

# **Exploring Parents' Perceptions of the Play-based Approach for Early Childhood Education**

By

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Student ID: 22355002

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

BRAC Institute of Educational Development

Brac University

May, 2024

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## **Declaration**

It is hereby declared that

1. The thesis submitted is my 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 that 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.

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## Approval

The thesis of “Exploring the Parents' Perceptions of the Play-based Approach for Early Childhood Education Submitted by Hafsa Zaman (Student ID: 22355002) of Summer, 2022 has been accepted as satisfactory in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science in Early Childhood Development on May, 2024.

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## Ethics Statement

**Title of Thesis Topic:** Exploring the parents' perceptions of the Play-based approach for Early Childhood Education

Student name: Hafsa Zaman

1. Source of Population: Parents and Teachers.
  
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- N/A
  
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

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## **Abstract**

The research being investigated examines how parents see the play-based approach to early childhood education. It aims to understand their opinions, experiences, and attitudes about this educational approach. A comprehensive sample of parents whose children were in preschool was asked and interviewed as part of qualitative approaches used to gather data. One FGD with same schools teachers explore their experience with parents' perceptions about play-based education. To find common themes and patterns in the parents' comments, thematic analysis was used. The results show a range of parental viewpoints, from strong support for play-based learning to planning how it conforms to academic requirements. While many parents understand how play helps their children develop their creativity, social skills, and cognitive abilities, others voice concerns about play's reported lack of academic focus. The study emphasizes the value of cooperative relationships between parents and educators in support of play-based learning strategies and highlights the necessity of ongoing communication and instruction to soothe the concerns expressed by parents. To further improve knowledge and support for play-based learning in early childhood education settings, recommendations are given for future study and practice.

**Keywords:** Parents; Early childhood education; Perception; Attitudes; Thematic analysis; Educational practice.

## **Dedication**

This thesis is dedicated to my loving family including my daughter Anabia, my mother Kazi Shahinur Bilkis, my father Md. Hassanuzzaman and my loving Husband Kalifa Nazim Uddin whose unwavering support and encouragement have been my guiding light throughout this research journey. My greatest source of inspiration is your faith in me.

## **Acknowledgments**

I am extremely thankful of Allah Ta'ala first and foremost. He has given me the grace to persevere this far to receive his benefits along the way. I also want to thank my supervisor, Riffat Jahan Nahreen, from the bottom of my heart. Throughout my journey, her advice and assistance were crucial. Her knowledge and support were extremely helpful in the development of my thesis.

I am also incredibly grateful to the participants who took part in my data gathering are also greatly valued since they were crucial to my data collection efforts. Their willingness to share information was important to the achievement of this research.

Lastly, my deepest gratitude goes out to my family for their constant encouragement during my master's program. Their support and affection enabled me to overcome and achieve challenges.

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## **List of Acronyms**

- PBL : Play Base Learning
- Govt. : Government
- PPE : Pre Primary Education
- ECE : Early Childhood Education

## **Glossary**

In- Depth Interview (IDI): This method involved one-on-one interviews with selected participants, including teachers, parents, and educational experts. The interviews were structured to explore individual experiences, understanding, and attitudes towards play-based learning.

Focus Group Discussions (FGD): FGDs were conducted with groups of kindergarten teachers, parents, and other stakeholders involved in early childhood education. These discussions were designed to capture a broader range of opinions and foster interaction among participants, revealing common themes and diverse viewpoints.

# **Chapter 1: Introduction and Background**

## **Introduction**

Play is an action or process people voluntarily participate in and find pleasurable for entertainment, leisure, and education. It is a basic feature of human conduct that manifests in different ways at different phases of life. Play is expressed in many ways, including physical activities, social interactions, and creative role-playing. It can be said play is also a source of early education for a child. Early education is crucial for a child's development and well-being. Play-based learning is a popular method that supports young learners' overall development by allowing them to explore and learn in a fun and natural way. Author of the Active Parenting program series Dr. Michael Popkin claims that playing with a child builds up their sense of self, helps them learn about the world, gives them opportunities to pick up new skills, and strengthens their relationship with their parent (Popkin, 2017). Play is beneficial for many things, such as emotional health, skill learning, sociability, and personal growth. Another study on UNICEF learning through play reveals that the eight years of life are the most critical for human development. During this time, cognitive abilities, emotional stability, social competence, and physical and mental health all grow. Early childhood learning is quick and essential for students to succeed in school and beyond. During this time, play-based learning is crucial ( UNICEF,2018). Play is a fundamental aspect of human behavior that extends beyond age, culture, and species. It is a natural and instinctive way for individuals to explore their surroundings, learn essential skills, and form social connections. Play is not just limited to childhood but continues to be vital throughout the lifespan, contributing significantly to cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development. It is not just a recreational activity but a fundamental aspect of a child's development, providing a holistic approach to learning and enabling them to explore, discover, and develop essential skills for future success. Recognizing

and encouraging play throughout life can lead to well-rounded individuals better equipped to handle the complexities of the world.

This research aims to explore parents' views of play in early childhood, focusing on opinions, experiences, expectations, attitudes, and knowledge. Since 75% of brain growth happens after birth, play is crucial for optimal development. Play helps develop both fine and gross motor abilities by stimulating the brain through the development of connections between nerve cells. Children may also express their feelings, think, create, and solve issues using it. Additionally, play promotes creativity, problem-solving, and communication. The study looks at how parents feel about play for early learning education, underlining the value of developing long-lasting connections and recognizing the individuality of every child. Parents can create a supportive home environment for their children's learning through play-based education, promoting social and emotional development, and fostering curiosity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills, ultimately leading to a lifetime of learning.

### **Statement of the problem**

Children and preschoolers benefit from play in many ways, including their cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development. Parents may completely interact with their children through play. Children's growth depends on play since it fosters their imagination, inventiveness, and physical stamina. In addition to building resilience, promoting unstructured play can help reduce obesity, boost physical activity levels, and support healthy brain development.(Duncan et al., 2009).

I want to explore to parents' perceptions of play-based early childhood education. I believe that play plays a crucial role in holistic development, contributing to cognitive, social, emotional, and physical growth. I also have a personal and professional interest in educational philosophies,

particularly those centered around play-based learning. Understanding parents' perspectives can help explore these philosophies with their values in their children's educational experiences. I also want to understand their level of involvement in their children's learning, which can inform strategies to enhance parental engagement. My current research focuses on the challenges and facilitators influencing parents' preference for play-based learning. This issue might add to the conversation about cutting-edge teaching strategies and find the main reason elements that impact parents' opinions on play-based education. By researching these elements, I want to get involved in the creation of stronger methods that will encourage play-based learning and increase parental engagement. My current research focuses on the barriers and facilitators that influence the utilization of play-based education, as well as the possible effects of this approach on learning. This knowledge can be used to develop advocacy strategies for play-based learning.

Play is essential for helping children of all ages learn and getting them ready for challenges in the future. Play is influenced by a variety of elements, one of which is family. Parental attitudes about play significantly impact children's play experiences. Parents' understanding of play's importance in a child's development influences their children's play opportunities. Parents who prioritize physical activities tend to provide more physical play opportunities, while those who prioritize intellectual activities provide more opportunities for intellectual play.( V. S., & Sriram, V. 2022). It is also thought that based on the role adults play, children need to be involved for them to learn through play.(Ntshangase & Venketsamy, 2022) . Parents' awareness of the importance of play in child development can vary widely based on factors such as cultural background, educational experiences, and exposure to current research in child development. Parents who had positive experiences with play during their childhood may recognize its importance more readily. Personal experiences can shape parental attitudes toward play in their children's lives. Prevailing parenting

trends can influence awareness. As certain educational philosophies and approaches gain popularity, parents may become more informed about the significance of play-based learning. Parenting styles can influence how much importance parents place on play.(Moon-Seo & Munsell, 2022) Its sees that those who follow more child-centered or permissive parenting styles may be more attuned to the developmental benefits of play. Parents should have a greater understanding of the power of play. Awareness of the importance of play involves a multifaceted approach that includes education, communication, and cultural sensitivity. When well-informed, parents are more likely to support and encourage play-based learning experiences for their children actively.(Saminder Singh & Ngadni, 2023a)

And the other hand, Play is crucial for a child's development, yet parents sometimes emphasize established academic activities over play. This might give root to the false belief that play is only for fun and doesn't advance mental, emotional, social, or physical growth. Some parents may consider play to be exclusively recreational and think that the best ways for children to learn are through more structured activities like memorizing facts or early academic exercises. This contrast might affect parents' decisions about play since they may see other people participating in more structured or academically related activities. According to research on parents' opinions of play-based learning for children aged three to five, play is essential for a child's overall growth and well-being. Parents encouraged educational institutions to offer sufficient play items and safe conditions because they valued joy, happiness, friendship, and amusement.(Shakandar Ali et al., n.d.)

Another research explores play-based learning in Bangladesh's early childhood education (ECE) and its impact on children's welfare. It uses Vygotsky's sociocultural approach and suggests government policy and stakeholder engagement could facilitate its implementation. The study also



considers the Japanese experience to address the global play crisis in early childhood education.(Alam, M. J. 2022). Nowadays Bangladesh has made significant progress toward ensuring children's health and physical development. It is necessary to increase the parents' understanding of early childhood development and learning.(IBE/2006/EFA/GMR/CP/05) But because of the scarcity of parks, heavy traffic, and high crime rates, urban surroundings provide particular difficulties for children to play outside. Informal playtime is restricted by private property and family schedules. Children's interest in playing outside is restricted by technological devices and a lack of nature. These problems are mainly related to community disengagement, lack of urban planning, and well-planned public spaces. This requires a comprehensive approach to government action. Due to the family's busyness, there is not much time to play with the children, giving them time and creating different kinds of creative play environments thus children become addicted to the device.

### **Purpose of the study**

The main purpose of this study is, to explore parents' perceptions of the play-based approach for early childhood learning. perceptions of parents' positive attitudes help promote children's positive attitudes toward education from early childhood, as their positive attitudes contribute to support efforts for play-based learning in their children and contribute to existing research on early childhood education. Understanding parents' perceptions of play-based approaches is crucial for creating a collaborative, supportive, and effective educational environment that aligns with their needs and expectations. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of factors influencing parental attitudes toward educational approaches. also, parents' awareness and knowledge about child development and the child's primary education through play, knowing their opinion and ideas about teaching children through play in home environments.

Furthermore, it explores preschool teachers' experiences with parents and what they face and parents' attitudes towards play-based education are positive and negative.

### **Significance of the Study**

Play is a fundamental and universal aspect of human behavior that transcends age, culture, and species. From the earliest stages of life, individuals engage in play as a natural and instinctive way to explore their surroundings, learn essential skills, and foster social connections. Play is not only confined to childhood; it continues to be a vital element throughout the lifespan, contributing significantly to cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development.

Kessel's research explores how children learn through play in early childhood settings, highlighting its richness and the importance of constructive play. The Constructivist Theory, influenced by Vygotsky's ZPD, emphasizes children's natural learning experiences and interactions with the environment. Incorporating open-ended play, modeled play, and purposefully framed play can create an engaging and effective learning environment for students. (Kessel, 2018)

Several pieces of evidence can be seen, Play, is a skill that is essential for all children from birth to age eight (NAEYC, 2020). Parten's study indicates that before the age of five, children go through these six phases. Once they understand them, they are going to experiment with other forms of play, including physical, competitive, and imaginative play. (Harris, 2022).

My interest will be sparked by a perceived gap in the existing research literature. If there's limited research on parents' perceptions of play-based learning in our context, we may see an opportunity to contribute to the knowledge base in this area. Exploring this topic could align with your professional or academic goals, such as pursuing a career in early childhood education, psychology, or research. Understanding parents' views on play-based learning can enhance collaboration between parents and teachers. It can help educators tailor communication strategies

to address parental concerns and highlight the benefits of a play-based approach. Regardless of the specific motivation, researching parents' perceptions of the importance of a play-based approach for early childhood education can contribute valuable insights to the field and potentially inform practices that benefit young learners.(Tekin, n.d.)

This research can generate new knowledge. The study aims to understand parents' beliefs and values regarding education and play. It can identify parents' concerns or misconceptions about play-based learning, enabling the adoption of play-based approaches and tailoring communication strategies. The study also reveals how these perceptions influence parental decision-making regarding early childhood education, educational program choices, and factors influencing parents' decisions. The findings can inform the refinement of educational policies that align with community expectations and aspirations for early learning. The study's findings can help create a comprehensive model of early childhood education that incorporates both academic and social aspects. The findings can inspire future research and contribute to ongoing activities about effective early childhood education practices.

In summary, we can say, that investigating parents' opinions on the value of a play-based curriculum for young children helps to generate new knowledge, effects, and insights that were either unknown or understood at the time of the investigation. This knowledge may therefore impact and shape research goals, policy, and teaching methods.

## **Research Questions**

1. What are the parents' perceptions about the play-based approach for early childhood education (ECE)?
2. How do parents envision their role in supporting play-based learning at home?

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

Play is an essential component of human development that supports social, emotional, cognitive, physical, and well-being from infancy to maturity. It helps children explore, think creatively, and solve problems, which develops their cognitive skills and helps them succeed academically. In addition, play fosters feelings for others, teamwork, interaction, emotional control, and physical well-being. In addition to promoting mental health by reducing anxiety, depression, and stress, active play helps in the development of gross and fine motor abilities. Play also encourages awareness and adaptation, as well as creativity, imagination, and lifetime learning. A society that is more healthy, stronger, and more socially competent can benefit from an appreciation of and recognition of the value placed on play. Early childhood education uses a variety of play activities to teach young children about school preparation and the development of fundamental abilities that will help them approach more challenging tasks like reading. Play is monumental for all children and can be an effective learning vehicle if educators recognize its potential. Therefore, in order to understand parents' opinions on the play-based method's efficacy and advantages for their children's learning and development, it is vital to investigate how parents perceive this approach in early childhood education. Knowing how parents see things might help offer insightful information on the adoption and use of play-based learning in the early years.

### **Importance of play**

Early childhood education should reflect young children's different learning processes and provide all the necessary components for an effective learning process and play offers all essential elements for a successful early childhood learning process. Play helps children develop in their zone of proximal growth. It has been more widely recognized that the play-based approach to early childhood education is a useful tool for promoting kids' learning and overall development. Play-

based learning is critical for fostering young children's creativity, problem-solving abilities, and social development, according to research. Children typically act more maturely and more randomly during play than they do during the day. Giving kids the chance to play helps them grow in all areas of development. (Berk, 1994). Lev Vygotsky, a Russian developmental psychologist, developed a remarkable theory early in the century that places a high value on social and cultural experiences in development (Berk, 1994). His findings provide evidence to the idea that adults as well as peers naturally facilitate early children's play while creating environments that foster imagination and creativity throughout the preschool and early childhood years. According to Vygotsky, a play needs two essential foundations that, when integrated during play, are crucial to the early stages of development (Berk, 1994). We can also say, The sociocultural theory of Lev Vygotsky highlights the relationship between children's learning. The phases of cognitive development are described by Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development, which highlights the need of play-based learning in early childhood education. In conclusion, play-based learning is critical to children's education and development can better assist children's growth and foster a more active learning environment by having a better understanding of the various roles adults play in accommodating children's learning via play. (Alharbi, n.d.)

There shows another research, explores the purpose of play in early childhood education, focusing Dewey, Froebel, and Rousseau's contributions. It talks about Piaget's idea of knowledge production through play, which says that play chances are how children naturally learn. However, the writers contest these viewpoints' applicability in the twenty-first century. Using play as a setting for adult interaction and Vygotsky's theory of social mediation, they emphasize the importance of teachers in promoting children's learning. The writers also discuss instructors' roles in kids' play and how they can tell when kids are learning ( Moore, D., Edwards, S., Cutter-

Mackenzie, A., Boyd, W. (2014). Play is very important for learning and play based education is easy way to learn. The paper by Ingrid Pramling Samuelsson and Maj Asplund Carlsson highlights how play and learning interact in early childhood education. They believe that play is an essential channel for children's biological learning and growth and provide a developmental pedagogy that integrates play and learning to foster creativity and all-around growth. Play-based learning activities emphasize the significance of identifying and fostering this process. The paper promotes a core method of instruction that encourages play.(Samuelsson & Carlsson, 2008).

Play is crucial for children's development and bonding, as it helps them learn family rules, social norms, and societal behavior. Parents should make time for play, as it builds lasting bonds and boosts self-esteem. Play types vary with age, including unoccupied, solitary, onlooker, parallel, and associative play. As children grow, play evolves, promoting social skills, language development, and cooperation.(The Importance of Play In, n.d.).

The article explores how play-based learning affects early childhood education and development, with a particular emphasis on the social and psychological benefits of play in early life. According to psychology and education researchers, play is a potent mediator of acquiring different skills throughout an individual's life, in line with Piagetian theory. According to this viewpoint, instructors should only provide chances for play in the environments that their students are exposed to, allowing children to learn "naturally" via play.Early teaching often has several benefits for children: better grades, longer attention spans, less or no need for special education throughout later school years, and improved social skills. (Ali et al., 2018)

## **Knowledge about play-based education**

Finding an understanding of how parents view the play-based approach can also help identify future implementation issues. With the use of this data, approaches to better assist and teach parents about the advantages of play-based learning may be developed. This may be beneficial to generate chances for learning through play. This can facilitate the development of a more knowledgeable and encouraging atmosphere for young children's education.(Stage et al., 2018)

Early childhood education should reflect young children's different learning processes and provide all the necessary components for an effective learning process and play offers all essential elements for a successful early childhood learning process. The books on children's play argue that structured activities replacing spontaneous play are not beneficial for children's development and personal and professional lives. They suggest self-paced, child-controlled play is the best approach, and offer suggestions for parents and teachers. (Rogers & Sawyers, 1988).The preoperational phase of development, according to Piaget, is best learned by hands-on manipulation, and play gives kids the chance to work with items and their immediate surroundings. Young children learn naturally because of their natural interest and need to understand the world around them. This leads to unexpectedly self-directed learning. In addition, Piaget also holds that children integrate experiences into their growing minds and modify when they come with fresh objects that cannot match, play is a fantastic illustration of integration. (Piaget, J, 1962). Dr. David Whitebread from the University of Cambridge has released a report on the significance of children's play in their intellectual achievement and emotional well-being. The report discusses five types of play, environmental and social factors, and their consequences. It also suggests policy recommendations to ensure children's continued growth and development. The paper suggests that everyone should implement policies to promote children's play, as modern urbanized societies

limit play opportunities due to environmental stressors, risk-averse societies, and separation from nature. It emphasizes the importance of rest, leisure, and play for children's development and calls for early childhood education to recognize the role of play in children's development (Whitebread, D., Basilio, M., Kuvalja, M., & Verma, M. 2012). We can say that high-quality early education is crucial for long-term developmental effects, promoting learning, imagination, and creativity. Brain development, including executive function and self-regulation, relies on children's play quality. Play development is a superior route to higher-level executive functions and self-regulation than direct training programs. Play is vital for children's development, promoting social-emotional, cognitive, and self-regulation skills, and fostering nurturing relationships (Yogman, M., Garner, 2018). Kessel's research explores how children learn through play in early childhood settings, highlighting its richness and the importance of constructive play. The Constructivist Theory, influenced by Vygotsky's ZPD, emphasizes children's natural learning experiences and interactions with the environment. Incorporating open-ended play, modeled play, and purposefully framed play can create an engaging and effective learning environment for students (Kessel, 2018). Another paper explores parental involvement, focusing on its psychological aspect and sociological factors. It suggests that demographic characteristics, beliefs, and attitudes can influence parental involvement. Parental involvement is crucial for children's education and positively correlates with academic achievement (Georgiou, 2007).

Research has demonstrated the substantial advantages of play-based learning for the education and growth of preschoolers, since it may lead to stronger social skills, higher academic performance, and longer attention periods. Encouraging students to engage in intentional activities that reflect real-world situations is crucial to developing strong cognitive skills. This promotes independence by enabling children to learn from their experiences, surroundings, parents. Its very



important that parents should have enough knowledge about early play based learning to nurture children through play based learning as parents are the first educators to help children through play.(Ali et al., 2018)

### **Some findings about play based education:**

Singer and other writers explained in child development and learning argues that our culture has overlooked the importance of play in children's development. This book also argues that play offers numerous benefits, including physical activity, attention span maximization, peer relationships, creativity cultivation, emotional processing, and academic skills. Over forty years of research shows that play has powerful effects in intellectual, social, and emotional spheres as well as valuable policy recommendations for teachers, counselors, and school psychologists in reintroducing play and joyful learning into classrooms (Singer, D. G., Golinkoff, R. M., & Hirsh-Pasek, K. (Eds.). (2006). We can see another research in Turkey about parents' perception of play, The study examines preschool parents' thoughts, feelings, and concerns about play in Turkey. The research involved 21 parents aged 1-5, who were part of a study. The study found that intensive parenting, characterized by child-centeredness, increased parental anxiety, and feelings of inadequacy, negatively impacted parents' perceptions of play. The study also revealed that cultural differences affect play perceptions, with Euro-American parents viewing play as crucial for early development, while Asian parents see little value in it (Babuc, 2015) . Another research on a kindergarden school shows, Regarding play-based learning in small Midwestern schools, the study examined the attitudes and views of early childhood professionals. Administrators, instructors, and students in kindergarten and transitional kindergarten were among the participants. Teacher-directed education, student-centered instruction, and play-based learning were the three early childhood teaching philosophies that informed the survey results. Regarding play-based learning

in preschool classes, the results revealed conflicting opinions. With regard to play-based statements, preschool educators and administrators were in complete agreement, but elementary educators, kindergarten educators, and instructors had varying or indifferent opinions (Sjoerdsma, S. (2016). But another research in Amy McGinn of the University of Northern Iowa's Student Work conducted a research to look at how play-based early childhood classrooms affected the social and intellectual development of prekindergarten students. The study, which was released in UNI ScholarWorks' Graduate Research Papers area, highlighted the necessity of early childhood education settings that are more inclusive and productive. According to the study, early childhood free play is positively correlated with future academic achievement in social and literacy domains (McGinn, n.d.) Free play can help children build critical abilities and a solid basis for future success in literacy and social development. Play is important for children's social, educational, and research contexts.

As parents are first educators for a child but sometimes parents frequently ignore play-based learning because they may not be aware of the advantages of play and its good effects on children. Play-based learning has a big influence on pupils' cognitive and academic development. There is a research that shows on pre school children, The purpose of this action research project is to determine how play-based learning affects preschoolers' academic development. The purpose of the study is to find out whether or not play-based learning environments allow children to improve academically. The study took out from September to May during the academic year, and information was gathered three times a year utilizing. The study was carried out from September to May during the academic year. Teaching Strategies GOLD was used to document the research throughout, and data was gathered using the IGDIs screener three times a year. Play-based learning has been an important issue in early childhood education, especially in preschool settings.

According to a 2010 survey, 45 percent of parents said they don't spend enough time playing with their children. Many parents are unaware of the advantages of play and its favorable effects on children.(Walther, n.d.)

Parents play a crucial role in a child's early development, as they are the closest family social network and first educational setting. Early parental participation promotes children's adjustment to their new environment and supplementary learning. Parents are skilled adults who support their children's education daily. (Hirsh-Pasek & Golinkoff, n.d.)We see another study in Bangladesh reveals that parents perceive play-based learning as crucial for children aged 3-5 years old. Play helps children solve problems, communicate, interact, build friendships, develop motor skills, and learn self-regulation. The study collected data from 12 parents who did not attend a preschool. Parents considered play joy, happiness, and entertainment. The study recommends educational institutions provide adequate play materials, secure environments, and local playgrounds. The National Plan of Action for Education for All emphasizes early childhood care, education, and development .(Shakandar Ali, 2019). There is another study shows about play based education in Bangladesh, The study explores how play is used in Bangladeshi pre-primary classrooms, with a concentration on how it helps kids learn and grow. It highlights how crucial play is for the growth of self-reliance, activity management, and critical thinking abilities. The survey discovered that a lack of support staff, and inadequate training are among the difficulties faced by early education providers. According to studies, play-based learning should be included in pre-primary education to make sure these problems have no impact on children's development. The project also intends to collect data from practitioners and instructors of preschools (Akter, 2021). Another study in Malaysia shows, purpose of this study is to find out how preschool parents see the value of play-based learning (PBL) in the education of young children. The foundation of "Developmentally

Appropriate Practice" (DAP) in Malaysian preschools is PBL, a human right that greatly enhances a child's growth and development. Play, however, is often overlooked in preschools while being a vital part of early childhood development. In order to get opinions on PBL, the study surveyed 18 parents from 7 different states in Malaysia. The results guided six main themes: placing "play" and "play-based learning" in context; understanding PBL as a teaching strategy; preschool initiatives supporting PBL; acknowledging that PBL can help children develop holistically; accepting PBL as a pedagogy for a child's development; and their concerns regarding. (Saminder Singh & Ngadni, 2023b) Though many Malaysian preschools underestimate the value of play in early childhood development, play is acknowledged as a human right under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Despite the general opinion that traditional approaches are the only practical way, play fosters verbal, cognitive, and social competencies, self-regulation, and transdisciplinary topic knowledge (Saminder Singh & Ngadni, 2023b).

## **Reserch on Child Development**

The education system of Bangladesh has changed a lot from the previous education system and approval has been given by the govt. of Bangladesh for play PBL for pre-primary schools. PBL has been started in many pre-primary schools of the country. Since play-based learning is a powerful and easy way for children's holistic development and easy way to learn, Bangladesh Govt. has started working on play-based learning. According to our country culture and environment play based learning is being reachers on how its helps and useful for children. Threr a study looks into how play is used in Bangladeshi pre-primary classrooms, with an emphasis on how it helps children learn and grow. Play teaches Children self-reliance, self-regulation, activity management, and critical thinking. Nonetheless, the survey discovered that space, support staff, and inadequate training are among the difficulties early education providers face. Preschool-

related experts are recommended to expedite play-based learning in pre-primary education (PPS).(Akter, 2021b). The study aims to gather information from pre-school teachers and identify how play can be more effective and useful for PBL in Bangladesh.

Another research on PBL, Bangladeshi children start pre-primary school in January, the month closest to their fifth birthday, and must adjust to a classroom setting. Preschool teaching and learning processes must include the purposeful application of play, exploration, observation, and play-based activities, according to the National Pre-Primary Curriculum. The government's SLIP (School Level Improvement Plan) budget provides 5000 takas (47 pounds/63 USD) annually to Government Primary Schools (GPS) for the purchase of instructional materials depending on student need. According to the PPE expansion plan, achieving a high standard of pre-primary education will need a thorough knowledge of play. Bangladesh has been the site of two small-scale research projects, one of which is titled "Playing with mathematics: a pilot intervention to develop basic mathematical skills." (Qader Chowdhury et al., 2021)

Another research explores play-based learning in early childhood education (ECE) in Bangladesh, highlighting the lack of children's play due to government policies and socioeconomic situations. It uses Vygotsky's sociocultural approach to understand its importance for children's welfare. The study suggests that government policy and stakeholder engagement could establish play-based learning opportunities. The research aims to address the hurdles and importance of play-based learning in Bangladesh, considering the Japanese experience.(Alam, 2022). UNICEF's Education Section emphasized the importance of early learning in reaching Sustainable Development Goal 4, the need of high-quality pre-primary education, especially joyful learning, and the difficulties advocates encounter.(UNICEF,2018). We can see Bangladesh nowadays also focuses on play-based learning The Bangladeshi government plans to expand pre-primary education to 4-year-olds

in 2023, following the introduction of one-year PPE for 5-year-olds in 2014. However, current professional development opportunities for PPE teachers are limited, requiring additional training.(Playful Pre-Primary Education in Bangladesh: Study on Professional Development Needs of Pre-Primary Teachers and Headteachers, 2022). And also Bangladeshi Constitution prioritizes children as future leaders and human resources for development.

Since play develops children's social, physical, cognitive, and literary skills, it is a crucial part of their growth. It's more than just physical play; it's healthy and a stress reliever. Parents should set aside time for play since it fosters cognitive, linguistic, physical, social, and emotional development in children. Playing outside may help youngsters create memories of their time spent outside, and play and education go hand in hand. For kids to succeed and feel good about themselves, it is essential to let them play and provide them with a learning environment.

We look at some play based educations creators who claim that play based learning is very crucial for children development. Froebel, the creator of the earliest Kindergarten, created a curriculum composed of gifts, occupations, mother's play, and songs. Maria Montessori developed a type of early childhood program that cultivated her curriculum from children's natural play activities. She provided materials that she designed for children and observed them playing with the materials. John Dewey believed that education for young children includes their daily experiences in the community. Play could be used to reconstruct the experiences children are involved in in the community.(Walther, n.d.)

## **Chapter 3: Methodology**

Research methodology refers to the systematic process of gathering, documenting, and analyzing information to answer research questions or test hypotheses. It is a crucial aspect of any research study, providing the process for how data will be collected, interpreted, and used to conclude

I explored parents' perceptions of play-based early childhood education in this study. Finding out how parents view the play-based approach in the context of early childhood education is the main goal of this study. I was interested in learning about their perspectives, convictions, and experiences with this teaching approach. I used a qualitative research design to get a thorough understanding of parents' perspectives. This method makes it possible to investigate and comprehend complicated incidents from the viewpoints of the participants. This chapter will start with the research methodology, followed by research context, research site, sampling method, data collection method and data analysis, research validity and reliability, ethical issues and limitations. This organization ensures a logical progression of the main goal of this research analysis and helps to provide a clear understanding of parent perceptions.

### **Research Approach**

Using a qualitative method the study looked at parents' perceptions of play-based learning for children. The primary objective of this study was to explore parents' views on the concept of “play-based learning” and to know their child's overall development. Qualitative research is descriptive, collecting data in the form of words or pictures rather than numbers. It involves analyzing data closely to its original form, such as interview transcripts, field notes, photographs, and other official records. Qualitative researchers approach the world in a nit-picking way, examining every detail to uncover a more comprehensive understanding of the subject matter (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998).

## **Research Participants**

To conduct the research, the total number of participants was six mothers, who had recently sent their children to school, and six preschool teachers for FGD. The interviews were set by approaching them individually almost one week before the actual interview dates giving them enough time to accommodate. The study employed in-depth interviews to gather information on the parents' participation in play activities with their children. FGD was held for what experience teachers face when parents admit their child for education.

## **Research Site**

The research was done in a kindergarten school in Dhaka city. With parents coming to the kindergarten school and the preschool teachers of that school. They were offered a comfortable environment where interview discussions could have been conducted freely. However, their home districts are in different areas outside Dhaka.

## **Participants Selection Procedure**

The method of purposive sampling was applied. I interviewed six mothers for IDI and six mothers were asked questions according to the thematic questions. Mothers whose children are between the ages of 3-6 years were selected. They were able to adjust to the guide's flexibility. Ensure that everyone is at ease in the setting.

The teachers for the FGD were selected from the same school where six mothers were interviewed. Six teachers were selected by their availability for FGD during the data collection.

Given the research's scope and duration, I chose six mothers with children aged three to six and six kindergarten instructors to serve as my samples. They are all very educated. As the school has play based learning system the mothers are familiar with play based education.



A table with the names of the participants and their educational backgrounds is displayed. I have referred to them by their identities in this specific case, and I shall do so through the whole study report. P1, P2, and similar designations were used for mothers, and T1, T2, and similar designations were used for teachers.

## Participants information Table

*Table 1: IDI Participants Information*

Partici pants	Interview Date and Time	Age	Educat ional Status	Profession	Child's gender & age in years	IDI Site	Participant s Home
1. Mother	12/2/2024	25	Honors ' 3rd year	Housewife & Student	4 years	Home	Dhaka
	45 minutes				Girl		
2. Mother	13/2/2024	39	S.S.C	Housewife	5 years	Kindergarten school	Rangpur
	40 minutes				Boy		
3. Mother	15/2/2024	33	MSc	Housewife	5 years	Kindergarten school	Barisal
	45 minutes				Boy		
4. Mother	16/2/2024	34	MBA	Businessw oman	3 years10 month	Kindergarten school	Khulna
	35 minutes				Boy		
5. Mother	16/2/2024	28	H.S.C	Housewife	5 years	Home	Pabna
	35 minutes				Boy		
6. Mother	18/2/2024	35	MBA	Housewife	6 years	Kindergarten school	Faridpur
	45 minutes				Boy		

*Table 2: FGD Participants Information*

<b>Date</b>	<b>24-02-24</b>	<b>Moderator</b>	<b>Hafsa Zaman</b>
<b>Start Time</b>	10:20 AM	<b>End Time</b>	11:10 PM
<b>Numbers of teachers</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Profession</b>
T1	25	M.A	School Teacher
T2	30	MBA	School Teacher
T3	29	MBA	School Teacher
T4	30	MBA	School Teacher

T5	38	MBS	School Teacher
T6	35	M.A	School Teacher

## Data Collection Methods

The techniques used to gather data for the current investigation qualitative approaches. The research questions and objectives were carefully considered while choosing the data-gathering procedures, which ensured a thorough examination of the study's themes. My research method is qualitative research.

Qualitative research is crucial for understanding human behavior and beliefs, with interviews being a valuable method for constructing meanings in natural settings, allowing participants to express their thoughts and feelings, and analyzing data about their social life (Alshenqeeti, 2014).

Before the actual data collection, the pilot data collection has been conducted with teachers. The data collection was FGD. The data has been collected through different methods, in-depth interviews with the mothers, and focus group discussions (FGD) with teachers. I selected these method for exploring the parents' perception of play-based learning. This combination of methods allows for a nuanced examination of the research questions from various perspectives. Throughout the whole data-collecting procedure, ethical concerns were of utmost importance, and strict protocols were implemented to guarantee informed consent and preserve participant confidentiality.

**i) In-depth interviews with 6 Mothers:** Six interviews were conducted with six mothers. The time of each interview was 40 to 45 minutes. They were asked some open questions and the questions were about their children's social and emotional development how much knowledge they

have as parents about play-based learning and how much they know about play-based learning. Each of their children was between the ages of 3 and 6.

ii) **Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with teachers:** An FGD was conducted with the teacher of the kindergarten school. The main aim of FGD was to know about their experiences with parents' perceptions, how much parents understand about play-based education, and how much they value and consider it important for their children's development. and it lasted for 50 minutes. Some general questions were asked to the teachers, asking about their experience with parents and how they experienced parents' responses to play-based education. And each respondent's described their experience.

## **Data Analysis**

After data collection, I applied the thematic procedure for data management and I was arranged my data according to the theme. Next, the transcript was reviewed and notes taken numerous times to understand the data concerning the goals and research questions. The data was arranged according to a topic and a few sub-themes. Thoughts and observations were placed below the topics. At first Content analysis was the main technique used for data analysis. Data analysis started with the very first stage of data collection and was an ongoing activity maintained through the use of field notes and recording. Subsequently, the data gathered from the field notes, and recordings was analyzed.

## **Validity & Reliability**

To maintain the validity and reliability of the data, multiple sources and methods were used for data collection, for example: interviews with mothers and FGDs with teachers. Such diversity of

descriptive data from different types of data triangulation presents multiple perspectives on research objectives.

Before finalizing the instruments for data collection, all instruments were reviewed with my supervisor. This was then incorporated into the equipment before being taken to the field to be piloted after feedback.

Validity and reliability were maintained in this study by testing the instrument developed for this study before using it to collect data. One mother was interviewed to check the reliability of the interview questions. The questions of the FGD checklist were pilot-tested in a group of three teachers before starting data collection for the study. After stacking the tools the interview length and FGD checklist were shortened keeping in mind the time constraints and amount of data.

## **Ethical Issues**

The main ethical issues considered for this study were:

- Participants were informed of the study's goal and consent is obtained from the school administration.
- The study was ensured respect for participants' rights, freedom, and dignity.
- The study technique, aims, secrecy, and data storage were explained clearly to participants.
- Participants had the option to withdraw their responses at any point.
- Personal information was handled with pure privacy, and no information will become public.
- Interview subjects and schools were given fake names to maintain privacy.

## **Limitations of the Study**

Even though extensive data was collected from several sources to fulfill its objectives, this study had several important limitations.

- It took some time to get the schedule of the participants, not all of them were available at the same time due to which there was a little delay from the scheduled time to collect the information.
- At the time of conducting the FGD, it took almost two weeks to get permission from the institution to get approval from the school due to which there was some delay in doing the data connection itself.
- All the teachers from schools were not available together to conduct FGDs as per their school schedule.

## Chapter 4: Result and Discussion

The discussion section divided into the insights gleaned from the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and interviews. Through thematic organization, we explore the understanding and perceptions of play-based learning among mothers. The results section has been arranged according to the information gathered from the FGD and interview. The data presentation for every part of this investigation has been organized thematically based on the main research topics.

### **Knowledge about Play-based learning:**

After summarizing all the interviews, we can see that most of the mothers have some idea about play-based learning, but some of them, were not clear about this concept properly, P5 and P6 mothers have faced some play-based learning at their time, it was not developed or given importance as it is now. For example, P1 said, *“I think play-based learning is very important for their children. But I need to know more about play based learning so that I can give my child a good environment”*.( Interview date:12-02-2024). Talking to all mothers it is known that during their time there is a big playground and in the playground, they get a chance to play and they get a chance to learn from being close to nature. P3 said, *“I got a big playground and in my time. I could run around and play games as I wanted during the school time which was given to us in the playground and different kinds of trees were planted in her school inside the playground.”*(Interview: 15-02-2024) And they hope for such an environment for their child. The playground plays a vital role in play-based learning by offering a space for children to explore, interact, and learn through play. It increase the physical activity, socialization, and imaginative play, enhancing overall development.

When asked if they had any experience with play-based education, most parents said they had no experience themselves, but they felt that the play-based learning approach introduced in the current

era was more important for their children, but one P2 mother had not very clear idea about play based education but now, after discussion she has some idea about recent play based education. P5 and P6 they have got some play-based learning but that is through their family.

p1 mother said that

***“As far I know,Although play-based learning has been introduced in the current school, but it is only in name because I still feels pressure on my child to study through the education system”.(Interview: 12-02-2024)***

When asked if she has any experience about play-based education, P6 mother said that ,

***“I have some experience of my own. In the school I was studied from, there was some education system of play learning but it was not so developed as it is now and so much importance was not given in my school.” (Interview: 18-02-2024)***

From FGD with kindergarten teachers, I find that mothers as parents are very aware of play-based learning. The teacher first asks the age of the children and suggests which class the child is suitable for according to the age and informs the parents that their education system is based on play-based learning. Children should be taught through play. Most of the teachers experienced with parents' perceptions was,parents are concern about their child holistic development and they know about play based learning. I found a similarity from interviews and FGD , teachers sheared their experience that mothers put a lot of emphasis on play-based learning and they prefer learning through play for their children's development.

However, a teacher named T1 said that according to her experience,***“Some parents are aware about play based education, but they often lack clarity about the content, school resources, and methods of instruction, requiring further clarification”.( FGD:28-02-2024)***

Teachers also share their experience, Every mother has a fairly good idea about play-based education and they think it is very important for their children and they try to teach their children different things through play at home and it is very effective way for holistic development for a child they think as parents. They try to ensure that their children do not feel the pressure of reading and take care of the holistic development of children through play.

### **Parents expectations for their Child:**

Play-based learning is the most accessible option for mothers. When the participants were asked which of the two options they would prefer for their child, namely traditional academic education or play-based learning, every mother opted for play-based learning. However, the students are not exposed to as much play-based learning on the school premises. They said they would if play-based learning is entirely operational. P1 shares that ,

*“I think,schools are implementing play-based learning, but implementation still needs to be completed. I feel pressure to teach my children, often using devices at home.”( Interview: 12-02-2024).* She also mentions that,

*“In our city life, there is a lot of lack of open space, so most of the school has no field or playground .so somehow play play-based learning method concept has not properly succeeded sometimes.”*

Talking to the mothers, it was found that all the mothers gave more importance to play-based learning and they felt that learning through play or play is more important for their children's learning. And all mothers hope that in school too, a school environment and their play will teach children more by reducing the number of books. They want a playground as a part of the PBL but



they also understand that PBL is not just having an open playground but can be facilitated with indoor support.

On the other hand, only one mother P2 is not entirely clear about play-based learning, so she expects the academic pressure of school as well as the pressure of school for her child, as she feels that the amount of play may become too much for her child and he gets used to it, and he will not want to read it. Others P4 children don't understand what is academic education, As the children don't understand academic learning values but they can be interested to learn through playing.

According to FGD with kindergarten teachers, parents are highly conscious of play-based learning. The instructor starts by inquiring about the children's ages. Based on that information, she recommends a class for the child that fits their age range. All teachers experienced with parents, they want more play-based education for their children in school environment. They expect the school environment to be play based for children completely so that there is no pressure to study.

### **Cognitive development:**

The results suggest that mothers understand the value of verbal and visual learning for their children' mental and emotional development. They think that play and listening are more effective ways for children to learn than applying traditional methods of learning. Many mothers support play-based learning because they feel it improves mental skills development in children. Children's mental development is also greatly influenced by their social interactions and the environment they live in. One mother emphasized how her child's painting helps him learn and shows how he understands his environment. In general, moms stress how important play is for fostering children's mental growth and understanding of their surroundings.

Mothers believe that children's learning and development depend greatly on their playing and listening. Because play-based learning develops a deeper understanding of the world in children, they prefer it. Children's mental development is also helped by socializing and drawing. In general, play is seen to be essential to children's thinking and learning.

From FGD talking to explore the teachers experience with parents, they believed mental development of children roughly according to their age but not all children's mental skills are equal, but some of parents not understand this, they always compare their own child to others development. Teachers are asked how they explain play-based learning to mothers who care about their children's mental growth. They respond that, based on their interactions with mothers, parents are not as conscious of their children's mental development as they believe their child is. They compare it more to their children because they believe their child isn't doing well in school or getting along with other children. Though the FGD was not supposed to discuss the mental health of the children, the teacher's emphasis more on the mental health of the children.

### **Socio-emotional Development:**

According to each mother I spoke with, before starting school, the social and emotional development of their children was often low, but later on, it increased. The participants feel that PBL can support social and emotional growth, even if attending school is a natural phenomenon.

The journey of each child's social and emotional development unfolds uniquely within the nurturing embrace of the school environment. Children, parents, and educators all see first the transforming impact of meaningful connections and shared experiences. Play-based learning helps children understand the value of cooperation and communication, building a foundation for social

skills that last a lifetime. To help kids develop understanding, flexibility, and self-awareness, teachers are essential in helping them understand the complexities of emotional intelligence. Parents acknowledge the significant influence the school's holistic approach has on their child's general well-being and express thanks for it. As a community, we are committed to raising compassionate, self-assured people, and we rejoice in each child's development and being successful.

One mother said that in her opinion,

*“ Play based learning helps a child's socio-emotional development a lot, through which the child interacts more with the parents when they play and play with them and Helping a child to overcome inertia and through play-based learning methods, children are more attuned to their surroundings.”( interview 6: 18-02-2024)*

In terms of social-emotional development, by discussing with the teachers experience of FGD, teachers told their experience with mothers that all mothers said their child had much low socioeconomic development before but after coming school children are enjoy school environment so they can play with their friends and learn new things together.

### **How the parents spend their time with children:**

Most of the mothers interviewed spend time with their children as they are housewives and most of the time they stay at home so they try to spend most of their time with their children for their children's development. They try to play with them through their toys and various conversations. As they are aware enough of the development of children, they give more priority to developmental toys. According to the interview, mothers they are more aware of their child's development. P1 As a mother, she gives more importance to her child's gross motor development because when a

child plays with a colored toy, she notices whether her child is interested in the game or the colors of the game attract him and about. Encourages the baby such as small toys that she is looking at to develop her mental development which is recognizing colors as she is looking at. She prefers bigger toys in play because sometimes small children can have small accidents while playing with small toys. She lets the child play with badminton, bat and ball, puzzles, color pencils or boxes, cooking set, counting tools toy. She shared that,

P2 She sheard she is not clear about play-based learning but she try to involve with her child through play. While encouraging play, she does not give priority to any specific skill development because she is very busy and cannot pay attention in many ways, so the child plays in his way. Through based education her child can learn opportunities to play, she has no choice of toys, her child can play with all the toys as he wants, like guns, balls, dolls, and different things, but through play-based education, he can learn new things. She also sheard,

***“At home, the child's father cannot give time to the child at all, but child has a sister, the sister plays with the child. since she is busy with work, but she always tries to give time to the child when she gets time. But the child plays on his own”.***(interview 2: 13-02-2024)

P3 also sheard ,

***“I'm not yet given importance to separate activities while the child is playing, but as i stay with the child all day at home, i observes through his play whether all his developmental sectors are in order and whether he is getting them. Keeps but does not take steps to prioritize anything separately.”***(interview3: 15-02-2024)

In terms of choosing toys at home, she gives physical activity games like badminton, cricket, football, which her child likes, and in terms of counting, coloring puzzle games at home, how

many counting games have she bought so that the child's reading becomes much easier through playing. She spends as much time as she can with her child's. She lives alone with her child full day, but occasionally on holidays, she takes her son outdoors to play so they may see the outside world. plus as much playtime as she wants with her child.

p4 and p6 prefer colored pencils in choosing toys for their children. They think that children are more attracted to colorful objects through colored pencils, and they try to play with children with colorful objects, and by teaching drawing, children learn about different colors, shaping and developing gross motor also.

P5 shared that her children mostly use devices at home but she knows that physical activity is more important for her children but due to her growing family, she is busy with various household chores so she can't give much time to the children. As the parents of the children, they are not able to give time to the child, he is busy with housework and the children's father is not able to give them time at all, so since he has brothers and sisters, they play with each other or they mostly use the device.

From the FGD, one teachers named Sabrina share with us that ,they feel that parents spend enough time with their children, but not all parents can spend most of the time. they mention,

***“Working parents who have both parents working. Know more about their learning and try to give time to the child.”(FGD: 28-02-2024).***

According to FGD one teacher named Fatema shared with us that,

***“Parents expect their children to learn through play, but on the other hand, they also want a learning pressure that can be seen in them. As mothers, most parents find themselves caught between the pressures of play-based learning and academic learning.”***

Another teacher named Maliha share, most of the parents think that children can be taught well only in school, but the teachers say that apart from school, the time to play with the children should be set apart from the parents' house, or the learning through play or study. Parents dose non want to accept children's development are not equally developed, so the development of some sectors may be less than their child's age. A teacher named Rupa shares with us that, in many cases parents are careless about their children, they don't care about any problems the child might have in coming to school late. Teachers think that those who are parents can give more time to their children and cannot participate in active games with their children, but those who stay at home try to give time to their children and try to give time between household chores. But in all cases, mothers who can give their children full time, but they try hard enough to explain and teach their children through play, but some of these children become addicted to the devices, which is why these days the development seems to be less than their age.

### **Parents' opinions about increased play-based learning for children:**

Mothers themselves have shared with us some of their views on what they expect and what helps their children's development.

P1 said that,

*“It is better for children if they can be taken outdoors one or two days a week in addition to their studies, even if they are in the city environment, so it will increase their physical activity and they will get an open environment instead of a closed environment.” (interview 1: 12-02-2024)*

P3 she said about the education system if the number of books is reduced and children are taught mostly through play and if it can be taken up to class one then it is very good because what the children learn up to class one through play they will remember more and it will be easier to learn.

And she also added that,

***“It would be easier for children to learn and understand if they were taught by taking them outside twice a week in an educational environment or by teaching them something alive, such as a fruit, through familiar pictures.”(interview 3: 15-02-2024)***

P2 Since she has no idea about play-based learning, he has not shared any of his views with us.

P4 Sheard The child never goes to study thinking of studies so his mother tries to teach him at home and home through play-based education because he cannot take the pressure of studying at all so he is taught by his mother through games from childhood. To create a play-based approach, she suggested new ways to teach children more through play and to keep children in play-based learning with fewer textbooks in the school environment. Child responds more to play-based learning because he feels pressure from academic learning and he doesn't want to sit with a pencil book notebook they don't want to understand that he can hold a pencil but instead of learning with his pencil, he plays. Enjoys reading more and remembers it more. According to P4 opinion,

***“Now a lot of new play-based education is being worked on, so according to him, it seems that to teach children most beautifully and easiest way, play-based education should be fully taught in all schools, some practical-based learning also should be brought here and children can learn better through play. As her child prefers outdoor sports more than Indian sports, she feels that playing outdoors like many children will accelerate their physical activity, so every school should address the same two days a week to take children to an open environment. Go so that***

*they can enjoy the outdoor environment by running and playing like themselves.”( interview 4: 16-02-2024)*

Also P5 child doesn't want to read at all when his mother forces him to read child feels pressure but the child most responds to play based learning. To increase play-based learning,P5 thinks that,

*“School classes should be made more interesting for children, such as different colors, flowers, birds, fruits, pictures of flowers, and different kinds of cartoons, and pictures of different numbers so that children see them quickly and have more interest and fun in learning. He thinks that children should be exposed to large pictures through play rather than books, and should also have opportunities for outdoor play.”( interview 5: 16-02-2024)*

The child of P6 reacts best to play-based learning; this isn't because he doesn't want to study academic material; actually because he is going to learn things more fully if they can be easily understood through play. She suggested to us that,

*“ Today's education system in Bangladesh is generally competitive but it is important play-based learning education system will start up to class one so that children can learn good reading through play.”( interview 6: 18-02-24)*

From the interview, it is understood that all the mothers give importance to their child and holistic development and they are quite aware. They think play-based learning can be an important and easy learning method. They think that the play-based learning system is the easiest way for a child without the pressure of their child's studies which makes their education easier by keeping them free from the pressure of studying together.

About mother advice, I found out from the interviews that most mothers believed that play helped learning. However, some mothers believed that their children had played too much and therefore



wanted academic pressure for their children for the time being. The teacher then attempts to explain it to them via play-based learning, which includes educating them through poetry in addition to the sports the kids will play and activities where they will learn to count in different colors. After explaining, they ask the mother whether she truly wants her child to be under greater academic pressure or if she has considered teaching her child to read by using play as a way to relieve some of the burden. Another teacher, Sabrina, shared with us that they frequently asks if learning should be taught via play or just through play simply. After that, they inform parents about play-based learning and explain how children may learn through play without having to put too much pressure on themselves.

## **Discussion**

This research explores parents' perspectives on the play-based approach to early childhood education. The play-based approach highlights the value of learning via enjoyable activities that help young children develop their creativity, social skills, and cognitive abilities. This research examines parents' attitudes, beliefs, and experiences with the play-based approach using a qualitative research design. Parents of preschool-aged 3-6 children's mothers were interviewed and one FGD with kindergarten teachers to gather data and thematic analysis was used to find recurrent data. These interviews were conducted to find out how important parents consider play for their child's overall development and how they see play in their child's development.

From the interview, It is acknowledged that all mothers place much importance on their child's holistic development they are well aware of this. They think play-based learning is important and can be an easy learning method. They think that the play-based learning system is the easiest way for a child without the pressure of their child's studies which makes their education easier by keeping them free from the pressure of studying together. Children learn through play in their zone of proximal development. throughout play, children tend to behave more spontaneously and maturely than throughout the day. Allowing children to engage in play promotes growth throughout all developmental domains (Berk, 1994). Based on the data collected from interviews, it appears that mothers are familiar with play-based learning these days, although they don't received play based learning system at their time. Through play-based learning, children respond quickly to their overall development and it is an easy way for them to learn new things in a short amount of time through fun and to develop more according to their physical age. Also, my interview data showed that while some mothers think play-based education is important for their children, they want the pressures of the academy to be the same for their children in a different

way. But most of the mothers want their children to learn well and to develop fully which they themselves have not got through academic pressure or pressure through educational games for their children. Mothers interviewed expressed their preference for a big field and close proximity to nature, allowing them to play and run around during playtime despite academic pressures and lack of open space. They expect an open environment for their children, as they grew up in a closed environment. When sending their children to school, they often feel academic pressure and lack development, leading them to expect the school to develop their children. This highlights the importance of a supportive and open environment for children's growth.

For parent knowledge about play-based learning, I did an FGD with teachers' experience to find out what teachers' experiences with parents are about learning. The teachers reported that they assist parents greatly in understanding their child's ability to handle pressure, but often struggle to determine if their child can handle the pressure.

The interview data reveals that children's mental development is primarily visual and verbal, influenced by their learning through play, family environment, educational toys, and their environment. Mothers focus on their children's morality and humanity, believing that understanding good and bad is crucial for their mental growth. Most mothers believe that mental development depends on the environment around the child, with a positive family environment leading to normal mental development, while a negative environment hinders mental development. High-quality early education promotes long-term developmental effects, fostering learning, imagination, creativity, and brain development through play quality, (Yogman, M., Garner, 2018). Therefore, mothers play a crucial role in their child's mental development. Mental development in children is influenced by their environment, parent-child relationships, and daily activities. It is important to note that every child's mental development differs based on age, and it

may be one at a time. However, from FGD teachers have observed in their class and share their experience that children's mental development is decreasing due to parental time and device addiction, which can limit growth opportunities. As a result, they believe that children's mental development is less than their age.

Mothers believe that their children's socio-emotional development is more developed after attending school than at home. My finding from interviews is that parents create a conducive home environment, such as learning and play, which helps children grow up alone. However, busy schedules and limited neighborhood interaction in city environments can hinder children's emotional development. From my literature review one research shows, Being a child's first educational environment and closest family social network, parents are extremely important to their early development. Early parental involvement helps children adjust to their new surroundings and pursue more education. Parents are able individuals who regularly assist their children with their schooling (Hirsh-Pasek & Golinkoff, n.d.) Children's emotional development is better when they have opportunities to mix with peers and learn about other family members. After school, children learn about sharing and caring, and they see their parents' behavior at home, leading to better understanding of other family members. Therefore, mothers believe that children's socio-emotional development is more developed in their home environment. The FGD indicates that children have shown significant development after a few months of schooling and are becoming more comfortable with their teachers. The interview revealed that mothers prioritize their children's development and spend more time with them, focusing on their growth through various developmental toys. However, some parents may not be clear about holistic development, leading to missed developmental opportunities. Fathers, on the other hand, struggle to give enough time to their children, often spending time with their families during holidays. Teachers found that

parents who are not clear about play based learning often feel stressed and academically pressured. in that family where Both parents are working they believe play base learning is beneficial for their child's education. Due to social system constraints, parents may take their children out on holidays to play, but teachers believe that fathers are trying to provide adequate development for their children, which they may not have received.

## **Conclusion**

This research analysis provides important light on how parents see the play-based approach to early childhood education. Through interviews and questionnaires, I investigated a wide spectrum of parental attitudes, beliefs, and experiences, seeking to understand concern and support for play-based learning.

According to my research, most of parents are interested in play-based learning and acknowledge its advantages in promoting social skills, creativity, and problem-solving abilities, others are concerned about the program's apparent lack of academic quality and readiness for formal education. This emphasizes how important it is for parents to be more conscious of and knowledgeable about the importance of play in the development of young children.

This study aims to explore parents' perceptions of play-based learning in early childhood education. It offers helpful details on how parents influence children's educational experiences. The results show a wide range of expectations, concerns, and goals for play-based learning among parents, as well as their views and opinions about it. The limits of the study indicate that the foundation established by this study might be expanded upon in further research. Our analysis of parents' opinions on the importance of a play-based approach in early childhood education provides a comprehensive understanding of the complex educational environment. We may actively collaborate to create learning environments that really fulfill the needs and expectations of educators and families by acknowledging and appreciating the insights given by parents. This study encourages further research, innovation, and conversation in early childhood education to provide a comprehensive foundation for future generations. Based on these understandings is essential to go ahead to inform educational practices and policy. Future research should focus on longitudinal studies to evaluate the effects of play-based approaches on children's academic

achievement and socio-emotional development over an extended period. Additionally, studies into the ways that cultural, socioeconomic, and contextual factors affect parental perceptions should also be conducted.

In conclusion, by recognizing and addressing parental perceptions, we can create more supportive and enriching early childhood education environments that prioritize children's holistic development through play-based learning. Collaborative efforts among parents, educators, policymakers, and researchers are essential in advancing this important agenda and ensuring the best outcomes for our children.

## **Recommendation**

Several recommendations for further research might be made given the implications of the conclusions and revelations from the study examining parents' opinions of the play-based approach to early childhood education. These suggestions aim to increase our knowledge of parents' attitudes and convictions about play-based learning and how it affects children's growth. Here are some recommendations:

- To give more understanding of the long-term advantages of play-based education, long-term analyses examining the impact of the approach on children's educational attitudes, socioemotional growth, and academic performance are needed.
- . A comprehensive approach involving community involvement, urban planning, and governmental actions—such as traffic calming and well-designed public spaces—is required to solve these problems. The family should play with children from the beginning, give them time, and create a variety of creative play environments so that they don't get addicted to the device.
- To support play-based learning, it is necessary to look at the workings of teacher-parent communication. The school need to plan events in which parents and their children may take part. The parents might be consulted on their children's developmental progress.
- Parents should be aware of the role of technology in play-based learning and how digital tools influence children's play activities at home. Parents teachers meetings can be held at school to talk about how much screen time is needed or discuss what they want as parents.

We can improve our knowledge of how parents see the play-based approach and help create practical methods for encouraging play-based learning in early childhood education settings by addressing these study recommendations.



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# Appendices

## Appendix-1

### Interview Guideline for mothers

**Title:** Exploring the parents' perception of the play-based approach for Early Childhood Education.

<b>General Information</b>
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Date:.....

Start Time:..... End Time:.....

Mothers' Name:..... Age:..... Education:..... Profession:.....

Fathers' Name:..... Age:..... Education:..... Profession:.....

Childs Name:..... Age:..... Gender:.....

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### **Guided Questions for IDI**

- 1. What are the perceptions of the parents about the play-based approach for early childhood education (ECE)?**
  - a) Which grade did you start your schooling from in your childhood. Please tell us about your own childhood school experience.
  - b) How do you envision/want the school setting for your child?

- c) Do you have any understanding or experience of play-based learning? Please explain in your own words.
- d) Which option would you choose for your young child- traditional academic learning or play-based learning? Please explain your rationale in your own words.
- e) How do you perceive the relation of the play-based approach and your child's cognitive development? Please explain.
- f) How do you perceive the relation of the play-based approach and your child's social and emotional development? Please explain.
- g) How do you think your child responds to and enjoys play-based learning compared to other educational methods?
- h) Do you have any suggestions for enhancing the play-based approach in early childhood education?

**2. How do parents envision their role in supporting play-based learning at home?**

- a) How often do you allow your child to play at home? Does he/she have any particular routine of study and play?
- b) Are there specific types of play activities you find more effective or enjoyable for your child? Please give example.
- c) Are there specific skills or areas of development you prioritize when encouraging play at home?
- d) What resources or materials do you think are essential to facilitate play-based learning at home?

e) What is your opinion of parents being actively involved in play with their children ?

Please tell elaborately.

f) Do you face any challenges in finding time for play-based learning within your family's schedule?

## Appendix-2

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

**Title:** Exploring the parents' perception of the play-based approach for Early Childhood Education.

Date:..... Start Time:..... End time:.....

Number of participants:..... Place:.....

Moderator:.....

Participant List:

1. Name:..... Age:..... Education:.....
2. Name:..... Age:..... Education;.....
3. Name:..... Age;..... Education:.....
4. Name:..... Age:..... Education:.....
5. Name:..... Age:..... Education:.....
6. Name:..... Age:..... Education:.....

### **FGD Guideline:**

1. When parents admit their child to school, how do you communicate the principles and benefits of play-based education to parents?

2. How supportive do parents seem to be of the play-based approach, and do they generally understand its importance in early childhood education?
3. Do you have any particular techniques or tools you apply to help parents understand the benefits of play-based learning? For example, do you implement any events involving parents to showcase the benefits of play-based learning?
4. Have you faced any particular difficulties while trying to convince parents of the benefits of play-based learning?
5. What kinds of questions or concerns do parents typically raise regarding the play-based approach, and how do you address them?
6. Are there specific aspects of play-based education that parents express particular interest or curiosity about?
7. Can you share any success stories or positive experiences where parents embraced and actively supported play-based learning for their children?
  8. In your experience, how involved are parents in supporting play-based learning at home

## Appendix-3

### Transcript for IDI

#### Questions for IDI

**1. What are the perceptions of the parents about the play-based approach for early childhood education (ECE)?**

**a) Which grade did you start your schooling from in your childhood. Please tell us about your own childhood school experience.**

**Ans:** She started her school from kindergarten and My education was not play-based learning and the emphasis was on reading alone. But in January and December there was some limited playing environment. However, my teachers and home were not game-oriented, so he did not get any confidence to play on his own. But he participated in some games.

**b) How do you envision/want the school setting for your child?**

**Ans:** I expects play based education for his child but our schools have not fully stublised them yet. I thinks that the game-based education of the school is only in name. But optimistic it will be better in the future. Want education system without stress on reading for her child. So that the child gets interested in coming to school and finds interest in learning reading at home and through fun.

**c) Do you have any understanding or experience of play-based learning? Please explain in your own words.**

**Ans:** No. I had no experience of my own. I didn't get Play- based education perfectly. I had a lot of presser about reading. And I was given a presser from the family.

**d) Which option would you choose for your young child- traditional academic learning or play-based learning? Please explain your rationale in your own words.**

**Ans:** I Gave more importance to play-based learning because my child still doesn't understand what academic learning really is. Reading is taught through play. I expects the same from the school.

**e) How do you perceive the relation of the play-based approach and your child's cognitive development? Please explain.**

**Ans:** I am aware enough about whether the cognitive skills of the child are being properly. I always takes care whether the child is developing cognitive through play or is suffering from mental development.

**f) How do you perceive the relation of the play-based approach and your child's social and emotional development? Please explain.**

**Ans:** My child's socioeconomic emotional development is a little low, I think my child has not grown up around many people since birth, which is why he has not learned to talk well



with people. As an optimist, I wants to develop more in the future and play with the children. But still talk less with everyone in school but it is less than before.

**g) How do you think your child responds to and enjoys play-based learning compared to other educational methods?**

**Ans:** My child is more responsive to play based education and he enjoy it.

**h) Do you have any suggestions for enhancing the play-based approach in early childhood education?**

**Ans:** In my concern, To increase the play-based education system in school by reducing number of books.

**2. How do parents envision their role in supporting play-based learning at home?**

**a) How often do you allow your child to play at home? Does he/she have any particular routine of study and play?**

**Ans:** No, he has not. I didn't give my child much pressure to eat and study often and I takes my child outside occasionally. Outdoor games. My child likes football, cricket, running and when inside the house, my child likes to play with puzzles and likes to paint.

**b) Are there specific types of play activities you find more effective or enjoyable for your child? Please give example.**

**Ans:** No, specially not. I am not yet given importance to separate activities while the child is playing, but I stays with my child all day at home, I observes through his play whether all his developmental sectors.

**c) Are there specific skills or areas of development you prioritize when encouraging play at home?**

**Ans:** In terms of choosing toys at home, I gives physical activity games like badminton, cricket, football, which her child likes, and in terms of counting, coloring puzzle games at home, how many counting games have I bought so that the child's reading becomes much easier through playing.

**d) What resources or materials do you think are essential to facilitate play-based learning at home?**

**Ans:** I think the most important thing about the play equipment is colored pencils. My child likes to play with colored pencils. And puzzles games, colorful toys.

**e) What is your opinion of parents being actively involved in play with their children ? Please tell elaborately.**

**Ans:** I think its very important to spend time with children. For my child, When it comes to giving time, both the parents give more time, but mostly I gives the time and if I am not able to give the time, the child stays with her maternal grandmother most of the time.

**f) Do you face any challenges in finding time for play-based learning within your family's schedule?**

**Ans:** No, I didn't face any challenges in finding time as I always stay in home so I always tried to give my child her proper time. And always try to give my child a play based learning environment.

### **Transcript for FGD**

#### **FGD questions**

**1. When parents admit their child to school, how do you communicate the principles and benefits of play-based education to parents?**

**Ans:** at first we want to know the child age. Then we suggest which class is better for their child. And we tell them our school play based learning based so we learn the child through play so what you want for your child.

**2. How supportive do parents seem to be of the play-based approach, and do they generally understand its importance in early childhood education?**

**Ans:** Yes, parents approach was positive for play based education. Ang they have some general understanding for play based education.

**3. Do you have any particular techniques or tools you apply to help parents understand the benefits of play-based learning? For example, do you implement any events involving parents to showcase the benefits of play-based learning?**

**Ans:** No, actually no tools applied for parents understanding but we arrange parents meeting in our school.

**4. Have you faced any particular difficulties while trying to convince parents of the benefits of play-based learning?**

**Ans:** Sometimes we faced actually, coz every parents has not same understanding about play based education.

**5. What kinds of questions or concerns do parents typically raise regarding the play-based approach, and how do you address them?**

**Ans:** sometimes they were very concern about school environment. Their child how react in school environment, and its really play based education methods or not.

**6. Are there specific aspects of play-based education that parents express particular interest or curiosity about?**

**Ans:** Not really . but every child is not same so they have particular interest according their child's need.

**7. Can you share any success stories or positive experiences where parents embraced and actively supported play-based learning for their children?**

**Ans:** Not really actually, but we discuss some points in our parents meetings.

**8. In your experience, how involved are parents in supporting play-based learning at home**

**Ans:** we think most of the parents are concern and supportive of play based educations and they try to give enough time for their children

## **Appendix-4**

### **Consent Form for the Participants**

#### **Exploring the parents' perceptions of the Play-based approach for Early Childhood Education**

I am Hafsa Zaman an MSc student of Early Childhood Development (ECD) in the Institute of Educational Development, BRAC University. As part of the course, I will conduct research on

**“Exploring the parents' perceptions of the Importance of Play-based approach for Early Childhood Education.”** This study explores parents’ knowledge about play and parents' perceptions of play-based education for early childhood education.

#### **Risks and benefits of participating in research**

By spending some valuable time on this recherche you risk no harm. The result obtained in this research will provide new information about future child development. Your participation in this research is expected to play a special role in the child development of children in our country.

#### **Compensation:**

You will not be compensated financially or otherwise for the time you spend participating in this study.

#### **Confidentiality:**

We will make every effort to maintain the confidentiality of all information you provide.

#### **Future use of information:**

Research data may be shared with other researchers, but anonymity must be maintained. One of our colleagues may contact you in the future for any further examination of your child.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may choose not to participate in the study without giving any reason or withdraw yourself at any time during the study. If

you are interested in participating in this research, please provide your signature in the designated space. Signature of participant.....