emotional competence.

#### **Theme 5: Practice to Support Children's Socio-emotional Development**

The researcher wanted to discover the practices to support children's socio-emotional development and the participants responded with managing time, fulfilling children's desires, teaching religious matters, teaching to do their own stuffs, keeping children busy with co-curricular activities, building positive thinking by inspiring to their good works, hiring home tutors and making understand about the situation. Community build-up and establishment of training centers for working parents are also mentioned by them.

### **Conclusion**

The cornerstone for how we feel about ourselves and how we interact with others is the socio-emotional development. This foundation is laid from the moment we are born and grows throughout our lives. Early childhood mental health is a term used by professionals to describe healthy socio-emotional development. Early experiences and interactions that are positive and

loving have a substantial impact on a child's social-emotional development. They also have an impact on a child's brain development. An attachment relationship is a long-term relationship that develops throughout a child's first few years of life which is based on infants repeated contacts with the primary caregivers. They have a long-term impact on how a youngster perceives himself, how he thinks and interacts with his environment, and what he expects from others (Ability Path, 2020).

### **Theme 1: Working mothers' perception on socio-emotional development of children**

In this particular study, the working mothers are well-educated and most of them were found to have knowledge about children's socio-emotional development. From the study, it is also discovered that the working mothers might know the concept of children's socio-emotional development and the necessary practices, but they are not always able to implement those in reality.

The working mothers focused that it is important for every parents to have knowledge on children's socio-emotional development. They brought various important elements that are associated with the children's socio-emotional development. They mentioned about different factors which are associated with the socio-emotional development of children.e.g. family education, genetics, family environment, social environment, or children's friend circle. Children feel lonely, upset, gets quiet, emotional and obstinate as an impact of being the children of working mother when they do not get enough time from their mothers. But as per the working mothers' version, most of their children are socio-emotionally developed according to their age.

### **Theme 2: Challenges to Address Socio-Emotional Development**

Children struggle to adjust with the busy schedule of their working mothers and that sometimes has impact on socialization of the children. Due to the busy schedule, the emotional connection

between mother and children is found to be missing somehow for which children are getting rude, depressed and tired and mothers feel guilty for not being able to give proper time to their children.

### **Theme 3: Children's Daily Routine and Working Mothers' Contribution in their Children's Daily Life**

Children's daily routine is also found to be influenced by their mother's busy schedule. Some children spend time by watching TV, cartoons or YouTube where other children play with the neighborhood children and other family members, talk with the parents over phone or they draw. In daily routine, some mothers get time to spend with their children by playing, watching cartoon together, reciting rhymes, singing, drawing and going outside where some mothers were found to be engaged their children in every activity that they do when they are home.

### **Theme 4: Children's Activity to Support their Socio-emotional Development**

Though the children hardly get quality time to spend with their mothers, they all love to play with others and majority can easily get along with others. All these children express their feelings in different ways like – crying, showing anger etc.

### **Theme 5: Practice to Support Children's Socio-emotional Development**

Some of the practices are suggested by the working mothers to boost up the socio-emotional development of children such as- managing time, , teaching to do their own stuffs like- brushing teeth, eating, organizing own study table etc., keeping children busy with co-curricular activities, building positive thinking by inspiring to their good works, community build up and establishment of training centers so that the working mothers could share their experience and opinions as well as get training on how to promote proper socio-emotional development of their children etc.



The researcher tried to explore the working mothers' opinions on their children's socio-emotional development in a variety of scenarios where COVID- 19 was not the main focus. COVID-19 is a current issue that has had a significant influence on people's lives. The government should devise a thorough strategy for dealing with such a situation in the future even when the situation is normal by revising work modality which could be blended where working women (the group which has been mentioned in this study) could get chance to work from home and from office both so that working mothers can give more time to their children which will benefited for the socio-emotional development of their children.

## **Recommendations**

- As different literature reviews in the study have shown the importance of socio emotional development and this study was done with the population of high socio economic background therefore to get diversified data population from different socio economic background can also be studied.
- Further study can be done on fathers' perception on the socio-emotional development of children since mothers mentioned about both parents involvement are important.
- The mothers of this study shared their feeling for not giving proper time to their children and they also shared the consequences in children's behavior due to mothers' absence for a long time. In some factories and in some organizations in Bangladesh we have seen day care facilities. There has been a policy of establishing creche if the number of female employees is 60 or above. This needs to be well monitored by the government. Besides, parents may get flexible work hours especially for older children under this study who may not be enrolled in the creches.
- Socio emotional skills is one of the 21st century skills that may develop if children are socio emotionally developed. Therefore parents, creches and even schools need to provide this support to children. Therefore understanding the importance of 21st

century skills awareness programs for parents, creches and even schools can be given and followed up to know the progress of these bodies in developing the skills.

