

# **Parents' Perception on Pre-Primary Education for 3-4 Years Old Children**

By

Aysha Tabassum  
20355011

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 have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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

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**Aysha Tabassum**  
20355011

## Approval

The thesis titled “Parents’ Perception on Pre-Primary Education for 3-4 Years Old Children” submitted by

1. Aysha Tabassum (20355011)

of Fall, 2021 has been accepted as satisfactory in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Masters of Science in Early Childhood Development on December 15, 2021.

### Examining Committee:

Supervisor:  
(Member)

---

Ferdousi Khanom  
Senior Lecturer, ECD Academic Program  
Brac Institute of Educational Development  
Brac University

Program Coordinator:  
(Member)

---

Ferdousi Khanom  
Senior Lecturer, ECD Academic Program  
Brac Institute of Educational Development  
Brac University

External Expert Examiner:  
(Member)

---

Sabira Sultana  
Lecturer, MEd Academic Program  
Brac Institute of Educational Development  
Brac University

Departmental Head:  
(Chair)

---

Dr. Erum Mariam  
Executive Director  
Brac Institute of Educational Development  
Brac University

## **Ethics Statement**

Title of Thesis Topic: Parents' Perception on Pre-Primary Education for 3-4 Years Old Children

Student name: Aysha Tabassum

1. Source of population: Parents of 3-4 years old children studying in English medium pre-primary schools

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

- 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 (yes or no)

- 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)
- h) Compensation and/or treatment where there are risks or privacy is involved (yes)

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

- a) from study participants (yes)
- b) from parents or guardian (n/a)
- 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:**

Authorized by:

(chair/co-chair/other)

---

Dr. Erum Mariam  
Executive Director  
Brac Institute of Educational Development  
Brac University

## **Abstract**

The importance of preschool education in children's development and learning is incomparable. It trains children for future learning experience and supports them to reach their full potential. Parents play a huge role in children's early development. Parents' perception towards early childhood education is very important for effective and successful programs. This study aims at exploring parents' perception regarding preschool education. This study can draw attention and raise awareness to the necessity and current scenario of the pre-primary education through exploring parents' perception on preschool education.

This study was a qualitative study. It used in-depth interview and focus group discussion of the parents in Dhaka as data collection method. The study revealed parents' opinion, views, expectations and believe about pre-primary education system of Bangladesh which can be helpful for providing quality education to preschoolers. The study indicates that parents perceive pre-primary curriculum should be activity and play based. The research further reveals that parents find both indoor and outdoor facilities to be important for children's holistic development but most preschools lack outdoor facilities. The study recommends providing standardized play-based curriculum for all preschool children. Another recommendation suggested by this study is allocating outdoor space for children's physical activity. Lastly, further research needs to be carried out on a larger scale to see a nationwide perspective.

**Key Terms:** Parents; Perception; Pre-Primary

## **Dedication**

I dedicate this thesis to my parents and my husband without whose help and support it would have been impossible for me to complete my Master's degree.

## **Acknowledgement**

This thesis has been conducted with sincere efforts, competence, and honest participation of a number of people who deserve my sincere gratitude.

First, I would like to thank the Almighty Allah for making me able to complete this research in sound health.

Next, I would like to show my gratitude to my honorable supervisor, Ms. Ferdousi Khanom (Senior Lecturer, Brac Institute of Educational Development, Brac University) who guided me through writing the report, from the very beginning of selecting this fascinating topic till the end of making it presentable. I would not be able to consummate this report without her useful remarks and consistent encouragement. Her thorough support and feedback made my paper much stronger and helped me increase in knowledge.

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## **List of Acronyms**

ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development
EFA	Education for All
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
IDI	In-depth Interview
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nation
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

# **Chapter I**

## **Introduction and Background**

### **Introduction**

Pre-primary years are crucial times for children's development (Sahin, Sak & Sahin, 2013). What happens in the first years of life is important not because this phase of development offers an indelible plan for adult well-being, but because it is a long-lasting or fragile stage for the following (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). Interaction with peers and teachers help them to adjust and interact with the world. Early years are very crucial for building the foundation of cognitive, social, emotional and physical development (Varney, 2018). 85% of the core brain structure is composed by age 5 (Wisconsin Council, 2007). Pre-primary nurtures a child's imagination and interest to know the world through letting them explore the surrounding in their own way (Varney, 2018). Theorist John Locke has suggested that children's minds are like a blank slate. Whatever input is given during this period of time shapes them. Environment plays a vital role in shaping a child's mind. He also argued that education is what makes them social and worthy members of society (Godbout, 2017). Pre-primary is the very first step to children's formal learning process and the beginning to shape them to reach their full potential. The importance of pre-primary education in a child's life is immense and this cannot be ignored in any way. Quality early childhood education creates a positive learning sequence, while lack of access to preschool education increases achievement gaps and limits opportunities (UNICEF, 2019).

Parents play an important role in the early education of children. Children's first learning process begins at home. They are the first educators in their children's lives. Parents can support children's development by providing various types of study and play materials (Landry, 2014). However, during this period of time a child does not only remain under parents or caregivers; they go to pre-primary center as a step to higher achievements (Begum, 2021). Parents send their children to pre-primary with a hope to benefit the young learners. Parents can start habits of children at home but without pre-primary education it is not possible to nurture them (Landry, 2014). Parents expect preschool education to develop children's social skills and prepare them for primary education (Sahin, Sak & Sahin, 2013). However, there is not much exploration on parents' perception regarding pre-primary education and their choice while selecting preschool.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The importance of pre-primary education has been recognized all over the world (UNICEF, 2019). In the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), goal 4.2 targets ensuring access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education for all children so that they are ready for primary education (UNDP, 2015). Quality pre-primary education ensures the development of critical skills in children required for gaining success in school and ensures less drop out or grade repetition (UNICEF, 2019). Bangladesh has also recognized the importance of quality pre-primary education. The types of pre-primary education offered in Bangladesh includes- government pre-primary, NGO run pre-primary, English medium and kindergarten (Moniruzzaman, 2019). In a discussion by the Federal of Bangladesh English Medium School Student Guardian Forum it was stated that around 1700 English medium schools and kindergarten are there

in Bangladesh but the exact number is unknown because of not registering to the government (Mousumi & Kusakabi, 2017). The strategies of pre-primary suggest that the learning should be provided through pictures, colors, rhymes, models, handiworks etc. and classrooms should be increased in phases (Ministry of Education, 2010). In Bangladesh the curriculum was never fixed for pre-primary education. The government pre-primary follows national curriculum whereas English medium pre-primary follows international curriculum (Aktar, 2013). However, government pre-primary starts from 4+ whereas private pre-primary schools start from age 3+. Adequate teaching material, indoor, outdoor playing facility, training the teachers has always been a challenge for the pre-primary schools (Asad, 2008). In addition, many pre-primary schools do not meet the standard for physical environment and facilities. These schools lack enough light, ventilation, learning space, teaching-learning materials, assigned space for playing both indoor and outdoor, clean toilets etc. (DPE, 2012).

There is no doubt that parents can play a huge role in children's early development. With time and urbanization both parents are now working equally to support the family. As a result, they admit their children to pre-primary schools at an early stage to support their development (Glynn, Farrell & Wu, 2013). To maintain an international standard of education parents send their children to English medium schools in spite of charging higher fees (Begum, 2021). Parents living in urban areas believe that some skills can only be attained by going to formal institutions and mixing with peers (Rahman, Chowdhury & Obaydullah, 2019). The reasons behind parents choosing English medium pre-primary schools over government run pre-primary schools is because parents consider disciplined environment, religious education, opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities

and sense of security over academic achievement and parents believe English medium schools provide better education than government schools (Suppramaniam, Kularajasingam & Sharmin, 2019). Moreover, parents tend to avoid schools that have high minority enrolment and high percentage of students from low-income families (Davis, 2011).

It is important to know parents' perception on the overall scenario of pre-primary education as there is less study conducted in this regard. The study explored parents' perception on pre-primary education in English medium schools in Dhaka city.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The aim of the study was to explore the perception of parents on pre-primary education for children aged 3-4 years old. This was explored through parents' understanding on the importance of pre-primary education for children. Parents' view on pre-primary pedagogy and teaching learning techniques also shaded light on their perception. In addition, through the study parents' perception on the physical environment (indoor and outdoor) of pre-primary children's development was explored.

Research objectives of this study included-

- To explore parent's understanding on the importance of pre-primary education
- To know parents' view about pre-primary environment for children's development

### **Significance and Justification of the Study**

Preschool is the ideal place for a child's foundation for lifelong progress (Kaushik & Marwaha, 2020). Pre-primary education not only emphasizes on children's development

but it enhances children's imagination, creativity, self-confidence and teaches fundamental skills (Shahdur & Barua, 2021). In "Sustainable Developmental Goal 4.2" it is stated that by 2030 it will be ensured that all girls and boys will have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education (UN, 2015). However, the quality of pre-primary education has not been ensured which is a crucial part of children's development. Pre-primary schools in Bangladesh lack adequate equipment, materials and physical facilities required for teaching learning process (Begum, 2021). Most of the schools do not have an outdoor playing facility which is an important criterion for preschool education (Hasan, Rashid, Smith, Selim & Rasheed, 2020). Research showed that the development that takes place during pre-primary years is very essential for a child's later life and if it is delayed or ignored the compensation later can be costly (Clipa & Boghean, 2015). Parents send their children to school with a hope to give children the best possible education and a better future and pre-primary is the initial step that parents willingly take for children's better future (Ghosh & Dey, 2020). Parents prefer English medium pre-primary schools for their children because of international qualification, curriculum, better teaching-learning process, fewer students, better infrastructure, social security, social identity, better career etc. (Mousumi & Kusakabi, 2017).

Parents' perception on the pre-primary system is very essential to improve the overall condition of pre-primary education. This study aimed at exploring parents' perception on pre-primary education. Many researchers have carried out research on pre-primary education, physical environment, learning process and techniques. However, not much research has been conducted only on parents' perception on pre-primary education,

physical environment, learning process and techniques. Pre-primary education ensures children's foundation for further learning process. The study can be helpful for Bangladesh context to gain more insight about 3-4 year old children's education system. Findings of the study can guide program designers and policy makers for ensuring quality education. The result of this study can also guide the pre-primary schools to take necessary steps to ensure a well-ventilated classroom, adequate learning space, teaching-learning materials, physical environment (outdoor and indoor) and appoint trained teachers as it shaded light on parents' expectation from pre-primary schools. Their views can help to incorporate elements and materials that can be useful for children's learning. The study can also help the educators to plan and implement strategies that can be beneficial for children's early development. Furthermore, the study can help to understand parents' view and perception of pre-primary which can interest the researchers to study further on the pre-primary education system.

## **Research Topic and Research Questions**

Parents' perception on pre-primary education for 3-4 years old children;

Parents' perception, view and opinion about pre-primary education are often overlooked. However, these perceptions, knowledge and views about pre-primary education not only help to develop children but also the quality of education as well. Therefore, exploring the perception and view of parents towards pre-primary education will bear significant contribution towards providing quality education in early childhood years by preschools.



## **Research Questions**

1. How do parents perceive about the pre-primary education for 3-4 years old children?
2. What is parents' view about the pedagogy and teaching learning process of pre-primary?
3. What is parents' opinion about the physical environment (outdoor and indoor) of pre-primary classes?

## **Operational Definitions**

**Parents:** Adults who are responsible for giving care and nurturing of a child are parents (Merriam-Webster, 2021). In literal meaning parent refers to the mother and father of a child.

In the study 'parents' is referred to both the mothers and the fathers of children. Parents of children aged 3 to 4 years who are attending pre-primary were the participants of the study.

**Perception:** Perception refers to understanding or view of something. It is the ability to view something in one's own way. Perception is a way individuals experience the world and this experience is sensory. Perceiving process helps us to gain knowledge and information about the environment and its elements required for survival. It helps to interpret and organize the information (Cherry, 2020). Perception is the way one thinks, notices things with senses and understands the thing. It has three processes- selection, organization and interpretation (Qiong, 2017).

In the study 'perception' refers to the understanding and view of parents on teaching-learning and physical environment of pre-primary education.

**Pre-primary Education:** Pre-primary is a place where a child gets the basics of his lifelong development (Kaushik & Marwaha, 2014). It is the step before primary or formal learning begins. This is where children get prepared for future learning stages and adjust with the fear of school through enjoyment and fun (Yasmin & Rumi, 2020).

In the study 'pre-primary' was used as the learning school, children of 3-4 years old attend. Here, parents' perception of 'pre-primary education' of English medium schools has been explored.

## **Chapter II**

### **Literature Review**

To understand the importance of exploring parents' perceptions about preschool education, systemized literature has been reviewed by following the key terms of this study. The key terms include theories on preschoolers' development, importance of pre-primary education, parents' perception and pre-primary education: global and Bangladesh context. The literature on parents' perception on pre-primary has been highlighted below.

#### **Theories on Preschoolers' Development**

Theorist Sigmund Freud believed that what children experience during early childhood helps to shape their personality and social behavior. It is the time when attention should be given to a child's development as the experience during this time has a lifelong impact on the child's mental state (Williams, 2018). Besides parents, pre-primary has a major role to play in building children's personality and shaping their social behavior. Pre-primary is a place where children come across peers and teachers that help them to connect to the world. This helps to develop their social and emotional skills (Funk, 2018).

Theorist Vygotsky suggests that human development is socially intervened where children gather cultural values, beliefs and problem-solving strategies. Children's immediate social and cultural environment, parents or teachers or peer mediate plays an important role to children's development (McLeod, 2020). In the pre-primary classrooms students get the opportunity to work in groups which enables them to solve problems and know other cultures and beliefs (Erbil, 2020).

Theorist Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory suggests that child development is a complex system that is affected by multiple levels of adjacent environments including parents and preschool to values, laws and customs (Evans, 2020). Preschool teachers can fulfill a secondary role in providing support like- nurture and care to children (Ryan, 2001).

Theorist Albert Bandura suggests that children's behavior is learnt through observation, imitation and modeling (Kurt, 2020). Children of 3-4 years old tend to imitate learn from their peers. When they observe others paying attention in a task, they are likely to follow it. Moreover, early childhood educators can also encourage children's positive behavior through reward systems (WGU, 2020).

### **Importance of Pre-Primary Education**

UNESCO stated that sustainable education should begin in early life and only early childhood education can play a significant role in constructing a sustainable society (UNESCO, 2008). The main objective of pre-primary education is to develop children both physically and mentally so that they can be ready for formal learning and abolish the fear of further education (Rashid, 2019). In preschool children know the unknown, get language and other stimulation that might not be possible at home and learn to differentiate between people (Mittra, 2020). When a child does not attend pre-primary, everything becomes unknown to him and this creates extra pressure on him (Mittra, 2020). Pre-primary education prepares children and helps them get used to going to school and teacher's efforts to persuade parents to send their children to pre-primary help them develop social behavior (Eria & Bakuza, 2021). Not only this, preschool helps

children to obtain certain skills such as pre-writing skills and pre-reading skills like- oral language and phonological awareness (Annonciata &Nadege, 2020).

The goal of pre-primary is to foster children's imagination, creativity, and socialization in order to prepare them for the next steps of their lives (Rashid, 2019). Children who attend pre-primary school develop emotional, academic and social skills otherwise they lack when entering primary program. Later, it becomes difficult for the teacher to develop these skills and make him move forward (Malone, 2013). It is seen that children who attended pre-primary have higher achievement in primary level than those children who did not receive any kind of intervention (Kaushik & Marwaha, 2014). Research showed that high quality preschool education enhances children's later school success, employment and earnings. In economic terms, the return of high-quality preschool is also very high, which is \$17 for every \$1 invested (Kamerman & Gabel, 2015).

### **Parents' Perception on Pre-Primary Education**

In research it was found that parents send their young children to school to enhance their communication and social skills and also to prepare children for the next stages of education (Sahin, Sak & Sahin, 2013). Parents expect the environment of pre-primary to be stimulating and safe where children can make their own choice of play. On the other hand, some parents become worried if they do not see their children bringing homework or just playing and not getting involved in the actual learning process (Boyd, 2018).

Parents consider any preschool related activity to be healthy as school itself is considered as a healthy place (Jayasuriya, Williams & Tandon, 2016). Parents believe preschool education should emphasize on guiding and playing activities while improving the

knowledge and skills that are needed at school. In addition, pre-schools need to develop self-concept and co-operation skills required at comprehensive school. (Nikko & Nuutinen, 2009). Parents in urban areas support preschool education as they believe preschool education plays a significant role as this helps children to successfully complete primary education and provide all-around development by enabling the child to understand different issues (Annonciata & Nadege, 2020). Moreover, research shows that urban parents pay more attention to the knowledge that children gain from attending pre-primary (Cui, Valcke & Vanderlinde, 2017). Parents' positive perception on pre-primary education not only influences children's academic acquisition but also helps them in holistic development (Eria & Bakuza, 2021).

In order to groom morally upright individual, early childhood years are the best time and for this, parents should involve themselves in the early years of children (Eria & Bakuza, 2021). Parents' involvement in early education of children not only help in their academic success but also help schools to improve current academic programs (Durisic & Bunijevac, 2017). Parents' perception and involvement in preschool helps children to have fewer behavioral problems, higher self-efficacy and better preparation for class (Li & Dhamotharam, 2021). International Journal of Research Studies in Education in 2014 revealed that parents are key stakeholders while demanding quality childcare services and that is why it is mandatory for the parents' to be engaged in pre-primary for quality education (Annonciata & Nadege, 2020).

## **Pre-Primary Education: Global and Bangladesh Context**

### **Global Context**

Education for All (EFA) is a global movement that was led by UNESCO. EFA goal 1 talks about expanding early childhood care and education. Goal 2 aims at free and mandatory quality education for all (UNESCO, 2000). In United Nation's Millennium Development Goals, goal 2 aims at ensuring universal education for all (UN, 2000). Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) goal number 4.2 aims at ensuring access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education for all children (UNDP, 2015).

A study has shown that around the world though the aid of education has increased over the years but the aid of pre-primary has been uneven over the past decades (Hadani, 2020). The enrollment rate of pre-primary globally has increased from 15.436% in 1970 to 61.515% in 2019 (UNESCO, 2020). In developed countries, pre-primary pedagogy focuses on the importance of play-based learning and research shows that children's learning outcomes are better with play-based programs compared to early childhood programs with a focus on academics (Boyd, 2018). The famous Montessori Method which is followed worldwide for pre-primary education highlights student centered approach where student guides the teacher and education programs are adapted according to children's interest and need (Deepan, 2021). In the USA, most preschools are administered by private organizations and various types of preschools are seen like- non-benefit co-operative schools, church-subsidiary schools, neighborhood community schools, private schools and Montessori schools (Kamerman & Gabel, 2015). In Russia,

with the learning process, preschool programs ensure children's good nutrition, proper timetable, healthy activities, obligatory naps and walking in the fresh air. Some private preschools even adapt Montessori and Waldorf learning processes and adapt to Russian instructional practices (Bodrova & Yudina, 2018). On the other hand, preschools in Britain focus on the learning process and provide personal and emotional development of the child, social, communication, language and literacy skills, mathematical abilities and general ideas about nature and society (Mcclary, 2014).

### **Bangladesh Context**

Bangladesh is slowly progressing in attaining success in Sustainable Development Goal 4.2. In 2009 the gross ratio of children attending pre-primary was 10.82% and in 2018 it has jumped to 40.82% (World Bank, 2021). This includes both under and over 3-5 years old children enrolling in the pre-primary. Operational Framework for Pre-Primary education acknowledges pre-primary children's need and necessity to prosper. It states that education should be focused on boosting children's early development (Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, 2008). In National Education Policy 2010, emphasis is given on the pre-primary education. Pre-primary education aims at cultivating children's senses and inspires them to learn and attend school through various activities. In addition, growing discipline for formal education and teaching children to be tolerant is another objective of pre-primary education. The objective is to provide mandatory pre-primary for 5+ children that will extend to 4+ (Ministry of Education, 2010). The age group Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) policy target is conception till age 8. In addition, it is mentioned to focus on the age group 6-8 years for ensuring smooth and successful transition to primary level (Comprehensive ECCD Policy Framework, 2009).



Unfortunately, there is no specific policy mentioning education for 3+ years old children in Bangladesh (Rashid & Akkari, 2020).

The most difficult part of Bangladesh to expand pre-primary education was ensuring the quality; this was because of lack of resources and implementation of standard quality (Graham, 2017). The National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) of Bangladesh did not introduce any specific curriculum for pre-primary. Moreover, the pre-primary schools lack proper infrastructural facilities like a playground, sufficient classrooms and an enjoyable teaching environment (Nath and Sylva, 2007).

The main aim of pre-primary is to develop children to reach their full potential according to international standard (Clipa, 2017). English medium schools in Bangladesh are being increasing rapidly (approximately 2000) and gaining popularity because of mainstream education failing to provide quality education to the local elite and shortage of public schools. Besides, Bangladesh government is more involved in promoting maximum coverage and Education for All instead of focusing on a particular kind of education (Mousumi & Kusakabe, 2017). English medium pre-primary schools in Bangladesh enroll 3+ years' children in pre-primary classes whereas government pre-primary schools enroll 5+ children in pre-primary classes (Yasmin & Rumi, 2020). However, there have been some irregularities in English medium pre-primary schools which include quality of education, appointing trained teachers and assuring safe and enjoyable academic environment (Kader and Salam, 2018).

## **Chapter III**

### **Methodology**

#### **Research Approach**

Purpose of this study was to explore the perception of the parents on pre-primary education. For this reason, qualitative research approach was used to gather in-depth information. Qualitative research is used to explore through unstructured information like-individual interviews, focus group comments, observations etc. and give deeper knowledge on the problem (DeFranzo, 2011). The study prioritized individual perception. In depth information included parents' views and insights into preschool education and its importance in child development. For this reason, individual interviews and focus group discussion was conducted to get a better understanding on the issue. It helped to obtain detailed information about the concept and fulfill the research purpose. It also helped to understand what parents expect from pre-primary education and ways that can be improvised to improve the quality of pre-primary education.

#### **Research Site**

The research site for this study was Dhaka city.

#### **Research Participants**

Since in this study, the perception of parents on pre-primary education was explored, therefore the participants of this study were the parents either father or mother whose 3-4 years old children are going to English medium pre-primary.

The study population in this research were the parents of 3-4 years old children in Dhaka city as the researcher resides in Dhaka and the parents of English medium preschool going children were accessible to her. However, not all parents of English medium preschool going children can be the participants of the study as the number was really large and unfeasible for this study. Hence, the sample in this study was chosen purposively.

### **Participants Selection Procedure**

For this study ‘purposive sampling’ procedure was used. Participants were the parents whose children are already attending English medium pre-primary classes so that the purpose of the study can be fulfilled which is to explore parents’ perception on pre-primary education. 10 parents from Dhaka city whose children are currently studying in English medium pre-primary classes were selected to attain the specific objective of the study.

### **Data Collection Tools**

The data collection tools included Focus Group Discussion and In-Depth Interview.

### **Data Collection Methods**

2 Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and 6 In-Depth Interview (IDI) were conducted through face to face and online platform. The focus group discussion was conducted through the unstructured questionnaire. Before starting, a consent paper was signed for face-to-face interviews and verbal consent were taken for online interviews. 6 parents were part of the in-depth interview where they shared their view, perception and

understanding on the importance of pre-primary education on their children's development. They also shared their views on the physical environment of the pre-primary. For focus group discussion 1, the group consisted of 4 participants and for focus group discussion 2 there were 6 participants. This focus group discussion took around 60-90 minutes. Before starting the interview, rapport was built with the participants. Both in-depth interview and focus group discussion was audio recorded and field notes were taken alongside.

## **Data Analysis**

Data analysis started during the process of data collection through taking field notes and audio recording. Content analysis techniques were used to organize the data. Data collected from FGD and IDI was classified under different themes and subthemes to ease the interpretation of the data. For FGD and IDI steps like- recording, taking notes, reading, memoing, classifying and interpreting were used to narrow down the collected data. In the beginning, data was sorted and organized into categories. Crucial data was highlighted according to the research questions. Then the data was reviewed and organized and categorized according to the themes and subthemes. Before interpreting, the organized and categorized data was summarized in alignment with the research questions of the study. Lastly, data was interpreted to add meaning to the study. The researcher's main target was to explore the selected parents' group perception on pre-primary education for children's development. For this, it was ensured that the interpretation reflected the true perception of the participants and data.

## **Ethical Issues**

Approval from BRAC Institute of Educational Development (BRAC, IED), BRAC University was taken. Participants' voluntary participation was ensured and their consent was collected through a consent form. It was ensured that the recorded data will not be used for any purpose other than the study and the reference of the data will not be disclosed.

## **Validity and Reliability**

The validity and reliability of IDI and FGD guidelines were reviewed by the experts of BRAC University's Institute of Educational Development. In addition, field test was done to ensure the validity of the research tool.

## **Limitations of the Study**

The present study was based on a very small group of participants. However, it followed the formal procedures of qualitative research. Still the research faced some unavoidable limitations while conducting the research.

- One focus group discussion and three in-depth interviews were not possible in person because of pandemic.
- One focus group discussion had 4 participants because of unavailability of the participants.

## **Chapter IV**

### **Findings and Discussions**

There are two sections in this chapter. First section is 'Findings' where data collected through different tools i.e. in-depth interview and focus group discussion are presented. Second section is 'Discussion' where the analyzed data has been discussed in light of literature and researcher's reflection. This part is concluded with a conclusion and recommendations based on the results and knowledge gained from the study.

### **Findings**

This section shows the results of the primary data collected to substantiate this study. Data from focus group discussion and six in-depth interview is analyzed here. The findings are focused on the two objectives of the study which includes exploring parents' understanding on the importance of pre-primary education and to know parents' view about the pre-primary environment for children's development.

### **Demographic Information**

Total 10 parents participated in this research. Among them 8 were mothers and 2 were fathers. 7 parents were engaged in services and 3 mothers were home makers. 1 of the parents was a doctor, 1 was a teacher and the others were engaged in corporate jobs.

Age of the participants ranged from 28 to 37 years old. All the participants belonged to middle income families. 6 parents have completed their bachelor degree whereas other 4 parents have completed their master's degree. 5 of the parents have 1 male child and 1 female child. The other 5 have only 1 child. All the children are currently studying in

different English medium pre-primary classes in Dhaka city. One of the children is studying in an English medium school where religion is prioritized.

## **Theme One: Parents' Perception about Pre-Primary for 3-4 Years Old Children**

This section is attached to the first objective of the study which is to explore parents' perception on pre-primary education for 3-4 years old children. For this reason, findings are presented under the sections describing the understanding and view of the parents about pre-primary education.

### **Parents' Understanding about Pre-Primary Education**

All the parents had basic knowledge about pre-primary. They believe that pre-primary is a place where children learn basic literacy, numeracy and etiquettes through play. They believe in this competitive world pre-primary works as a medium of developing children's early knowledge required for formal schooling. Their responses are stated below-

*“Pre-primary is early education. It is learning through tricks and tips what we call first lessons. Here, children of the same age can play and come together. They get to know their surroundings and understand the world outside home. They gain knowledge about right and wrong and how to appropriately talk with people.”* (In-depth Interview # 2, Date: 24 October 2021)

*“In pre-primary children learn through playing, activities, group study and this learning is fun for them as a result this has a long-lasting impact on children. It also shapes children’s personalities.”* (Focus Group Discussion # 1, Date: 20 October 2021)

### **Pre-Primary Education in Bangladesh**

When it comes to pre-primary education in Bangladesh parents had mixed opinions about it. All parents think that pre-primary education system has improved a lot more than before as the number of children going to pre-primary has increased. They added,

*“Pre-primary enrollment has increased to 97% but because of pandemic it seems parents are struggling to put their children in preschool as learning is now online based.”* (In-depth Interview # 1, Date: 22 October 2021)

However, some parents added that although children going to pre-primary have increased, yet the quality of education in government pre-primary classes is still not good. They think private schools provide better education than the government schools. One of the parents stated,

*“Bangladesh government pre-primary education mostly focuses on academic knowledge. They do not focus on the basic things like holding pencils properly. Even old rhymes are getting replaced with new rhymes that are not interesting.”* (In-depth Interview # 5, Date: 5 November 2021)

Some of the participants did not have enough knowledge about the government pre-primary education system. They opined,



*“To me English medium pre-primary education is much more effective than Bangla medium and if we look into government schools, we will not see any pre-primary classes there rather their education starts from primary.”* (In-depth Interview # 6, Date: 5 November 2021)

### **Parents’ Views towards the Importance of Pre-Primary Education**

All the parents think that pre-primary education is very important for children. They think pre-primary education helps children to learn the etiquettes, follow instructions, enhance the communication skills and adjust with future learning. One of the parents opined that,

*“No matter how much you teach children at home, pre-primary education is very important for a child. They learn to communicate and follow instructions. At home they might not follow what we say but they do hear teachers’ commands and follow them.”*  
(In-depth Interview # 4, Date: 2 November 2021)

Few parents mentioned that pre-primary helps to detect children’s early disability. One of the parents specifically stated,

*“Sometimes parents cannot detect or understand the early physical or mental disability of children. So, when a child goes to pre-primary teachers can figure out the problem and notify the problem. Thus, early detection of the problem can reduce the severity.”*  
(In-depth Interview # 6, Date: 5 November 2021)

### **Age of Starting Preschool Education**

Regarding the starting age of preschool parents had different opinions. Some parents think 3-3.5 years is the perfect time for children to attend pre-primary. Parents stated,

*“I used to think children should attend pre-primary when they are matured at 5 but now I think they should attend at 3.5 years because children’s mental growth is not possible sitting at home. When they socialize with other kids of their age then the growth takes place.”* (Focus Group Discussion # 2, Date: 30 October 2021)

On the other hand, some parents believe children should start going to pre-primary after age 4. One of the parents mentioned,

*“I think 4 years is the best time because children are quick learners and they can easily grab the learning. It also becomes easy to make them follow a routine and they even become ready to learn.”* (In-depth Interview # 3, Date: 25 October 2021)

### **Consideration while Choosing/Selecting Pre-Primary Institution for Your Child**

All parents considered an institution where children can learn through playing rather than pressuring the child to learn. They preferred the quality of education the institution is providing. They also prioritized institutions where children will have the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities. During Focus Group Discussion one of the participants mentioned-

*“Of course, I consider a pre-primary where children learn through playing. I support children’s education through playing. I avoid preschools where there is only study and no extracurricular activity.”* (Focus Group Discussion # 1, Date: 20 October 2021)

Some parents also added that they also consider institutions near their house and the affordability of the schools. One of the parents also mentioned of school environment and roadside noise. Participant stated,

*“First I will select a school which is near to my house and budget friendly. What is the environment and how they are teaching the children. If the school is soundproof from outside noises as it hampers their attention and if they individually prioritize the child.”*

(In-depth Interview # 4, Date: 2 November 2021)

Few parents mentioned that they do not compromise with the quality even if the school is far from home. One of the parents opined,

*“I consider the teaching method and environment of the school. Then how much the school is supporting leadership skills added to that if they have age appropriate curriculum or not and if they support parents engagement and involvement. That is why even after staying in Bashundhara I admitted my child to an Uttara pre-primary institution.”* (In-depth Interview # 6, Date: 5 November 2021)

### **Opinion about the Quality Indicators of Pre-Primary Education**

Most of the parents said that classroom environment, safety, hygiene and curriculum are the most important quality indicators of pre-primary education. One of the parents stated-

*“Hygiene has to be there because diseases are contagious. If a child is infected, he is likely to infect other children as well. That is why school needs to take steps so that diseases do not spread.”* (In-depth Interview # 4, Date: 2 November 2021)

Some parents added that trained teachers and parents’ engagement has to be there. One of the parents thinks regular parents’ engagement is not that much necessary. She stated,

*“First of all, the teachers have to be well trained to handle such small children. Another thing is that both parents are now very much busy with outside work. If*

*preschools can do better without parents' engagement on a regular basis then it becomes easy for us.*" (Focus Group Discussion # 2, Date: 30 October 2021)

### **Opinion about Attending Preschool before Going to Primary School**

All of the parents stated that attending pre-primary before primary is very important.

They believe pre-primary mentally prepares a child for further learning. Parents opined,

*"First we need to attract the child to the learning world. If we suddenly put them into the mainstream world then they will get lost."* (In-depth Interview # 2, Date: 24

October 2021)

*"Pre-primary helps a child to learn a lot of things step by step maintaining their level.*

*Now if we do not send a child to pre-primary and send the child directly to class 1 at a later age we will see a huge difference between the child who attended pre-primary and who did not."* (In-depth Interview # 6, Date: 5 November 2021)

## **Theme Two: Parents' View about the Pedagogy and Teaching Learning**

### **Process of Pre-Primary**

This section states the findings of parents' view about the pedagogy and learning process of pre-primary classes. Parents' approach to this matter considering their views, thoughts, expectations and opinion will be comprehensively discussed in this section.

### **Factors Considered Before Enrolling Their Child in this Particular Preschool**

Most of the parents stated that curriculum, teachers' approach and the environment were the main reasons of the preschool to admit their child. One of the parents opined,

*“Their learning process is completely play and activity based. They do not give any pressure for homework. They help develop children’s sensory skills through playing with sand and water.”* (In-depth Interview # 1, Date: 22 October 2021)

Whereas, few parents mentioned that people around influenced them to choose this particular preschool for the child. They opined,

*“People around me have praised this preschool. Mothers who already had children studying in the school have inspired me to get my child admitted here. Moreover, the school was near my house.”* (Focus Group Discussion # 1, Date: 20 October 2021)

### **Views on Preschool Curriculum for Children Aged 3-4 Years**

Most of the parents believe curriculum should be play based and support children’s development. They added that preschool curriculum should have less study and more behavioral, cultural and religious teaching. They opined,

*“There should be less study rather the curriculum should concentrate on developing children’s behavior. Children need to learn about culture and religion as well. Pre-primary will sow the seed in them.”* (Focus Group Discussion # 2, Date: 30 October 2021)

Few parents said that learning should be visualized. They added,

*“Children enjoy and learn things fast when they see something on the TV. So, I think showing videos can be added to the curriculum.”* (Focus Group Discussion # 1, Date: 20 October 2021)

## **Thought on the Teaching-Learning Quality of the Preschool**

About thought on teaching-learning quality of preschool, most of the parents said the quality is very good and children learn new things every day from school. They opined,

*“The teachers’ everyday teaches new things to the students. For example- my child learnt to make things with soil. This actually helps to make connection with nature.”*

(Focus Group Discussion # 2, Date: 30 October 2021)

However, few parents were not happy about the teaching-learning quality of the preschool as they give pressure to the students. One of the parents opined,

*“In this school they give pressure on all the subjects. They give handwriting homework where they learn to write letters and numbers. I have to be alert all the time and it is a pressure for me.”* (In-depth Interview # 3, Date: 25 October 2021)

## **Expectations from Preschool Teachers**

At this, majority of the participants said that preschool teachers should be able to handle the kids properly and should understand child psychology. One of the parents mentioned,

*“Teachers do not understand that children are individuals, they have different needs and the teaching process should be accordingly.”* (In-depth Interview # 5, Date: 5

November 2021)

Few parents added that teachers should be able to bring out children’s strong points with patience. One of the parents opined,

*“Teachers should have lots of patience. They will not push children with anything. They need to highlight children’s good qualities overlooking their weaknesses.”* (In-depth Interview # 1, Date: 22 October 2021)

### **Opinion about the Professional Qualification of the Teachers of Pre-Primary**

All the parents said that teachers have a high educational background. When it comes to professional qualification, most of the parents said the teachers lack this. Parents responded,

*“I have seen teachers in this school who get angry at children with small things and they even pass statements like you are good for nothing. This is not the right way to talk to children.”* (In-depth Interview # 4, Date: 2 November 2021)

In contrast, few parents stated that teachers get regular training in the particular preschool and they know how to handle children with care. Parents mentioned,

*“The teachers understand children’s ability and prepare the lesson so that children can easily adopt it. I never saw them getting angry at children or pressurizing them for anything rather they tell us not to scream at children. I heard they get training regularly.”* (Focus Group Discussion # 1, Date: 20 October 2021)

### **Views about Teaching-Learning Approach Pre-Primary Classes**

Majority of the parents stated that the teaching-learning approach is play based. They opined,

*“In this preschool, they encourage children to do pretend playing. This helps them to understand others’ point of view and I really like this about the school.”* (Focus Group Discussion # 1, Date: 30 October 2021)

However, one of the parents stated that the school focuses more on the academic learning. She responded,

*“In my sons preschools they give handwriting homework and the writing cannot go beyond the line. This is not the correct way to teach handwriting to them.”* (In-depth Interview # 3, Date: 25 October 2021)

In addition, few parents said that teaching approach should have brain development activities and visual so that children can see and hear when they learn. They stated,

*“Teaching should be visualized so that children can learn faster and the learning could be long-term. We see when a child hears something again and again he learns it very quickly. Moreover, brain development activities should be there as well.”* (In-depth Interview # 2, Date: 24 October 2021)

### **Changes in Their Child After Attending Pre-Primary Classes**

Majority of the parents saw huge changes in their children. They became confident and developed communication skills. One of the parents stated,

*“My daughter learnt how to write, draw and color in a structured way. She learnt small addition and subtraction like taking away 2 balls from 3 balls is 1. She has also overcome her shyness.”* (In-depth Interview # 1, Date: 22 October 2021)



One of the parents mentioned there was no positive change in the child. The child lacked confidence and felt shy. She added,

*“My son has lost interest in study because of the pressure. He remains confused and asks me all the time if he can do this or that.”* (In-depth Interview # 3, Date: 25 October 2021)

### **Theme Three: Parents’ View about the Physical Environment of Pre-Primary**

This section is in compliance with the second objective of the study which is to know parents’ view about the pre-primary environment for children’s development. Findings are stated under different headings below.

#### **Opinion about Overall Environment of the Pre-Primary Classes of Their Child**

##### **Attending**

All the parents think that overall environment is very good. However, some of the parents added that it would have been better if there was a big field outside the preschool where children can play for physical growth. One of the parents mentioned,

*“I think a playing field should be there in every preschool just like what we see in Bangla medium schools.”* (Focus Group Discussion # 2, Date: 30 October 2021)

Few parents even talked about the student teacher ratio. One of the parents stated that because of teacher student ratio the environment of the classroom is not ideal for children to learn. They added,

*“Environment is really good. Classrooms are big, air and light can easily pass through the room and there is a small field outside but the teacher student ratio is 25:2 which I*

*think is not appropriate for preschool.” (Focus Group Discussion # 2, Date: 25 October 2021)*

Almost all the parents stated the lack of outdoor space in the preschool. One of the parents mentioned,

*“There is no open space in the school. There is a garage like space on the ground floor. When it is time for children’s assembly, parents stay outside the campus. This is what I do not like about the school.” (In-depth Interview # 4, Date: 2 November 2021)*

### **Play Facilities the School Provides**

Majority of the parents stated that all the schools provide both indoor and outdoor playing facilities. However, most parents said that there are indoor facilities in the school but outdoor facility is missing. One of the parents mentioned,

*“There is a small playground in the front but without any playing materials. Every week the school arranges different types of activities like- science fun, pool day, fruits day where children learn about different kinds of things.” (In-depth Interview # 1, Date: 22 October 2021)*

However, all the parents added that they are satisfied with indoor playing facilities as the indoor area is full of educational toys and materials. One parent opined,

*“For indoor play the school has different types of playing materials like- plastic horses, slides, blocks, puzzles. In fact, there is no table or chair in the classroom. The entire floor is covered in carpet where children play and learn. There is also a TV in the class*

*where children watch rhymes and cartoons.*” (In-depth Interview # 5, Date: 5 November 2021)

### **Opinion about Importance of Indoor and Outdoor Facilities at Preschools**

At this point all the parents stated that both indoor and outdoor facilities are very much important for children’s growth. Majority of the parents said that indoor and outdoor facilities help children to boost brain development and physical development. They opined,

*“Indoor facilities help children with their mental growth and outdoor facilities help with children’s physical growth.”* (Focus Group Discussion # 1, Date: 20 October 2021)

Few parents added that children do not get bored when there are indoor facilities in the classroom. The learning becomes enjoyable to them. One of the parents stated,

*“In the school they do pretend play as an indoor activity as a result, I have seen my child’s language skills have developed not only that I am sometimes amazed by her imagination. Outdoor play is mostly important for developing social skills.”* (In-depth Interview # 1, Date: 22 October 2021)

### **Opinion about the Design of the Indoor and Outdoor Environment of the Pre-Primary Classes Their Child Attending**

All the parents said that indoor facilities of the preschools are outstanding. One of the parents opined,

*“Inside the class teachers hang students’ painting to decorate as a result a sense of belonging is grown inside children.” (In-depth Interview # 1, Date: 22 October 2021)*

However, most parents added that outdoor facilities could have been better. One of the parents stated,

*“Outdoor facilities in the school could have been better. There are playing facilities outside but most of the time senior students play there and preschool children do not get any chance to play. Maybe the school can arrange a corner only for the children.” (In-depth Interview # 5, Date: 5 November 2021)*

One of the parents stated that the overall environment of the preschool is different than what we usually see. She opined,

*“There is a play corner in the classroom where there are lots of toys. Children even have sleeping facility in the class. For outdoor there is a big playground where there is swimming pool and children are allowed to swim once a week under teacher’s supervision. They also have separate game zone for children.” (Focus Group Discussion # 1, Date: 20 October 2021)*

### **Expectation about the Indoor and Outdoor Environments for Pre-Primary Classes**

In response to expectation about indoor and outdoor environment for pre-primary classes all of the parents stated that there need to be a big playground outside and indoor materials has to be fun and enjoyable to the children. One of the participants stated,

*“I expect classrooms to be big so that children can move around and explore. Classrooms have to be colorful so that children are attracted towards the class.”*

*Outside playing area will be spacious and safe where children can run around and there will be swings, slides and see-saw.” (In-depth Interview # 1, Date: 22 October 2021)*

Few parents said that there has to be safety both inside and outside and the classrooms need to be big enough for children. One of the parents responded,

*“I think inside there can be plastic horse, small slides and other learning toys but for outside there can be climbing materials as kids enjoy climbing but everything has to be maintaining safety.” (In-depth Interview # 4, Date: 2 November 2021)*

### **Parents Suggestion to Improve Preschool**

When it comes to suggestions to improve preschool education parents have different opinion.

Most of the parents suggested that teachers do not have to be highly qualified to teach in preschool rather they require trainings and they need to know how to manage children.

They opined that,

*“I do not think teachers need to be highly qualified to teach in pre-primary. Teachers need to have patience, soft spoken, polite and have the ability to manage children.”*

(Focus Group Discussion # 1, Date: 20 October 2021)

Few parents suggested that all preschools should stick to one single curriculum- *“All the preschools need to follow one specific curriculum so that every child’s early learning becomes equal.” (In-depth Interview # 3, Date: 25 October 2021)*

Some of the parents mentioned about adopting digital means- *“As Bangladesh has become digital, I think learning should become digital as well. It will make learning fun and enjoyable.”* (In-depth Interview # 4, Date: 2 November 2021)

## **Discussion**

This section discusses the findings from the collected data. Findings of the data relating to the objective and research questions of the study will be discussed here.

### **Parents’ Perception about Pre-Primary for 3-4 Years Old Children**

This section discusses the study results in the light of the first objective of this study, researcher’s reflection and other existing study findings.

The study found that all the participants had clear knowledge about pre-primary education. All the participants opined that pre-primary is the institution that opens the door of outside world to children and they gain knowledge about the surroundings. According to researchers, pre-primary education is the first step towards entering the world of knowledge and purposeful life (Haque, Nasrin, Yesmin & Biswas, 2013). So, from the findings it can be suggested that parents had proper knowledge about pre-primary education. When it came to Bangladesh pre-primary education, few parents lacked proper knowledge. They think government schools do not have pre-primary classes and only private sectors provide early education. However, in reality, informal baby classes are there for preschool going children aged below 6 years in government primary schools and its main objective is to acclimatize children with school environment (Aktar, 2013).

The findings of this study show that all the parents believe that pre-primary education is very important for children. Majority of the parents suggested that preschool is important because children learn to communicate and learn to follow instructions. Preschools help children learn basic life skills by providing positive learning environment (Jolly, 2020). Few parents also suggested that preschool help to identify children's early autism. In a study conducted by some researchers it was seen that preschool teachers get the opportunity to detect children's developmental, behavioral and emotional problems which makes it ideal settings for screening and identification of developmental delay (Tareh, Ahmad & Zaid, 2020). This supports the findings of the present study.

Participants had mix responses when it came to starting age for preschool education. Some believed 3-3.5 years is the best time whereas, others believed after 4 is the perfect time for attending pre-primary. However, none of their view is incorrect. UNICEF suggests, pre-primary educational programs are generally designed for children of 3-5 years old in spite of having various standards (UNICEF, 2021).

This study findings show most of the parents consider the quality and the curriculum of preschool before admitting the child. Research shows, parents consider preschools with age appropriate curriculum so that children social, emotional and academic literacy (Dahari, 2011). On the other hand, few parents consider affordability, easily accessible of the preschool and 'word of mouth' or references. Lakshmikanth (2019) and Sharmin (2019) identified that opinions from current or previous parents and school reputation help parents to select the best preschool. Research by Sharmin (2019) also shows that specific group of parents consider the location of the school who does not have necessary transportation to drop their children at school.

Most participants' view of quality indicators of pre-primary education is classroom environment, safety, hygiene and curriculum. According to Qadiri and Manhas (2017), children who attend pre-primary education cultivate good health and hygiene habit. However, few parents also added that trained teachers are also an important quality indicator. In research by Hong (2019) it was seen that quality of teacher-child interactions, curriculum and teacher results in preschooler's language and literacy development. The findings of this study also show that all the parents believe attending preschool before primary is essential as it prepares children for future learning and adjust with the learning environment. Research suggests preschool helps to provide the foundation for learning both academics and social by preparing them for primary schools (Ristic, 2016).

### **Parents' view about the Pedagogy and Teaching Learning Process of Pre-Primary**

Analysis of the second theme reveals parents believe that curriculum for preschool should be visual, play and activity based so that learning becomes enjoyable to them. Curriculum should be designed to teach them behavior and culture. The findings also show that some preschools focus on learning through activity and play and few preschools focus more on structured learning process. The curriculum varies depending on the educational philosophy the institution follows. According to Onditi, Otengah and Odongo (2018), depriving children from play affect children's growth and development and most preschool lacks adequate playing materials and have little time for children to play.



Parents expect preschool teachers to be patient and understand that children are individual and they have different need. The study findings also show that few teachers lack professional qualification and are unable to manage children whereas; parents also appreciated few teachers' ability to handle children. Teachers lose their patience very quickly and ignore children's need. As a preschool teacher patience is the most important characteristics along with passion, creative, observant, communicative and compassionate (Sorokopud & Anderson, 2021). In research by Yasmin and Rumi (2020) it was seen that pre-primary teacher's formal training is low or completely absent which becomes difficult for ensuring quality education.

The study found that parents saw huge positive changes in children after attending pre-primary. In contrast, few children had negative changes who studied in structured way. Experts suggest that child maltreatment (neglect) in early childhood negatively affects children's brain and cognitive development resulting long lasting effect (Reunamo, Sajaniemi & Karna, 2020).

### **Parents' View about the Physical Environment of Pre-Primary**

This section discusses the findings of this study in compliance with the second objective of the study. In the study finding it was seen that parents had positive opinion about the overall environment of the pre-primary classes. However, parents expressed negative attitude towards teacher student ratio of the preschool which is 25:2. They feel it makes the classroom chaotic no matter how trained the teachers are at managing children. According to Yasmin and Rumi (2020), teacher student ratio in Bangladesh may vary from 1:8 to 1:79 which creates a high disparity in teacher supporting individual children

so, at least 2 teachers should be appointed in pre-primary classes. This result indicates contradiction between parents' opinion and experts' opinion.

In this finding it was seen that parents were pleased with the indoor facilities of the preschool as it has all the materials required for children's development and learning like- puzzle, plastic horses, slides, blocks etc. However, they showed their concern when it came to outdoor facilities. Outdoor facility of the school lacks open space and playing materials which hinder children's physical growth and learning from environment.

According to experts, outdoor facilities help children with kinesthetic learning, team work, problem solving ability and build community stewardship (Morgan, 2016).

The findings of the study say that parents expect indoor environment to be eye-catching, big and equipped with age-appropriate materials. On the other hand, parents expect outdoor environment to be safe and have more physical activities for children. Parents emphasized much on the lacking of a playground in preschools.

The findings of this research also indicate that parents believe highly qualified teachers is not mandatory for preschool rather they need to be understanding towards children. They also believed curriculum should focus on digital and visual learning as it will help children to learn fast. Therefore, it can be concluded that parents feel there are lots of gaps in the pre-primary education system in Bangladesh that needs to be resolved.

## **Conclusion**

Bangladesh has done significantly well in the education sector. Education has always been an important sector of development for the Bangladesh Government. Although the numbers of students attending pre-primary classes are rising day by day yet the quality of

education for preschool is always a question. The Government has created many policies and commissions regarding the development of pre-primary education. However, the Government has lacked in ensuring quality education in preschools.

This research has discussed parents' perception on pre-primary education for 3-4 years old children. The research findings provide parents belief, thought and views towards pre-primary education. Parents believe preschool education plays a significant role for development and early learning of children. Through research it was seen that though most parents were satisfied with the curriculum of the pre-primary yet few parents were not pleased. The research shows parents think curriculum of the preschool should be play based, fun and enjoyable. Furthermore, parents opined that pre-primary teachers lack professional training. During the course of interviews parents shared the importance of both outdoor and indoor facilities of preschool for children's early development. The research also provides data regarding the need for more outdoor activities for children's physical growth. Lastly, it can be concluded that parents' perception, opinion and view regarding pre-primary classes can help to improve the pre-primary education system in our country.

## **Recommendations**

After reflecting on the findings and discussion of the present study on the perception of parents on pre-primary education for 3-4 years old children studying in English medium pre-primary classes in Dhaka city, the researcher has come up with some recommendations on the subject matter. The recommendations are-

- In the study findings it was seen that preschools have their own curriculum rather than following one single curriculum. So, standardized play-based curriculum for all preschool children needs to be provided.
- It was evident that preschool teachers lack proper training. Teachers' training should be provided to improve their skills.
- Most of the preschools lack outdoor playing facilities and space which is an important factor for children's development. School authority need to allocate child friendly outdoor space for children's physical activity.
- Lastly, further research needs to be carried out on a larger scale to see a nationwide perspective as the study was on a smaller scale.

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## Annex 1: In-Depth Interview Questionnaire (English)

### In-Depth Interview Questionnaire

**Research Title:** Parents' Perception on Pre-Primary Education for 3-4 Years Old Children

#### **Section A: Demographic Information**

Interview Date:	
Start Time:	
End Time:	
Name of Respondent:	
Age:	
Gender:	
Education Level:	
Occupation:	
Child's Age:	

#### **Section B: Parents' Perception about the Pre-Primary Education for 3-4 Years Old**

##### **Children**

1. Did you hear the term 'Pre-Primary' education before?
2. What do you know about pre-primary education?
3. What do you think about pre-primary education in Bangladesh? Please share.
4. Do you think pre-primary education is important for children? If yes, please share your opinion.
5. According to you at what age children should go to pre-primary class? Why?
6. What are the things you consider while choosing/selecting pre-primary institution for your child?
7. According to you, what are the quality indicators of pre-primary education?

8. Do you think some of the indicators are more important than others? If yes, which are those and why?
9. Do you think children should attend preschool before going to primary school? If yes, please explain why. If not, please explain why.

**Section C: Parents' View about the Pedagogy and Teaching Learning Process of Pre-Primary**

1. What were the factors you considered before enrolling your child in this particular preschool?
2. What was your first impression after taking your child to preschool?
3. Did you get any chance to see the preschool curriculum for children aged 3-4 years? What were the things you noticed?
4. According to you, what should be included in the pre-primary curriculum for children aged 3-4 years?
5. What is your thought on the teaching-learning quality of the preschool your child currently attending?
6. As a parent what is your expectations from preschool teachers?
7. What is your opinion about the professional qualification of the teachers of pre-primary classes your child is attending?
8. What kind of teaching-learning approach do you think pre-primary classes should follow for 3-4 years old children and why should they follow that? Please explain?
9. What changes do you see in your child after attending pre-primary classes?

**Section D: Parents' View about the Physical Environment (Outdoor and Indoor) of  
Pre-Primary Classes**

1. How is the overall environment of the pre-primary classes of your child attending?
2. What type of play facilities does the school provide?
3. Do you think indoor and outdoor facilities at schools are important for children? If  
yes, why and if not, why not?
4. What is your opinion about the design of the indoor and outdoor environment of  
the  
pre-primary classes your child attending?
5. What types of indoor and outdoor environments do you expect for pre-primary  
classes?

**Concluding Question**

1. As a parent, what do you suggest to be improved in preschool education?

## Annex 2: In-Depth Interview Questionnaire (Bangla)

### In-Depth Interview Questionnaire

গবেষণার বিষয়: ৩ - ৪ বছর বয়সী শিশুদের জন্য প্রি-প্রাইমারি শিক্ষার বিষয়ে পিতামাতার ধারণা

#### ক : জনমিতিক তথ্য

সাক্ষাৎকারের তারিখ:	
শুরুর সময়:	
সমাপ্তির সময়:	
উত্তরদাতার নাম:	
বয়স:	
লিঙ্গ:	
শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা:	
পেশা:	
শিশুর বয়স:	

#### খ: ৩ - ৪ বছর বয়সী শিশুদের প্রি-প্রাইমারি শিক্ষা সম্পর্কে অভিভাবকদের ধারণা

1. আপনি কি 'প্রি-প্রাইমারি' শিক্ষা শব্দটি আগে শুনেছেন?
2. প্রি-প্রাইমারি শিক্ষা সম্পর্কে আপনি কি জানেন?
3. বাংলাদেশে প্রি-প্রাইমারি শিক্ষা সম্পর্কে আপনি কী ভাবেন? ব্যাখ্যা করুন
4. আপনি কি মনে করেন শিশুদের জন্য প্রি-প্রাইমারি শিক্ষা গুরুত্বপূর্ণ? যদি হ্যাঁ, দয়া করে আপনার মতামত ব্যাখ্যা করুন.
5. আপনার মতে কোন বয়সে শিশুদের প্রি-প্রাইমারি শ্রেণীতে যাওয়া উচিত? কেন?
6. আপনার সন্তানের জন্য প্রি-প্রাইমারি প্রতিষ্ঠান নির্বাচন/বাছাই করার সময় আপনি কোন কোন বিষয়গুলি বিবেচনা করবেন?



7. আপনার মতে প্রি-প্রাইমারি শিক্ষার মান নির্দেশক কি কি?
8. আপনি কি মনে করেন কিছু মান নির্দেশক অন্যদের চেয়ে বেশি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ? যদি হ্যাঁ, এগুলো কি কি এবং কেন?
9. আপনি কি মনে করেন প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়ে যাওয়ার আগে শিশুদের প্রি-প্রাইমারি যাওয়া উচিত? যদি হ্যাঁ, দয়া করে ব্যাখ্যা করুন কেন। যদি না হয়, কেন তা ব্যাখ্যা করুন।

**গ: প্রি-প্রাইমারি পদ্ধতি এবং শিক্ষণ শেখার প্রক্রিয়া সম্পর্কে অভিভাবকদের দৃষ্টিভঙ্গি**

1. এই প্রিস্কুলে আপনার সন্তানকে ভর্তির আগে আপনি কোন বিষয়গুলো বিবেচনা করেছিলেন?
2. ওই স্কুল সম্পর্কে আপনার অনুভূতি কি ছিল?
3. আপনি কি ৩ - ৪ বছর বয়সী শিশুদের জন্য প্রিস্কুল পাঠ্যক্রম দেখার কোন সুযোগ পেয়েছেন? আপনি কি কি বিষয় লক্ষ্য করেছেন?
4. আপনার মতে, ৩ - ৪ বছর বয়সী শিশুদের প্রি-প্রাইমারি পাঠ্যক্রমে কি কি বিষয় অন্তর্ভুক্ত করা উচিত?
5. আপনার সন্তান বর্তমানে যে প্রিস্কুলে পড়ছে তার শিক্ষাদান ও শেখার মান সম্পর্কে আপনার ভাবনা কি?
6. একজন অভিভাবক হিসেবে প্রিস্কুল শিক্ষকদের কাছ থেকে আপনার প্রত্যাশা কি কি?
7. আপনার সন্তান যে প্রি-প্রাইমারি শ্রেণিতে অংশগ্রহণ করছে তাদের শিক্ষকদের পেশাগত যোগ্যতা সম্পর্কে আপনার মতামত কী?

৪. ৩ - ৪ বছর বয়সী শিশুদের জন্য প্রি-প্রাইমারি শ্রেণীতে কোন ধরনের শিক্ষাদান ও শেখার পদ্ধতি অনুসরণ করা উচিত বলে আপনি মনে করেন এবং কেন তাদের তা অনুসরণ করা উচিত? দয়া করে ব্যাখ্যা করুন?

৯. প্রি-প্রাইমারি ক্লাসে অংশ নেওয়ার পর আপনার সন্তানের মধ্যে আপনি কি কি পরিবর্তন দেখতে পাচ্ছেন?

**ঘ: প্রি-প্রাইমারি ক্লাসের বাইরের এবং ভিতরের (ইনডোর এবং আউটডোর) পরিবেশ**

**সম্পর্কে অভিভাবকদের দৃষ্টিভঙ্গি**

১. আপনার সন্তানের প্রি-প্রাইমারি ক্লাসের সার্বিক পরিবেশ কেমন?
২. স্কুল কি ধরনের খেলার সুবিধা প্রদান করে?
৩. আপনি কি মনে করেন স্কুলে বাইরের এবং ভিতরের সুবিধা শিশুদের জন্য গুরুত্বপূর্ণ?  
যদি হ্যাঁ, কেন এবং যদি না হয়, কেন নয়?
৪. আপনার সন্তান যে প্রি-প্রাইমারি ক্লাসে অংশ নিচ্ছে তার বাইরের এবং ভিতরের পরিবেশের সম্পর্কে আপনার মতামত কি?
৫. প্রি-প্রাইমারি ক্লাসের জন্য আপনি কোন ধরনের বাইরের এবং ভিতরের পরিবেশ আশা করেন?

**শেষ প্রশ্ন**

১. একজন অভিভাবক হিসেবে, প্রিস্কুল শিক্ষায় উন্নতি করার জন্য আপনি কি পরামর্শ দেন?

### **Annex 3: Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guideline (English)**

#### **Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guideline**

**Research Title:** Parents' Perception on Pre-Primary Education for 3-4 Years Old Children

#### **Introductory Questions:**

- a. How are you all?
- b. How is everyone at home?

#### **Questions:**

1. What do you know about pre-primary education? Do you think pre-primary education is important for children?
2. According to you at what age children should go to pre-primary class? Why?
3. According to you what are the quality indicators of pre-primary education?
4. What were the factors you considered before enrolling your child in this particular preschool?
5. Did you get any chance to see the pre-school curriculum for children aged 3-4 years? What were the things you noticed?
6. According to you, what should be included in the pre-primary curriculum for children aged 3-4 years?
7. What is your thought on the teaching-learning quality of the preschool your child currently attending?

8. What kind of teaching-learning approach do you think pre-primary classes should follow for 3-4 years old children and why should they follow that? Please explain?
9. What changes do you see in your child after attending pre-primary classes?
10. How is the overall environment of the pre-primary classes of your child attending?
11. Do you think indoor and outdoor facilities at schools are important for children?  
If yes, why and if not, why not?
12. What is your opinion about the design of the indoor and outdoor environment of the  
the  
pre-primary classes you child attending?
13. As a parent, what do you suggest to be improved in preschool education?

## Annex 4: Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guideline (Bangla)

### Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guideline

গবেষণার বিষয়: ৩ - ৪ বছর বয়সী শিশুদের জন্য প্রি-প্রাইমারি শিক্ষার বিষয়ে  
পিতামাতার ধারণা

#### সূচনামূলক প্রশ্ন:

- a. তোমরা সবাই কেমন আছ?
- b. বাড়ীর সবাই কেমন আছে?

#### প্রশ্ন:

1. প্রি-প্রাইমারি শিক্ষা সম্পর্কে আপনি কি জানেন? আপনি কি মনে করেন শিশুদের জন্য  
প্রি-প্রাইমারি শিক্ষা গুরুত্বপূর্ণ?
2. আপনার মতে কোন বয়সে শিশুদের প্রি-প্রাইমারি শ্রেণীতে যাওয়া উচিত? কেন?
3. আপনার মতে প্রি-প্রাইমারি শিক্ষার মান নির্দেশক কি?
4. এই প্রিস্কুলে আপনার সন্তানকে ভর্তির আগে আপনি কোন বিষয়গুলো বিবেচনা  
করেছিলেন?
5. আপনি কি ৩ - ৪ বছর বয়সী শিশুদের জন্য প্রিস্কুল পাঠ্যক্রম দেখার কোন সুযোগ  
পেয়েছেন? আপনি কি কি বিষয় লক্ষ্য করেছেন?
6. আপনার মতে, ৩ - ৪ বছর বয়সী শিশুদের প্রি-প্রাইমারি পাঠ্যক্রমে কি কি বিষয়  
অন্তর্ভুক্ত করা উচিত?

7. আপনার সন্তান বর্তমানে যে প্রিন্সুলে পড়ছে তার শিক্ষাদান ও শেখার মান সম্পর্কে আপনার ভাবনা কি?
8. ৩ - ৪ বছর বয়সী শিশুদের জন্য প্রি-প্রাইমারি শ্রেণীতে কোন ধরনের শিক্ষাদান ও শেখার পদ্ধতি অনুসরণ করা উচিত বলে আপনি মনে করেন এবং কেন তাদের তা অনুসরণ করা উচিত? দয়া করে ব্যাখ্যা করুন?
9. প্রি-প্রাইমারি ক্লাসে অংশ নেওয়ার পর আপনার সন্তানের মধ্যে আপনি কি কি পরিবর্তন দেখতে পাচ্ছেন?
10. আপনার সন্তানের প্রি-প্রাইমারি ক্লাসের সার্বিক পরিবেশ কেমন?
11. আপনি কি মনে করেন স্কুলে বাইরের এবং ভিতরের সুবিধা শিশুদের জন্য গুরুত্বপূর্ণ? যদি হ্যাঁ, কেন এবং যদি না হয়, কেন নয়?
12. আপনার সন্তান যে প্রি-প্রাইমারি ক্লাসে অংশ নিচ্ছে তার বাইরের এবং ভিতরের পরিবেশের সম্পর্কে আপনার মতামত কী?
13. একজন অভিভাবক হিসেবে, প্রি-স্কুল শিক্ষায় উন্নতি করার জন্য আপনি কি পরামর্শ দেন?

## **Annex 5: Consent Form (English)**

### **Consent Form for Parents**

**Title of the Research:** Parents' Perception on Pre-Primary Education for 3-4 Years Old Children

**Researcher:** Aysha Tabassum

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

I am conducting this research as a part of my Master's Degree requirement from the Institute of Educational Development (IED) - BRAC University. The aim of this research is to explore parents' perception on pre-primary education for 3-4 years old children of Dhaka city.

#### **Expectation from you**

If you agree, you will be expected to share your perception, views and thoughts on pre-primary education. This will include physical environment, pedagogy and teaching-learning process of pre-primary classes. The interview may take 60 to 90 minutes, depending upon your response.

#### **Risks and benefits**

There is no risk to you for participating in this study; directly or indirectly parents, children, policy makers may be benefited in the future.

#### **Privacy, anonymity and confidentiality**

All information collected from you will remain strictly confidential. I would be happy to answer any of your queries about the study and you are welcome to contact me.

#### **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 participating in my study, please indicate that by putting your signature in the specified space below.

Name of the Parents:

Name of the Researcher:

Signature of the Parents:

Signature of the Researcher:

Thank you very much for your cooperation. For any further query, you may contact me. My contact no is, 01760871362, or you can email at [aysha.tabassum93@gmail.com](mailto:aysha.tabassum93@gmail.com).

## Annex 6: Consent Form (Bangla)

### অভিভাবকদের জন্য সম্মতিপত্র

**গবেষণার নাম:** ৩ - ৪ বছর বয়সী শিশুদের জন্য প্রি-প্রাইমারি শিক্ষার বিষয়ে পিতামাতার ধারণা

**গবেষকের নাম:** আয়শা তাবাসসুম

**গবেষণার উদ্দেশ্য:** এই গবেষণার উদ্দেশ্য ঢাকা শহরের ৩-৪ বছর বয়সী শিশুদের প্রি-প্রাইমারি শিক্ষার বিষয়ে অভিভাবকদের ধারণা অনুসন্ধান করা

**আপনার কাছ থেকে প্রত্যাশা:** আপনি যদি সম্মত হন, তাহলে প্রি-প্রাইমারি শিক্ষা সম্পর্কে আপনার উপলব্ধি, মতামত এবং চিন্তাভাবনা শেয়ার করবেন বলে আশা করা হবে। এতে প্রি-প্রাইমারি শ্রেণির বাইরের এবং ভিতরের পরিবেশ, পদ্ধতি এবং শিক্ষণ শেখার প্রক্রিয়া অন্তর্ভুক্ত থাকবে। আপনার প্রতিক্রিয়ার উপর নির্ভর করে সাক্ষাত্কারে ৬০ থেকে ৯০ মিনিট সময় লাগতে পারে।

**ঝুঁকি এবং সুবিধা:** এই গবেষণায় অংশগ্রহণ করার জন্য আপনার কোন ঝুঁকি নেই; প্রত্যক্ষ বা পরোক্ষভাবে পিতামাতা, সন্তান, নীতিনির্ধারকরা ভবিষ্যতে উপকৃত হতে পারেন।

**গোপনীয়তা:** আপনার কাছ থেকে সংগৃহীত সমস্ত তথ্য কঠোরভাবে গোপন থাকবে। আমি অধ্যয়ন সম্পর্কে আপনার যেকোনো প্রশ্নের উত্তর দিতে পেরে খুশি হব এবং আমার সাথে যোগাযোগ করতে আপনাকে স্বাগত জানাই।

**ভবিষ্যতে তথ্য ব্যবহার:** এই গবেষণা থেকে সংগৃহীত কিছু তথ্য ভবিষ্যতে ব্যবহারের জন্য রাখা যেতে পারে। এই ক্ষেত্রে অন্যান্য গবেষকদের সরবরাহ করা তথ্য এবং ডেটা, অংশগ্রহণকারীদের সনাক্তকারী তথ্যের গোপনীয়তা, পরিচয় গোপন রাখা এবং গোপনীয়তার রক্ষণাবেক্ষণের সাথে বিরোধ বা লঙ্ঘন করবে না।

**অংশগ্রহণ এবং প্রত্যাহার করার অধিকার :** এই গবেষণায় প্রমোত্তর পর্বে অংশগ্রহণ সম্পূর্ণভাবে আপনার ইচ্ছার উপর নির্ভরশীল। আপনি যদি গবেষণায় অংশগ্রহণ করতে না চান অথবা প্রত্যাহার করেন তাহলে আপনার সিদ্ধান্ত মেনে নিবো এবং আপনাকে কোনোরকম প্রশ্ন করবো না।

আপনি যদি আমার প্রস্তাবে গবেষণায় অংশগ্রহণ করতে রাজি হন, দোয়া করে নিচের অংশে আপনার স্বাক্ষর দিয়ে নিশ্চিত করুন।

অভিভাবকের নাম:

গবেষকের নাম:

অভিভাবকের স্বাক্ষর:

গবেষকের স্বাক্ষর:

আপনাকে ধন্যবাদ আপনার সহযোগিতার জন্য। কোনো ধরণের প্রশ্ন ও যোগাযোগের জন্য, আমার নম্বরে হচ্ছে 01760871362 অথবা ইমেইল করুন [aysha.tabassum93@gmail.com](mailto:aysha.tabassum93@gmail.com).