- People listen to what social media says. Therefore social media and other companies that takes children time on screen can come forward in raising awareness about the importance of socio emotional development as their social responsibility.

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## Appendix A.

### Demographic Information

#### In-depth Interview

Serial	Age	Occupation	Family Income	Educational Qualification	No. of Children	Ages
1	35	Lecturer, German University Bangladesh	60+	Master's from BRAC University	1 (boy)	6
2	25	Service, Softnet BD	1 lack	Master's	1 (girl)	5
3	34	Govt. Service Holder	65+	Msc in Psychology	2 (boy, girl)	5, 2
4	35	Service, Daraz Online Bangladesh	65+	MA in English, Eden Mohila College	1 (girl)	4
5	35	Service, Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry	70+	Masster's, Jagannath University	2 (girl)	4, 2 months
6	41	Lab Officer, BRAC University	80+	M.Sc in Microbiology in Dhaka University	01 (girl)	6

## Focus Group Discussion

Serial	Age	Occupation	Family Income	Educational Qualification	No. of Children	Ages
1	34	Manager, BRAC	Did not share	Ms from Jahangirnagar University	2 (girls)	5, 2
2	35	Banker (FAVP & Relationship Manager), Mutual Trust Bank Limited	1,00,000	Post Graduation, Dhaka University	2 (boy, girl)	5, 2.5
3	30	Teacher, Appletree International School	90+	MBA from American Internation University	1 (boy)	5
4	29	Banker, Trust Bank Limited	120+	BBA, MBA from Dhaka University	1 (girl)	4
5	33	Business	1.5 lacks	MBA, Dhaka University	1 (boy)	4
6	32	Private Service	90+	Msc	1 (girl)	4



## **Appendix B.**

### **IDI Guideline**

#### **Knowledge**

- **What is working mothers' knowledge/perception on the socio-emotional development of their children?**
  1. What do you understand by social-emotional development?
  2. What do you understand by social-emotional development of children?
  3. Why socio-emotional development is important for a child?
  4. According to you, what are the important factors for a child's social-emotional development?
  5. Do you think parents should have knowledge on socio-emotional development of children? If yes, why?
  6. In your opinion, what are the impacts of working mothers on the social-emotional development of their children?
  7. According to you, what are the difficulties a child may face in social-emotional development for having a working mother?
  8. In your opinion, what are the challenges you face in addressing socio-emotional development of your child?
  9. In your opinion, what could be working mothers' roles in socio-emotional development of their children?
  10. Do you think, your child has developed socio-emotionally according to his/her age?

#### **Practice**

- **What are the practices they follow to support children's socio-emotional development as working mothers?**
  1. How does your child spend time in a day? What is his daily routine?
  2. How do you spend time with your children?
  3. What kind of activities/play you do with your child that promote his/her SED? And how?
  4. What kind of play your child plays? Please share.

5. Does your child love to play with friends or, he loves to play alone? Why?
6. In your observation, do you think that your child can get along with others easily?
7. Does he express his feelings such as- anger/upset (what does he do, quiet/express), happiness, excitement? What do you do then?
8. Is your child engaged in any co-curricular activities which involve socio-emotional activities? (such as-playing football or cricket with friends, draw pictures with others) If yes, what are those?
9. According to you, how much importance do all the activities play to shape up your child's socio-emotional development?
10. What else you can do to promote SED of your child?

## **FGD Guideline**

### **Knowledge**

- **What is working mothers' knowledge/perception on the socio-emotional development of their children?**
  1. What do you understand by social-emotional development of children?
  2. Why socio-emotional development is important for a child?
  3. In your opinion, what are the impacts of working mothers on the social-emotional development of their children?
  4. According to you, what are the difficulties a child may face in social-emotional development for having a working mother?
  5. In your opinion, what are the challenges you face in addressing socio-emotional development of your child?
  6. In your opinion, what could be working mothers' roles in socio-emotional development of their children?

### **Practice**

- **What are the practices they follow to support children's socio-emotional development as working mothers?**
  7. How do you spend time with your children?
  8. Does your child love to play with friends or, he/she loves to play alone? Why?
  9. Does he express his feelings such as- anger/upset (what does he do, quiet/express), happiness, excitement? What do you do then?

10. Is your child engaged in any co-curricular activities which involve socio-emotional activities? (such as-playing football or cricket with friends, draw pictures with others)  
If yes, what are those?
11. What else you can do to promote social-emotional development of your child?

## Appendix C.

### IDI Guideline (Bangla)

- সামাজিক-আবেগিক

বিকাশসম্পর্কে কর্মজীবী মায়েদের উপলব্ধি অথবা বোধকতোটুকু?

১। সামাজিক-আবেগিক বিকাশ বলতে আপনি কি বোঝেন?

২। শিশুদের সামাজিক-আবেগিক বিকাশ বলতে আপনি কি বোঝেন?

৩। সামাজিক-আবেগিক বিকাশ শিশুদের জন্য গুরুত্বপূর্ণ কেন?

৪।

আপনার মতামত অনুযায়ী শিশুদের সামাজিক-আবেগিক বিকাশ এর জন্য কোন বিষয় গুলো বেশী গুরুত্বপূর্ণ?

৫। আপনি কি মনে করেন পিতামাতার শিশুদের সামাজিক-আবেগিক বিকাশ

সম্মন্ধে জ্ঞান থাকা উচিত? যদি হ্যাঁ হয়, তাহলে কেনো?

৬। আপনার মতামত অনুযায়ী কর্মজীবী মায়েদের প্রভাবকতোটুকু তাদের সন্তানের সামাজিক-আবেগিক বিকাশ এর ক্ষেত্রে?

৭। আপনার মতামত অনুযায়ী একটি শিশু কি কি প্রতিবন্ধকতার মুখোমুখি হতে পারে তার মা কর্মজীবী হওয়ার কারণে?

৮। আপনার মতামত অনুযায়ী আপনি কি কি সমস্যার মুখোমুখি হন আপনার সন্তানকে সামাজিক-আবেগিক বিকাশ এর শিক্ষাদেয়ার ক্ষেত্রে?

৯। আপনার মতামত অনুযায়ী কর্মজীবী মায়েদের তাদের সন্তানের সামাজিক-আবেগিক বিকাশে কি ভূমিকা থাকা উচিত?

১০। আপনি কি মনে করেন আপনার সন্তানের বয়স অনুযায়ী তার যথাযথ সামাজিক-আবেগিক বিকাশ হয়েছে?

- কর্মজীবী মায়েরা তাদের সন্তানের সামাজিক-আবেগিক বিকাশে কি কি অনুশীলন করে থাকে

১। আপনার সন্তান প্রতিদিন কিভাবে সময় কাটায়, তার দৈনন্দিন সূচিকি?

২। আপনি কিভাবে আপনার সন্তানের সাথে সময় কাটান?

৩। আপনি কি ধরণের ক্রিয়াকলাপ করে থাকেন যেটা আপনার সন্তানের সামাজিক-আবেগিক বিকাশে সহায়তাকরে এবং কিভাবে?

৪। আপনার সন্তান কি ধরনের খেলাধুলা করে থাকে? দয়াকরে বলুন।

৫। আপনার সন্তান কি তার বন্ধুদের সাথে খেলাধুলা করতে পছন্দ করে? নাকি একা একা খেলাধুলা করতে পছন্দ করে? কেন?

৬। আপনার কি মনে হয় আপনার সন্তান কি খুব সহজেই অন্যদের সাথে মিশতে পারে?

৭। সে কি তার অনুভূতি গুলো প্রকাশ করে? যেমন - রাগ, অভিমান, আনন্দ, উল্লাস প্রকাশ করে (সে আসলে কি করে?), আপনি তখন কি করেন?

৮। আপনার সন্তান কি এমন কোনো সহপাঠক্রম সংক্রান্ত কাজে সংযুক্ত যেটা তার সামাজিক-আবেগিক বিকাশের সাথে যোগাযোগ রাখে? (যেমন- বন্ধুদের সাথে ফুটবল অথবা ক্রিকেট খেলা, অথবা অন্যদের সঙ্গে ছবি আঁকা)

যদি হ্যাঁ হয়, তাহলে সে গুলো কি?

৯। আপনার মতামত অনুযায়ী ওই সব কার্যক্রম কতোটুকু সহায়তাকরে আপনার সন্তানের সামাজিক আবেগিক বিকাশে?

১০। এগুলোর পাশাপাশি আপনি আরও কি করতে পারেন আপনার সন্তানের সামাজিক-আবেগিক বিকাশে?

## FGD Guideline



সামাজিক-আবেগিক বিকাশ সম্পর্কে কর্মজীবী মায়েদের উপলব্ধি অথবা বোধ কতোটুকু?

১. শিশুদের সামাজিক আবেগিক বিকাশ বলতে আপনি কি বোঝেন?

২. সামাজিক আবেগিক বিকাশ শিশুদের জন্য গুরুত্বপূর্ণ কেন?

৩. আপনার মতামত অনুযায়ী কর্মজীবী মায়েদের প্রভাব কতোটুকু তাদের সন্তানের সামাজিক আবেগিক বিকাশ এর ক্ষেত্রে?

৪. আপনার মতামত অনুযায়ী একটি শিশু কি কি প্রতিবন্ধকতার মুখোমুখি হতে পারে তার মা কর্মজীবী হওয়ার কারণে?

৫. আপনার মতামত অনুযায়ী আপনি কি কি সমস্যার মুখোমুখি হন আপনার সন্তানকে সামাজিক আবেগিক বিকাশ এর শিক্ষা দেয়ার ক্ষেত্রে?

৬. আপনার মতামত অনুযায়ী কর্মজীবী মায়েদের তাদের সন্তানের সামাজিক আবেগিক বিকাশে কি ভূমিকা থাকে উচিত?

● কর্মজীবী মায়েরা তাদের সন্তানের সামাজিক-আবেগিক বিকাশে কি কি অনুশীলন করে থাকে?

১. আপনি কিভাবে আপনার সন্তানের সাথে সময় কাটান?

২. আপনার সন্তান কি তার বন্ধুদের সাথে খেলাধুলা করে? নাকি একা একা খেলাধুলা করে? কেন?

৩. সে কি তার অনুভূতি গুলো প্রকাশ করে? যেমন - রাগ ,অভিমান, আনন্দ, উল্লাসপ্রকাশ করে(সেআসলে কি করে?), আপনি তখন কি করেন?

৪. আপনার সন্তান কি এমন কোনো সহ পাঠক্রম সংক্রান্ত কাজে সংযুক্ত যেটা সামাজিক আবেগিক বিকাশের সাথে যোগাযোগ রাখে?(যেমন বন্ধুদের সাথে ফুটবল অথবা ক্রিকেট খেলা, অথবা অন্যদের সঙ্গে ছবি আঁকা) যদি হ্যাঁ হয়, তাহলে সেগুলো কি?

৫. এগুলোর পাশাপাশি আপনি আরও কি করতে পারেন আপনার সন্তানের সামাজিক আবেগিক বিকাশে?

## **Appendix D.**

### **Voluntary Consent Form for Working Mothers**

BRAC Institute of Educational Development, BRAC UNIVERSITY

**Title of the Research Protocol:** Working Mothers' Perception on the Socio-Emotional Development of their Children Age 4-6 Years.

**Principal Investigator:** Sadia Alam

#### **Introduction:**

Children's social and emotional development refers to how they learn about themselves, their feelings, and what to expect while interacting with others. It is the development of the ability to establish and maintain social relationship, expressing and managing emotions in a variety of ways and, investigating and interacting with the natural world (Help Me Grow, 2021). Social and emotional competencies are increasingly being viewed as crucial for children's success, both in school and other settings as well as later stages of life into adulthood (Darling-Churchill & Lippman, 2016).

#### **Purpose of the research:**

I am from the BRAC Institute of Educational Development- BRAC UNIVERSITY conducting a research to discover the perception of working mothers on the socio-emotional development of 4–6-year-old children to explore their thoughts and beliefs and how they manage their time and contributing to their children's socio-emotional development.

#### **Why selected:**

I have selected the working mothers as they have to manage giving time to their children by balancing both their work life and family life.

#### **Expectation from the respondent:**

If you agree to participate you will be expected to share your knowledge and practices about the socio-emotional development of children in early years. The respondents may give electronic signature or they can send consent in an email.

**Risks and benefits:**

There is no risk for you to participate in this study. Moreover, the child directly or indirectly may be benefited in future if the findings are taken into account by the policy makers and educators.

**Privacy, anonymity and confidentiality:**

All information collected from you will remain strictly confidential. I would be happy to answer your questions about the study and you are welcome to contact me; (cell # 01685516624), (Email # [sadiaalam437@gmail.com](mailto:sadiaalam437@gmail.com)) or anytime required.

**Future use of information:**

Some of the information collected from this study may be kept for future use however in such cases information and data supplied to other researchers, will not conflict with or violate the maintenance of privacy, anonymity and confidentiality of information identifying participants in any way.

**Right not to participate and withdraw:**

Your participation in the study is voluntary, and you are the sole authority to decide for and against your participation in this study. Refusal to take part in the study will involve no penalty. If you agree to my proposal of enrolling yourself in my study, please indicate that by putting your signature or your left thumb impression at the specified space below.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Investigator

Date:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

Date: