

**Teachers' perceptions about child-friendly and interactive
teaching-learning in early primary grades of Government
Primary Schools (GPS)**

A thesis presented to the
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2. Does the study involve (yes or no)?

- Physical risk to the subjects
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- Psychological risk to subjects
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- Proposal ✓
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- Questionnaire or interview schedule ✓

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The Research Checklist indicates:

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to all pre-primary teachers in Bangladesh.

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Executive Summary

The teacher's role is the key to achieve results in child-friendly schools and learning spaces. Therefore, the required training and support to prepare teachers for this important role must be a priority (UNICEF, 2009, p.5). Teachers are powerful mediators in all educational matters. Ukeje, (1992) noted that if the child is the centre of educational system, the teacher is the pivot of the educational process (as cited in Olaleye. 2012).

The pre-primary activities in Bangladesh consist of various programs under different actors. Earlier NGOs were in the frontline and a big number of pre-primary schools were run by NGOs like BRAC, Save the Children, Plan International, Care, Action Aid, Dhaka Ahsania Mission etc. Other options offered are by madrasas, mosque-based maktabas, mondiris and privately owned Kindergartens. In 2010, Government initiated pre-primary education through GPS as an interim arrangement with an intention to expand it with standardized curriculum and materials. Conducting teaching learning process for the pre-primary learners is critical and much different than those of regular primary learners. But the interim teachers, after receiving 6 days basic training, are facilitating pre-primary classes.

The study looked into the understanding and perception of early grade teachers about child friendly teaching learning process. As Government introduced PPE by an interim arrangement involving existing primary teachers (especially early grade teachers), this study explored the teacher's perception about the child friendly interactive teaching learning process in early grades of primary school. The assumption was that PPE initiative (which included training of teachers, conducting

classes as per training and teacher's guide emphasizing child friendly and activity-based teaching learning) has influenced early grade teaching learning to some extent

The overall objective is to find out the perception of early grade teachers about the child-friendly and interactive teaching-learning process, to what extent this is practiced in early grades of primary school, and what barriers the teachers are facing in practicing child-friendly and interactive pedagogy.

Following a qualitative approach, including in-depth interview with the teachers and class observation in the particular research sites, the research has been conducted in two urban schools with four teachers selected - two with pre-primary training and two without. In this study two types of data collection tools were used; in-depth-interview questionnaire (semi-structured & open ended) and observation tool and guideline. A data categorization and coding system was applied to analyze the data. The transcription of the recorded data was produced and the contents were coded. Coded data were further analyzed, described and classified based on themes derived from the research questions.

Findings revealed that all four participants are familiar with child-friendly interactive teaching process and spoke in favor of teacher's positive attitude, friendly behavior and congenial interaction to make classroom interactive. The trained teachers preferred and emphasized learner focused classroom as they are aware of the benefits. The non-trained teachers due to superficial knowledge, emphasized more on materials and participation, and favoured classroom practices in which teachers have to play main role. The trained teachers were more confident to make class child friendly and interactive but non-trained teachers were found more traditional.

Regarding views and understanding on child-friendly interactive teaching, most of them mentioned that students are more interested in doing tasks and their talents are nurtured through their active participation.

All of the respondents received some sort of training on different subjects of primary grades. However, the trained respondents obtained training in “primary level teaching” and “subject based training”. On the other hand, the non-trained teachers obtained training in C-in-ED and particular subjects; which were basically on classroom management, methods and techniques. In terms of interactive teaching, the responses were distinctively different from two types of respondents. The trained group of teachers stated the learner as the center of interactive teaching whereas the non-trained teachers focused more on teacher’s role to conduct the class. Most of *the* respondents also emphasized the value of the joyful learning processes for children, such as learning by playing, acting or using interesting material during the learning process. In addition they also mentioned that group work, pair work or experience sharing were also important ideas in teaching process.

Understanding of the practice on interactive teaching learning process in early primary grades is varied by the respondents. Most of them mentioned that more classroom space and less number of students are necessary for interactive teaching. The teachers, who are familiar with the interactive teaching learning process, said that they used to face difficulty to teach before they obtained the training. The training helped them to know the methods and techniques of managing a large classroom effectively through the interactive process. Lack of infrastructure (space, furniture), learning materials and training were considered as most challenging issues to respondents to engage children. During the observation, it was found that, the trained teachers had their separate plans according to individual differences. On the other

hand, the tendency of a separate plan for individual children was not frequent with the non-trained teachers.

Findings show that without proper and appropriate support (from Government, School Management Committee, TRC, TEO, ATEO, and DPEO), it is difficult to execute any initiative at the school or classroom level. In addition, they need positive attitudes and regular monitoring from Head teacher, TRC, TEO to ensure child-friendly interactive teaching learning.

Based on the above discussion, the study found that, the teacher's perception regarding child-friendly interactive teaching learning process differs among trained and non trained teachers. Trained teachers mentioned about learner focused and participation based teaching learning process. But non trained teachers talked about materials and participation of the children; they also mentioned that supportive school environment, teachers' training and low student-teacher ratio are key factors to ensure interactive teaching-learning in the classroom.

In conclusion, it can be said that to ensure interactive teaching learning process for the children of early grades, training of teachers, conducting classes as per training and teacher's guide emphasizing child friendly and activity-based teaching learning are important.

Recommendations. Further study with a larger sample size is required. Pre-primary teachers could be assigned in the early grades as Pre-primary or Early Childhood Development training support to improve teaching learning process in early grades. Teachers' motivation, constant monitoring and supervision need to be taken in to account so that all the teachers willingly give their full effort to teach early graders. Curriculum and guideline for teacher's education package can be reviewed to make it

more attractive and user friendly. Specialized professional course on ECD and training on interactive teaching learning for teacher can further improve the classroom situation.

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Glossary of Terms

ASPR	Annual Sectoral Performance Report
ACER	Australian Council for Education Research
CAMPE	Campaign for Popular Education
DPE	Directorate of Primary Education
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EFA	Education for All
GO	Government
GPS	Government Primary School
MOPME	Ministry of Primary and Mass education
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NCTB	National Curriculum and Textbook Board
NGO	Non Government Organization
NPA	National Plan of Action
PEDP	Primary Education Development Program
PPE	Pre-Primary Education
RNGPS	Registered Non Government Primary School
UNESCO	United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund

CHAPTER I:

1.1 Introduction:

A child-friendly classroom or learning space is many things. It is not only friendly and welcoming for the child, but also conducive to learning, safe for all, gender-responsive and fully inclusive. It provides opportunities for girls and boys alike, regardless of their background, enabling all to participate equitably in the learning process (Unicef, 2009, p.4).

There is strong global evidence that early childhood development provides a solid foundation for good health, growth, and success in education. Pre-primary education is the most common and promising intervention of early childhood care and development in Bangladesh. To secure a strong foundation for the development of children, one of the cornerstones is children's participation in high quality pre-school. In such pre-school, teachers have knowledge about early childhood development, there is a creative learning environment, and methods for teaching early literacy and numeracy are promoted through pre/in service teacher training (Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development, 2007).

National Education Policy, approved in 2010, recognizes pre-primary education as an integral part of primary education and government is now committed to introduce one-year pre-primary through government primary education system. Earlier, the Ministry of Primary and Mass education (MOPME) also recognized the importance of pre-primary education and for effective implementation of pre-primary throughout the country, took an initiative to bring all pre-primary education activities under one framework. In 2008, the Pre-primary Education Operational Framework approved by MOPME with a long

term vision envisaged that “all children, 3-5 years of age, are attending pre-school programs of some kind and have access to programs of health, nutrition, social, physical and intellectual development, and being initiated into formal education.” The short-term vision of PPE operational Framework is to introduce one-year pre-primary education for all children of 5 to below 6 ages (Ministry of Primary and Mass education, 2008).

The Government of Bangladesh is strongly committed to achieving Education for All (EFA) within the time frame set in the Dakar Declaration for EFA and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Second National Plan of Action for Education for All (NPA-II) a strategic planning document for the primary and non-formal education sub-sectors, also underscored the importance of early childhood care and education and urged for a national ECCE framework.

If we want to bring children to the school, teacher characteristics and instruction styles are critically important (Momen, 2010, p.11). However, Piaget (1956) spoke on different effects of the environment on the growth of mental structures of the child, which facilitates learning. He said that the environment stimulates learning and the development of the cognitive domain in the early years holds the key to learning (as cited in Osakwe, 2009).

The study looked into the understanding and perception of early grade teachers on child friendly teaching learning process. As Government PPE introduced by an interim arrangement involving existing primary teacher (especially early grade teachers), this study will explore the teacher’ perception about the child friendly interactive teaching learning process in early grades. The assumption is that influence of the PPE initiative (which included training of teachers, conducting classes as per training and teacher’s

guide emphasizing child friendly and activity-based teaching learning) has influenced early grade teaching learning.

This paper is organized in five chapters including introduction and background, literature review, methodology and findings, and discussion, conclusion and recommendation of the research. In chapter 1, the following sections are organized as statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study, research topic and research questions.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

With lots of improvement and dimensional change in the primary education sector, quality remains as a daunting challenge. The traditional way of teaching learning, perception about learning, inappropriate assessment system to measure achievement, class size, contact hour, an enabling learning environment and lack of trained teachers are some of the issues that affect quality. With all those challenges, internal efficiency in the system is stuck within a range for a long time which is a great concern for government. To improve internal efficiency, government introduced pre-primary to better prepared children so that they can easily cope with the learning process and environment and continue education to complete the cycle. Though it started with a very good intention as a sophisticated intervention for quality, it needs specialized professional support to produce the result. There is no short-cut and low cost way to achieve quality. Bangladesh, with a huge primary education system comprising 20 million children, cannot afford the resource needed for a high standard service delivery. Hence it is

important to study and explore innovative and cost-effective approaches to maximize quality of education.

As government started pre-primary with existing teachers from 2010, there is an opportunity to examine the effectiveness of the initiative and to understand its strength and deficiencies.. To further explore this area, studying the perception of teachers, both trained and non-trained, and their understanding about child friendly learning would help us to identify the areas of intervention for enhancing teachers' skills. It will also provide information about teachers' attitude and knowledge which would be a great help for designing improved system and techniques to maximize learning achievement.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

Despite progress in primary education through different interventions by government, quality remains as daunting and multi-faceted challenge. Traditional teaching learning process is one of the major challenges that need continuous and consistent efforts to change. Pre-primary is a new addition to the movement of quality but varied understanding of early learning and child friendly interactive teaching learning method can be a barrier to reaching the destination.

From different progress reports and studies, it emerged that short pre-primary training has a great influence on the early grade teaching and child friendly teaching learning process. As quality is a big concern in the current sector wide program and pre-primary is introduced widely under PEDP III, the understanding about child friendly interactive

teaching learning process and influence of pre-primary in that seems to be an interesting area to explore.

As first step towards exploration, the purpose of this study is to create a baseline of understanding with a small sample to find out about the perception of teachers about pre-primary teaching-learning and its influence on their professional understanding and practice as teachers.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Bangladesh, a developing country, operates one of the largest primary education systems in the world with approximately 17.5 million children. The country has achieved immense progress in some of the educational arenas like net enrollment rate (98.7% - boys 97.2% and girls 99.4%), gender parity (ratio of 1.02 in favor of girls) over the last few years (Bangladesh Primary Education Annual Sector Performance Report, 2012). According to Annual Sector Performance Report , (2012) survival rate and primary cycle completion rate have also been increased from 67.2% and 60.2% respectively in the two types of schools (Government and registered Non-Government) in 2010 to 79.5% and 70.3% in 2011.

DPE-supported program of pre-primary classes in GPS and RNGPS served 73% of the enrolled children, NGOs served 26% and ELCDP and others served about 1 percent (Mapping of pre-primary in Bangladesh, 2012). The total number of preprimary centers in 2012 was 88,225. Of these, 60,965 or 69 percent are supported by DPE. NGOs ran 23,168 centers (26 percent). The remaining about 5 percent are run under ELCDP and others (Directorate of Primary Education, 2012).

PEDP III, the sector-wide program for primary education development, focuses on quality and improvement of the teaching-learning process. This is attempted through different means such as introducing Diploma in Education as the professional training course for teachers, Each Child Learn pilot initiative emphasizing active teaching-learning and learning assessment reforms etc. Mainstreaming pre-primary is another major initiative by government to improve the overall quality of learning. Through all these efforts, qualitative change is expected to contribute to enhancing the quality of

learning. But are all these initiatives addressing the issues properly? What about the progress till to date especially in the curriculum delivery method and the role of the teacher in it? What is the perception of teachers about child friendly teaching learning process? The theoretical understanding is not enough to change the deeply rooted traditional practice about the teaching learning process.

In a recent study, Asadullah and Chaudhury (2012) confirmed that a large proportion of children do not attain basic competency (measured in terms of skills specified in primary school curriculum) upon completing primary schooling. It was found that only 2% children attained all the measurable terminal competencies (Directorate of Primary Education., 2011; CAMPE, 2008).

The root causes of the poor performance and low completion rates of students are many. Besides high children-teacher ratio, low contact hour and lack of teacher's motivation and quality, the conventional teaching-learning methods focusing on memorizing facts and lack of school readiness are major obstacles.

Through the short pre-primary education teacher training course and its curriculum and pedagogic approach, a child friendly, play-and-activity-based teaching learning is attempted to be introduced to primary school teachers. This initiative creates an opportunity for the teachers, selected from the current primary school teachers, to know more about the interactive teaching learning process and thus change their mindset and behavior. An anthropological study by SIDA found that primary school teachers who attended pre-primary training and conducted pre-primary classes were well aware of the benefits of pre-primary classroom practices (UNESCO, 2007). They realized the

importance of child-friendly teaching learning and were willing to replicate this in the primary education class.

As government took decision to continue pre-primary through the primary school teachers and train them for this purpose, the findings of this research can indicate if the mainstream teachers were motivated and interested to change the traditional teaching learning method that existed in primary school.

Understanding the perception of teachers and challenges from the teachers' perspective is very important for designing any interventions for teachers. This study will explore the perception of teachers about teaching learning process and will try to understand how it may be influenced by the pre-primary education introduced recently by government. The findings might help to know if and how the rollout of child friendly teaching learning process at pre-primary level affected teaching and learning in early grades of primary school. The underlying assumption is that the influence of pre-primary training can carry over into the teaching learning process in the early years of the primary school.

1.5 Research Topic & Research Questions

Topic: Teachers' perceptions about child-friendly and interactive teaching-learning in early primary grades of Government Primary Schools (GPS)

The study has tried to explore the perception of early grade teachers on child friendly and interactive teaching learning and at the same time the alignment and difference between perception and practice through observing their activities. The study focused on the differences of perception and practice of teachers trained on pre-primary with those of teachers not trained. It further tried to identify the challenges and opportunities for introducing child-friendly pedagogy in early grades.

1.6 Objective

The overall objective was to find out the perception of early grade teachers about the child-friendly and interactive teaching-learning process, to what extent this is practiced in early grades of primary school, and what obstacles teachers face in practicing child-friendly and interactive pedagogy.

1.7 Research Questions

The research questions derived from the overall objective are as follows:

- What are teachers' perceptions about the child friendly and interactive teaching learning process?
- What challenges do teachers face in practicing child friendly interactive teaching learning process in early primary grades (Grade-1 and Grade-2) of GPS?

- Are there differences in early primary grades teaching practices of teachers who had PPE training and who did not have this training?
- What supports do teachers feel that they need to practice the child friendly interactive teaching learning process in early primary grades?

Chapter 2: Literature Review

It is widely recognized that the teacher's role is the key to achieving results in child-friendly schools and learning spaces. Therefore, the required training and support to prepare teachers for this important role must be a priority (UNICEF, 2009, p.5). Teachers are powerful mediators in all educational matters. Ukeje, (1992) noted that if the child is the centre of educational system, the teacher is the pivot of the educational process (as cited in Olaleye. 2012). Besides international studies, research conducted by Plan Bangladesh, BRAC and ICDDR, B indicated that early stimulation and preparation for education enhance student learning in school and increase the possibility of retention up to the terminal grades (Young, 2002).

2.1 Bangladesh situation from PPE to Primary grade

The pre-primary activities in Bangladesh consist of various programs under different actors. Earlier NGOs were in the frontline and a big number of pre-primary schools were run by NGOs like BRAC, Save the Children, Plan International, Care, Action Aid, Dhaka Ahsania Mission, members of Campaign for Popular Education and some other members of the Bangladesh ECD Network. There are some other options offered by madrasas, mosque-based maktabas, mandirs and privately owned kindergartens. As an interim arrangement, from 2010, Government also initiated pre primary through GPS & RNGPS. All these pre-primary actors follow varying objectives, methodology and curricula with inadequate coordination. A step toward coordination has been taken in 2012 with the approval by the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education of a pre-primary standard program (Directorate of Primary Education, 2012).

As government introduced PPE by an interim arrangement by involving existing primary teachers (especially early grade teachers), this study will look at the influence of PPE initiative (training, classroom transaction as per training and use of teacher's guide encouraging child-friendly and activity based pedagogy) in early grade teaching learning.

Currently one selected teacher from every primary school is receiving 6 days of training on PPE. This teacher conducts one PPE class in each primary school (DPE). This is the interim arrangement that government has been implementing since 2010, which has continued up to 2013. From 2014, the newly developed curriculum has been introduced and, 15,000 new teachers recruited for PPE. (PEDP-3 Program Documents: Sub-component 2.1.2 Pre-primary). The pre-condition of deputing new PPE teacher in school is a 15 days basic training that all teachers have to undergo (Directorate of Primary Education, 2013). Though they will be primarily responsible for PPE class, as Assistant teacher, they will also conduct other early grade classes.

Under PEDP III, the plan is to start and continue one PPE class in each school maintaining the national service delivery standard. This will contribute eventually to serving all eligible PPE children of a catchments area (Directorate of Primary Education, 2012). In addition, the Primary School Quality Level (PSQL) standard in PEDPII, to be continued during PEDP III, requires that all teachers receive regular, annual, in-service training and sub-cluster training (Directorate of Primary Education, 2012). Thus, various types of teacher training courses exist, including a one-year basic training (Certificate-in-Education) to be upgraded to the Diploma (increasing training duration to 18 months with additional emphasis on classroom practice as part of training), and short-term subject-based training (on five major primary school subjects), sub-cluster training, basic in-

service (multiple ways of teaching learning) training, school management and academic supervision training. The contents of all these training courses emphasize and encourage child-centered and activity-based approach - as recommended by most development-psychologists and educationalists.

2.2 Child friendly Teaching–learning

Creating curiosity to learn can be done more in a child-friendly school. A UNESCO (2001) report on child-friendly school stated that such a school ensures quality education and positive learning for the child. Where this outcome is absent, the school is not child-friendly. In the child-friendly teaching learning process, a teacher has to play a crucial role. The teacher works directly with the children and has an impact on their lives. Teachers are effective agents of change as they function, formally or informally, as administrators, curriculum developers, instructors and career guidance counselors. Child-centered, interactive methodologies make learning enjoyable and exciting to students and improve their retention, participation and performance. These approaches create open learning environments characterized by group cooperation and positive competition among learners. This new methodology changes the role of the teacher from the ‘fountain of all knowledge’ and a feared authority figure to a ‘facilitator of learning (Unicef, 2009, p.23).

2.3 Interactive teaching-learning process

It is critical to know how teachers realize, understand and comprehend the concept of 'child-friendly' and 'interactive teaching-learning.' Teachers' perceptions on these issues and hands-on practice in the classroom can ensure a meaningful teaching learning process.

While many characteristics of interactive teaching can be described, Unicef study (2011) noted that there was no agreed meaning of the notion of 'interactive teaching.' A set of indicators was developed referencing international literature. These indicators were about a number of pedagogic features, consisting of:

- Students actively engaged and involved in their learning;
- The teacher uses 'open-ended' rather than 'closed' questions, allowing students to raise more questions and offer opinions;
- Democratic, orderly, and friendly environment in the classroom;
- Easy communication between the students and the teacher, and among the students themselves;
- Student centered activities and regular and constructive feedback to students.

However, the teaching/ learning partners in the classroom need to be aware of each other's different perspectives of the teaching/ learning environment they experience. Findings of that study showed how improvements in the student/teacher partnership could result in a shift in focus from one of curriculum delivery to that of a dynamic interactive teaching/learning process more suited to the individual needs of the students (Barker & Moroz, 1997).

2.4 Training of teachers

Children's first years of school are a period when conceptions and ways of accessing knowledge, as well as the connected cognitive, affective and social processes are constructed and developed. Therefore, preparing and training basic education teachers effectively is an issue that has concerned theorists, educational system administrators and national and international agencies dedicated to educational development. If we accept the concept of the “knowledge society,” we must also recognize that primary school teachers are key players in giving young children a head start in building a foundation of competencies in thinking, reasoning, and communication. On the route toward the knowledge society the training of primary school teachers in new ways is, therefore, an important area of effort and investment. However, training primary school teachers and transforming teaching practices, which have been built up through years of conventional thinking and organisational processes have proven to be complex. The gap between the traditional practices and teaching learning in the knowledge society poses a difficult challenge (Dubar. C., 1997).

A similar concern is that better performing teachers may be assigned to higher grades, rather than the early grades.

In a study Jacob and Lefgren (2005) found that teacher training can have a significant, positive impact on student achievement under generally favorable school and management conditions. Similarly, pre-primary and early primary education has a positive correlation with further learning when the school is concerned about operating a quality program (Directorate of Primary Education, 2012).

Attention to early grades education can have a strong impact on quality education. By providing necessary support to the young children for their development in physical, cognitive, linguistic social and emotional dimensions, ECCE has a strong and positive impact on further learning in primary education and beyond. In the Brazilian PROAPE project, for instance, it was found that the total costs of schooling including the early learning program itself, for pupils up to grade 2 of primary education, was 11% lower for those who participated in ECCE than for those children who did not. In this and other programs, dropout and grade repetition on primary education turned out to be Lower as well (Myers, 1992). Similar outcomes were found for the Integrated Child Development Service in India, a project serving 32 million children (Young, 2002).

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Research Approach

The study has tried to gain a deep and holistic understanding of the experience of teachers with child friendly interactive teaching and learning. It is intended to be a qualitative-descriptive study of how teachers understand interactive teaching. The study, therefore, has followed a qualitative approach designed to explore the research questions. The researcher further aims to reveal the inner experience and reflection of teachers.

3.2 Research Participants

Teachers of Grade 1 and Grade 2 of GPS were the study population for this study. As the study was trying to explore the perception and understanding of teachers on child friendly interactive teaching learning, its scope has been limited to study the teachers only rather than their interaction with others like children or parents, though these are relevant concerns. To look at how teachers' understanding is applied in practice, , the study has also focused on classroom but mainly to observe the teachers and their activities and behavior in the classroom.

3.3 Research Site

The study has only explored the urban school in two different locations of Dhaka city at Mirpur and Dhanmondi.

3.4 Sample and sampling process

A purposive sampling technique was used for this study. Two schools were selected from urban area to conduct this study. Four GPS teachers of Grade 1 and Grade 2 were

selected through purposive sampling from these two schools. Both male and female teachers were selected with PPE training and without any training on pre-primary education in equal numbers.

Two classes of Early Grade (Grade 1 and Grade 2) from the two schools have been selected for observation where one class was conducted by PPE trained teacher and other one by non-trained teachers.

3.5 Instruments and data collection

Two types of data collection tools were used to collect data. These are in-depth-interview questionnaire (semi-structured & open ended) and observation tool and guideline. In depth interviews focused on the understanding, perception and practices of teachers regarding child friendly interactive teaching-learning in early grades. On the other hand observation tool helped to understand the pros and cons of teaching methods between participants who were trained on pre-primary education (PPE) teaching-learning and those who were not trained. The researcher has developed the instruments following a process that ensured validity of the tools. Each interview session took a total of few hours. Interviews were conducted in different settings, such as school premise or convenient place of the participants. The purposes of the study were explained to them and questions were translated in Bangla that was easily understood by the teachers. Interviews were recorded with the consent of the participants.

Two classes of early grade (grade 1 and grade 2) of different schools were observed for three to four days full time throughout class hours, where one class was conducted by PPE trained teachers and another one by non-trained teachers. Observations were recorded using tools. Additional information also recorded in the note book.

3.6 Data Analysis

A data categorization and coding system was applied to analyze the data. The transcription of the recorded data was produced and the contents were coded. Coded data were further analyzed, described and classified based on themes derived from the research questions.

Data Management: Data were managed professionally to maintain the biasness and accuracy. Responses from respondents and observation were summarized in a table to support the thematic analysis. Rechecking was also there using the audio record to ensure the accuracy of the data.

Classifying: Different themes derived from the responses and observation which were grouped, classified and detailed out in the result section. An analysis plan was followed to guide the qualitative analysis to ensure appropriate reflection of the research asks in the results. Following classification template for presentation of data from the interviews and classroom observation were used while articulating the results and analyzing it.

A. Teacher Perception about Child-friendly/Interactive Pedagogy

- Common points
- Perceptions of trained (PPE) teachers
- Perceptions of untrained teachers

B. Child-friendly/Interactive Classroom Practices

- Common practices of teachers
- Practices of trained PPE-trained teachers

- Practices of teachers without training

C. Challenges in practicing child-friendly/interactive pedagogy

- Common concerns as expressed by teachers
- Challenges noted by PPE-trained teachers
- Challenges noted by teachers without PPE training

D. Overcoming challenges

- Common ideas
- Views of PPE-trained teachers
- Views of teachers without training.

3.7 Ethical Issues & Concerns

The ethical issues and concerns were properly maintained by taking consent before interviewing respondents. The purpose of the study was clearly described to respondents so that they can take decision whether they are willing to participate in this interview or not. Independence was there to withdraw them at any point of time during conducting the study. Before observation, necessary permission has been taken from school, teacher and children in written to meet the ethical requirement. Confidentiality of the participants has been strictly maintained and no names of the respondents were used in the report.

3.8 Validity & Reliability

The construct validity was ensured through critical review and alignment of research objective and questions and at the same time data collection instruments to ensure items properly derived to answer research questions. Expert review was done with the support of internal and external mentor of the study as well as consulting with thematic experts. Prior to the data collection, the instruments were checked with the help of expert opinion and a small scale piloting with one teacher. After the pilot session, the interview questionnaire was adjusted and developed with the particular findings. This process ensures again the validity and reliability of the tools and data up to a limit. Data collection including class observation was done by the researcher to ensure accuracy of the data and information.

3.9 Limitations of the Study

Sample size is small. So it is not possible to generalize the findings. The study only considered the urban school but most of the government schools are located in rural areas and the context and dynamics of urban and rural schools different in many ways. These limitations have to be kept in mind in considering the findings of this exploratory study.

Chapter 4: Findings

4.1 Findings:

In-depth interviews of four teachers and classroom observation provided detailed information on the practice of child-friendly and interactive teaching-learning in early primary grades of Government Primary Schools (GPS). Findings of the study will be presented starting with characteristics and demographic details of the respondents. This is followed by elaboration of specific objectives and experiences and views of teachers on child-friendly and interactive teaching –learning in early primary grades. Finally, findings from teacher interviews are presented enriched by quoting some of their responses. The findings from class observation are described and analyzed to indicate the teachers' perception about teaching-learning and how this is put into practice as well as the challenges they face in this respect.

4.1.1 Characteristics of the Respondents

All of the respondents have a minimum experience of at least 4 years of teaching. They have a minimum educational qualification of the BA degree. Two of them have the MA degree. Those who do not have MA have pedagogic training for primary teachers - the Certificate in Education. All of the participants are married.

4.1.2 Findings on Teacher Perception about Child-friendly/Interactive teaching learning process

Preferred teaching methods in early grades

Most of the participants like teaching in early grades and mentioned that a child centered environment could be the most appropriate teaching method for the teaching of early

grade students. The trained teachers preferred and emphasized most on learner focused classroom as they are aware of the benefits. The non-trained teachers with their superficial knowledge of pedagogy emphasized more on materials and student classroom attendance, and favored classroom practices in which teachers have to play the main role. As. one of the non-trained teachers put it: *“Using good materials supports teaching and ensuring learners’ participation”*. (Personal communication: Interview # 3, Date: December 3, 2013)

Both trained and non trained teachers also mentioned of using digital methods, input methods and task methods during teaching – concepts and terminologies they have learned from the pedagogic course or in-service training. Three out of four respondents said they were familiar with the child-friendly/interactive teaching method.

Understanding on Child friendly/ interactive teaching and learning approach

Regarding understanding of the child friendly interactive teaching learning method, teachers having some sort of familiarity with the child/friendly interactive teaching method explained the method. In their perception, the child friendly/interactive teaching and learning method is, *“the one which makes students more interested in doing tasks and their talents are nurtured. The children will learn sharing and friendly behavior. There will be effective interaction between groups, teachers and students”*. (Personal communication: Interview # 1, Date: December 2, 2013)

The respondents generally assumed child friendly/interactive teaching and learning method as a method that is focused on children whose talents would be nurtured based on

sharing and a friendly learning process. The respondents felt that it would be a spontaneous process and they need not put any extra effort to make the class child friendly/interactive. It may be concluded that, according to respondent's perception, a child friendly environment is concentrated on the interaction or activity involving learners which should happen spontaneously in the classroom.

Training to teach in early grades

All of the respondents received some sort of training on different subjects or issues. However, the trained respondents have training on "primary level pedagogy" and "subject based training". They said that they could use what they learned from the training in the classroom. One of the trained participants stated "*I was not able to teach the learners using effective methodology in teaching before I received the training. However, I learnt about interactive and effective learning process when I received the training*". (Personal communication: Interview # 2, Date: December 2, 2013)

On the other side, the non-trained teachers replied that, they haven't received any special training. The non-trained teachers both have training in CINED and particular subject, which were basically on classroom management, methods and techniques. They said that, before the training they could not understand how to manage the classes, but they could easily implement the learning in the classrooms now. One of the non-trained interviewee teachers said: "*there is no opportunity to initiate or practice interactive teaching approach without the training*". (Personal communication: Interview # 4, Date: December 3, 2013)

Concern about interactive teaching

In terms of concern about interactive teaching, the responses were distinctively different between two types of respondents. The trained group of teachers stated that, the child/student should be the central concern of interactive teaching. The non-trained teachers were focused on teacher's interest to conduct the class. One of the respondents emphasized on the less number of children and the teacher's cooperation during the classroom, so that it could be easy for them to conduct the class. One of the non-trained participant stated that "*supportive school environment, teachers' training and low student-teacher ratio are key factors to ensure interactive teaching-learning in the classroom*". (Personal communication: Interview # 4, Date: December 3, 2013)

Views on key important issues regarding interactive teaching and learning

In response to this question respondents mentioned that motherly caring, good behaviors, friendly and cheerful interaction and sharing during the teaching are most important indicators for interactive teaching and learning process. The other key factors are sharing and reciprocal relation, group works are important for teaching learning process. One of the trained teacher said: "*respectful relationship and understanding between the children and teachers is highly helpful for sustainable learning. Children can learn easily in this environment*". (Personal communication: Interview # 1, Date: December 2, 2013)

Most of the respondents also emphasized on the joyful learning processes for the children, such as learning by playing, acting or using interesting material during the learning process. In addition they also mentioned that Group work, pair work or experience sharing were also important ideas in teaching process.

Views on students' potential and performance in the class.

Many of the respondents mentioned that students of their classes performed up to their potential. The respondents said that, they assist their students who are weaker or slower in learning. Two of the respondents emphasized on grouping techniques so that the good students can interact with the weak students during the sessions.

Based on the above discussion, the study found that teacher's perception regarding child-friendly interactive teaching learning process differs among trained and non trained teachers. Trained teacher mentioned about learner-focused and participation-based teaching learning processes. But non-trained teachers talked about materials and participation of the children; they also mentioned that supportive school environment, teachers' training and low student-teacher ratio were key factors to ensure interactive teaching-learning in the classroom. However, all of them mentioned group work, pair work or experience sharing for interactive teaching process.

4.1.3 Findings on Child-friendly/Interactive Classroom Practices

Understanding about the practices on interactive teaching learning process

Understanding about the practice on interactive teaching learning process in early primary grades varied for the respondents. Most of them mentioned that bigger size classrooms and less number of students were necessary for interactive teaching. In addition, group formulation and participatory methods were needed for students to grasp the lesson. Using pictures and real life objects were also considered important for the children to understand the lesson and relating it to their personal experience. Also they

talked about the teacher's attention to the students, attractive learning materials and lesson plans for effective teaching-learning.

According to the participant teachers, all except one have been following interactive teaching learning process in their classroom. The respondents asserted the need for interactive materials (e.g. pictures and other teaching aids), which they frequently used as tools for group work, pair work etc. At the time of such group or pair work, teacher's responsibility to discuss or invigorate the learning process was noted. One of the trained participants mentioned: "*the training of preprimary education was fully activity based, and I am trying to make good use of it*". (Personal communication: Interview # 1, Date: December 2, 2013)

Only one non-trained respondent said that as she didn't have enough idea about the interactive learning process, she used to apply real life materials and pictures to attract children's attention, and it worked with the children, according to her.

Initial experiences/thoughts about teaching in interactive way

Teachers, who are familiar with the interactive teaching learning process, said that they had faced difficulty to teach before they got the training. The training helped them to know the methods and techniques about how to manage a big class effectively through the interactive process.

Several techniques were used for making the lessons understandable to all children, particularly, when a student didn't understand a topic during a class. The preferred practices were: supporting children individually (e.g. showing pictures, getting close to the child and helping the child solve the problem) and supporting children in a group (e.g. putting the child into groups with students who had better understanding of the topic, and telling other children to help the child).

Engaging children to build conceptual understanding in their lessons and activities

Conceptual understanding is important for an interactive learning process. Different techniques have been followed by different respondents. Such as: engaging one-to-one with a child in a nurturing approach, and real life experience sharing (i.e. showing pictures); engaging children in the class (e.g. giving tasks, eye contact); regular monitoring (e.g. giving tasks and close monitoring) and group task (e.g. formulation of groups and pairs).

Motivating and encouraging children during and after activities seemed important for student engagement. Several types of motivations were mentioned by the participants, including: 1. Activity based: Engaging them into drawing pictures, giving group work and pair work to solve problems; and 2. Appreciation: Praising their activities, for example, encouraging them to complete their tasks with clapping, words of praise and asking all children to join in such appreciation.

The study found that, all of the activities mentioned above were thoroughly used during the class to engage all students in lessons and activities. Moreover, sometimes giving students work at home also helpful to engage them in study. All the participants emphasized the importance of regular appreciation of children for their performance and praising students regularly in the classroom.

Challenges in engaging all students in the class and encouraging good performance

Lack of infrastructures (spaces, furniture), learning materials and training were considered as most challenging issues to participants to engage children. Moreover, a large number of students in a class and lack of parent's awareness were also mentioned by the participants as problems. Non-trained teachers mentioned not getting training as one of the challenges for them. One of the participants stated: *"we have to get training on pre-primary education to learn how to interact with the children effectively"*. (Personal communication: Interview # 1, Date: December 2, 2013)

Based on the understanding of the teachers on practices to make the classroom interactive, the study revealed that the interactive classroom needs the, following -- a) Capacity building of teachers through effective training; b) Availability of materials to make the classroom interactive e.g. joyful learning materials and multimedia; c) Collective awareness; e.g. awareness of teachers as well as parents about stimulating interactive learning process; and d) Communication and interaction with the children during the learning process.

Respondents mentioned that more classroom space and less number of students were necessary for interactive teaching. Trained teachers mentioned that training helped them to know the methods and techniques of managing a large classroom effectively through the interactive process.

4.1.4 Challenges in practicing child-friendly/interactive Teaching learning process

Felt challenges in early primary grades

All respondents mentioned that the students were often not attentive and the parents were not concerned enough, which the teachers saw as key challenges for practicing child-friendly/interactive teaching in early primary grades. One of the non-trained participant mentioned: *“we have to reduce the unfriendliness between the children and teachers and we have to learn how to manage a large class smoothly”*. (Personal communication: Interview # 3, Date: December 3, 2013) In addition, they mentioned not being able to use updated and effective approaches as a barrier for practicing interactive teaching in the classroom. One of the trained participants said: *“updated and effective approach is important for teaching in early grade. It is hard to use updated approaches in learning without training”*. (Personal communication: Interview # 2, Date: December 2, 2013) Apart from this, they mentioned following other challenges 1. **Materials:** Lack of materials and attractive textbook; 2. **Infrastructure:** Lack of classroom or, small crowded classrooms that distracted students; 3. **Lack of Awareness** of parents about problems and how they could help; and 4. **Allocation of time** often not enough for

carrying out the activities. The allotted time for a class sometimes became challenging to manage learning.

Participant's view to overcome challenges

The respondents asserted that effective measures against these challenges could be the way to overcome these challenges. For example, available and attractive learning materials, availability and access to infrastructure, parents and students' awareness, and capacity building of teachers could be the effective ways to overcome these challenges. One of the trained teachers said: *“training is highly needed to facilitate interactive teaching-learning process. In addition, learning materials and teaching aids are crucial for interactive teaching”*. (Personal communication: Interview # 4, Date: December 3, 2013)

All the respondents said that, most of the times the school and classroom environment was not favorable for practicing child friendly interactive teaching learning process. Most of the times, interrupted electricity supply hampered class work, especially as the rooms were crowded and often hot.

Needed supports to conduct the class in a child friendly/ interactive way

In response to query about needed support, all the participants mentioned various kinds of support they needed from different sources for conducting child friendly/interactive classes. The sources identified were: Government, School Management Committee, TRC, VEO, DEPO, UEO, and AEUO. All the participants' mentioned that receiving training would be good for them. And they can get the training from the person such as: Head teacher, TRC and TEO.

Regardless of trained or non-trained participants, learning materials, training and attractive textbooks were the top expected items. They also mentioned following other items: 1. Proper maintenance of classrooms, 2. Good washroom facilities, 3. Limited numbers of classes to teach in a day; 3. Digital aids for classrooms, 5. Supplying SRM; and 7. No strikes or political turmoil

Findings revealed that without proper and appropriate support (from Government, School Management Committee, etc.), it is difficult to execute any initiative at the school or classroom level.

4.1.5 Findings from Observations

Material Use during the class hour: It was found in the observation that, regardless of their education and training status, all of the participants used some teaching materials; such as pictures and charts. Most often they asked questions to the students related to their lessons. However, storytelling and systematic, use of models, charts and cards were more frequent with the trained teachers.

Interaction with the Students

Observation revealed that some of the children were more attentive to their lessons than others. Some children asked questions to their teacher about their lesson without waiting for clarification about a concept; some showed interest in answering the questions. The trained teachers, however were more effective in handling students questions and encouraging students to provide the answers themselves.

All of the respondents used open ended questions and they frequently asked such question to the children.

Students' Engagement in class activities

It is found that the participants used several types of activities for student's engagement.

The following activities were noted during the observation-

Storytelling: The story telling seemed most interesting for student engagement. This method helped students to pay their attention to their teachers or other particular students who joined in story-telling.

Group work and pair work: This method helped the students to pay their attention collectively to diverse learning activities.

Individual tasks: Sometimes individual tasks seemed important, when the students were not interested in group work. Only the trained teachers followed such activities in their classroom in a meaningful way, while the non-trained teachers were not able to use this particular technique in their classroom.

Question and answer technique: Only a trained teacher followed question and answer technique effectively which was complemented by specific tasks for homework.

Teachers with training combined giving instruction with other activities (e.g. telling story, playing games etc.) in order to keep the children engaged. The non-trained teachers concentrated more on didactic instruction and used "formal" language with the children.

In case of maintaining class discipline, respondent teachers were used common technique of giving instruction to students. A common characteristic of the participants was that

they all claimed to be flexible in their classroom handling. However, observation revealed that while all of the teachers tried to engage students in play activities, some, the trained ones, were more effective and interactive more often, than the others.

Praising students' Performance

Findings from class observation showed that there were differences between trained and non-trained teachers in regards to praising students' performance. The trained teachers praised students frequently. Teachers praised the students verbally, by gestures and by clapping. The teachers also maintained gender equity in this respect in the class. . The non-trained teachers were less spontaneous and enthusiastic in praising students, often failing to offer any encouragement when a child did not respond correctly. They also used verbal expressions of praise and clapping and were sensitive about gender equity.

Challenges

Observation revealed that the participants faced significant challenges in the classroom.

The following findings indicate important challenges:

- A big class size with a large number of students seemed a great challenge for the teachers to manage the learning session.
- Shortage of learning aids materials was seen as a barrier during the teaching learning process.
- With a large class size and all not engaged in meaningful, activity, a large number of students were found distracted or gossiping during the learning session.

To cope with such obstacles initiatives were taken with somewhat greater success by trained teachers. For example, group work can be an important tool which was used more often by trained teachers. An alternative solution was to change the seating arrangement of the children so that they could be back on track with the lesson, which worked sometimes.

Most of the participants encouraged pair work and group work. Only a trained participant teacher encouraged individual work more effectively to keep students engaged during the learning session. Observation also showed that, the trained teachers had their separate plans according to individual differences; which was not the case with non-trained respondents.

Key Findings

- Findings revealed that teacher's perception on child-friendly interactive teaching learning process differs among trained and non trained teachers.
- Trained teachers (in pre-primary) preferred and emphasized learner focused classroom practices as they are aware of the benefits. The non-trained teachers due to superficial knowledge emphasized more on learning materials and student attendance, and focused on classroom practices in which were teacher-centred.
- Respondents mentioned that more classroom space and less number of students are necessary for interactive teaching. Trained teachers mentioned that training helped them to know the methods and techniques of managing a large classroom effectively through the interactive process. The trained teachers had their separate plans according to individual differences. But this was not frequent with the non-trained teachers.
- Class observation showed some of the children as attentive to their lessons; engaging all students actively is the most serious challenge for teachers. Three out of four respondents had similarity in asking open ended questions. Both trained and non-trained teachers used materials; frequently making use of teaching aids and pictures.
- However, teachers with training combined giving instruction with other activities (e.g. telling story, playing games etc.) in order to keep the children engaged. The non-trained teachers concentrated more on didactic instruction and used "formal"

language with the children. Non-trained teachers mentioned not getting training as one of the major challenges.

- Class observation revealed that all of the teachers tried to engage themselves during the play activities. But it happened that, they were not so interactive in every class; the level of engagement varies class to class.
- Lack of infrastructures (space, furniture), learning materials and training were considered as most serious challenging issues to participants in engaging children in learning.
- A large number of students in a class and lack of parent's awareness were also mentioned as significant problems. Observation confirmed that participants faced challenges to manage large size classes and shortage of materials
- Without proper and appropriate support (from Government, School Management Committee, etc.), it is difficult to execute any initiative at the school or classroom level.

Chapter: 5 Discussions, Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Discussion

The purpose of writing this discussions section is to explain observations and learning from the research study supported by the findings. The discussion highlights teachers' perceptions, challenges they face and support they need to practice child friendly interactive teaching learning in early primary grades. Based on the findings, this section also focuses the differences in early primary grades' teaching practices of teachers who had PPE training and who did not have the training. The analysis is done to describe the categories as identified in the findings.

5.1.1 Teachers' Perception about Child-friendly/Interactive teaching learning process

Most of the teachers opined that during the early grades teaching-learning activities, it is necessary to keep the children and their interest at centre. Trained teachers preferred and emphasized a learner-focused classroom as they are aware theoretically that teacher-centered classroom is a traditional method in contrast to a child centered one. In child-centered classrooms main focus is given on children and teachers have a somewhat passive role. They also believed that child-centered method is effective in which children get opportunity to learn through their effort. The non-trained teachers have limited understanding of child-centered classroom as they are not trained professionally on how

to teach pre-primary classes. As a result, they emphasized more on materials and student presence in the classroom where teachers play main role and children have a passive role.

Momen (2010) explained that teachers interact with the students without proper cognizance of their individual need, potentiality and developmental level. Also, researcher of that study observed the classes which have shown that non trained teachers were complacent with what they know, and think that it is an easy task to teach children. As a result, in the classroom, they failed to apply interactive teaching-learning to engage and stimulate children for creative activities. However, there are opportunities for raining of teachers for primary grades in Bangladesh. Now the government of Bangladesh has started pre-primary teachers training in GPS (PEDP-III, AOP-2013/14).

Informed about child-friendly interactive teaching

It was observed that all four participants heard of and were familiar with the child-friendly interactive teaching where learners enjoy activities and have liberty to say what and how they want to learn as well as have right to express opinion. The concept or term of child-friendly is quite known to all who are in teaching profession. However, it may be limited to hearing about the concept without understanding it as a whole or in practical terms. Observation findings revealed that practice is needed to make easy communication between the students and the teacher and among the students themselves.

The classroom is not only a place of learning, but, also a place where to grow up healthy, to be loved, respected and protected from violence and abuse and to be supported

irrespective of specific needs. Teacher's knowledge on ECD is likely to influence children's early foundation (Coffman & Lopez, 2003).

Training benefits to teach in early grades

It was observed that the trained teachers are more confident in making a class child-friendly and interactive. It was found that the teachers who received C-in-Ed course, but not special training on pre-primary, are less confident in making classroom child-friendly and interactive. C-in-Ed training appeared not to be enough for the teachers to make the classroom child-friendly. On the other hand, six days of training on pre-primary helped teachers to make a class child-friendly. Through in C-in-Ed training, teachers learn about overall classroom management, methods and techniques, they feel confident that after receiving pre-primary training, they would be able to make classroom more interactive. Required training and support to prepare teachers for this important role must be a priority (UNICEF, 2009, p.5). Clotfelter et al. (2006) and Feng (2005) report that there is evidence that better trained and more experienced teachers tend to be assigned to students of greater ability and with fewer discipline problems (as cited in Harris and Tim, 2008, p.5).

Concern about interactive teaching

Expectedly, there were two different views observed within the trained and non-trained teachers. Trained teachers said that in interactive classes, focus have to be on learners,

their right and interest; but non-trained teachers, on the other hand, emphasized teachers' role more than that of the learner. Also, non-trained teachers were found more traditional than those who received pre-primary training. Another important issue came from one respondent who mentioned that a smaller class size increased cooperation and interaction between the teacher and students.

It was found that all respondents agreed on children's learning outcome and were satisfied with their students performance. The respondents said that they provided support to slow achievers for smooth learning and moving on to the main stream in primary school. They even opined in favor of forming mixed-group (of fast and slow achievers) for group work through which slow achievers may get more opportunity to interact and learn. It has been seen from research that teaching-learning partners in the classroom need to be more aware of each other's different perspectives of the teaching-learning environment they experience. Findings of the study also showed how improvements in the student-teacher partnership could result in a shift in focus from one of curriculum delivery to that of a dynamic interactive teaching-learning process more suited to the individual needs of the students (Barker and Moroz, 1997).

5.1.2 Child-friendly/Interactive Classroom Practices

Observation showed that trained teachers use 'open-ended' rather than 'closed' questions, allow students to raise more questions and offer opinions. Regarding the **question and answer technique** the observation revealed that the actions taken to encourage

participation when student appears to be losing interest were different based on participants' training status.

The participants having training were familiar with techniques and activities (e.g. telling story, playing games etc.) in order to keep the children on track, so that the children could not lose their attention to the lesson. The non-trained teachers concentrated more on the classroom instruction and use of formal didactic language in the classroom.

By comparison, the techniques followed by the trained respondents are supportive to practicing democratic, orderly, and friendly environment in the classroom. Periodically, various activities (e.g. story telling or playing a game) encouraged the children to concentrate more on the class.

Recalling initial experiences/thoughts about teaching in an interactive way

It was observed that the trained teachers achieved necessary skills through training and afterwards became more capable to teach by creating an interactive learning environment which had not existed earlier.

Findings revealed that teachers applied skills they learned from training for making learning enjoyable. Teachers said that they had faced difficulty to teach before getting the training. The training helped them to know the methods and techniques of how to manage a big class effectively through the interactive process.

Ways to engage children to build conceptual understanding in their lessons and activities

Regarding the students' active engagement and involvement in their learning, it was observed that necessary clarifications and discussion played important role to engage children in classroom activities. Teachers can take different measures for making teaching easy such as showing picture, giving appropriate tasks to students, regular monitoring of student activities, and group/pair work etc. It was found that all teachers have used appropriate techniques for making teaching easy to learners such as providing individual support, showing picture, giving clue, get closer to student, putting in group etc. whenever necessary. The difference is that the trained teachers used these techniques with greater enthusiasm and confidence and achieved better student participation than the untrained teachers.

Student centered activities to encourage children in class activities

Learning is an individual process dependent as much on what a child brings to it as on what a teacher does to facilitate it (UNICEF, 2009). Usually teachers in Bangladesh tend to engage children in activities for which the purpose is not very clear. The common activities regardless of purpose include copying from the book or practicing lesson exercises from the book which allows teacher to do their own work or relax in the classroom. Even though participants mentioned of praising children for their activities or giving constructive feedback but it is not really a regular practice.

Democratic and friendly environment in the classroom

It was observed that teachers tried to keep children's motivation high during and after activities in the classroom by maintaining a friendly environment. Most of the teachers use several types of activities in the classroom to keep children engaged. These included drawing pictures and group work and pair work to solve a given problem. Teachers also encouraged students by appreciating completion of a task by clapping or offering verbal praise. Moreover, sometimes giving students works at home also was helpful to engage them in study.

Non-trained teachers mentioned that less amount of training or not getting training at all is one of the challenges for them. A large number of learners, small classrooms and lack of infrastructures are the hard reality which hindered many positive efforts and creative intentions; though various initiatives from the state have been bringing about improvement.

Praising students' performance

In respect of praising student, differences were found among teachers. Observational findings revealed that trained teachers encouraged and praised learners using different techniques in class. It was found that trained teachers were more conscious on gender equity.

Non-trained teacher praised learners conditionally; only when a learner completed given tasks. Conditional praise may hamper young learners' learning attitude. Observation showed that non-trained teachers are generally aware about gender equity.

5.1.3 Challenges in practicing child-friendly/interactive teaching

learning process

Lack of materials, infrastructure problem, lack of parents' awareness and limited contact hours are practical challenges in Bangladesh. Most of teaching learning activities in the classroom are only text-book based and limited by contact hours that did not support additional activities.

Findings show that without proper and appropriate supports (from Government, School Management Committee, TRC, TEO, ATEO, and DPEO), it is difficult to execute any initiatives at the school or classroom level. Positive attitudes and regular monitoring from Head teacher, TRC, and TEO to ensure child-friendly interactive teaching learning were necessary. It was observed that lack of materials, infrastructure problem, and limited contact hours limited the democratic, interactive, and friendly environment in the classroom.

It was observed that positive interaction depends on nurturing behaviour (e.g. calling children by name, focusing on individual child), which can be fruitful for interactive learning process. Trained participants have used acquired skills received from training and were able to provide appropriate activities to keep learners busy in a meaningful way. Trained teachers are able to create new activities to communicate with the learners in a friendly way as needed.

Non-trained teachers, on the other hand, emphasized on traditional teacher-centered method where learners role is to follow instruction given by their teacher. Non-trained

teachers are not interested in or not capable of creating new activities. They feel reluctant to take initiatives with an excuse of lacking necessary training.

Pre-school teachers as well as teachers in early grades have to interact extensively with children and facilitate their cognitive development. The findings of this study confirm the key factors that may be supportive of or hindrance to child friendly teaching learning process.

5.2 Conclusion

The study indicated that child friendly interactive teaching learning is a known terminology to all concerned with primary education, but understanding this as a general concept and its actual practice in classroom are not the same. There is a big gap between superficial knowledge and actual practice. Pre-primary trained teachers clearly showed better understanding and could demonstrate practice more effectively than non-trained teachers.

Pre-primary is comparatively a new area for teachers as it was initiated in the public system on a large scale only from 2011 through an interim package. But it seemed that teachers, who were involved in primary and received short training, are excited about the content and process of training which they carried over to the early grades without any additional effort from DPE. This is a good indication for the policy-makers that quality training can influence the traditional teaching learning practice and can help transform knowledge into practice.

To ensure an interactive teaching-learning process for the children of early grades, training of teachers, conducting classes as per training and teacher's guide emphasizing child friendly and activity-based teaching learning are important.

5.3 Recommendations

The findings of the study suggest further steps and activities which should be considered to promote child-friendly and interactive teaching-learning in early grades of primary school, as enumerated below.

- Further study with a larger sample size is required.
- Pre-primary teachers could be assigned responsibility in the early grades in a systematic way to promote child friendly teaching learning in early grades.
- Teachers' motivation, constant monitoring and supervision need to be taken into account so that teachers are encouraged to give their full effort to teach early graders.
- Specialized professional course on ECD and training on interactive teaching learning for supervisors – such as AUEOs, URC staff, head-teachers etc. – focusing on preschool and early grade learning can further improve early grade teaching-learning.
- Curriculum and guideline for teacher's education package can be reviewed to make it more attractive and user friendly

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Annex-1: Teacher Interview Questionnaire

Research Title: Teachers' Perceptions about child friendly interactive teaching learning process in early primary grades of Government Primary Schools (GPS)

Section A: Demographic Information

Interview Date:StartEnd

1. Teacher's Name: Serial No.

2. School:.....Teacher...of
Class.....

(Please put a tick mark)

2. Age: 20-30 years 30-40 years 40+

3. Gender: Male Female

4. Location: Urban Rural Semi Urban Other Specify

5. Marital Status

Married Unmarried Divorce Other Specify

6. Number of Children:

No child 1 child 2 children more than 2 children

7. Education Level: SSC HHC Graduate Masters Other Specify

8. Teaching Experience: 0-1 Yr 1-2 Yrs 2-3 Yrs 4 or more Yrs

Section B: Teachers' perceptions about child friendly interactive teaching learning process

1. Which are the teaching methods that you like most while teaching in early grades?
2. Have you heard about the child- friendly/ interactive teaching?
3. What do you understand by Child friendly/ interactive teaching and learning? Can you please explain and provide examples of activities that illustrate this approach?
4. Do you feel that teachers should give an extra effort to make the class child friendly/interactive?
5. What type of training have you received for teaching in Early Grade class? Have you received any other training? How is your training helping you to teach children in the classroom?
6. What does concern you most about interactive teaching?
7. What are the things that are most important to you for interactive teaching and learning? Are you able to use these things/ideas in your teaching?
8. Are students in your class performing up to their potential? Whether your answer is yes or no, please explain.

Section C: Practices on Child friendly interactive teaching learning process of early primary grades

1. What do you know about the practices on interactive teaching learning process in early primary grades? Please explain with examples.
2. Do you follow interactive teaching and learning process in your class? If yes, then what are some activities or methods you follow? If no, why.
3. Can you recall some of your initial experiences/thoughts while teaching in interactive way? Are there experiences that were unexpected or surprising?

4. If a student doesn't understand a topic during a class what do you do?
5. How do you engage children to build conceptual understanding in their lessons and activities?
6. What types of activities do you initiate for student's engagement? How do you encourage them to participate in class activities?
7. What do you do to engage all students in lessons and activities?
8. Do you think it is important to praise students for performance? Do you practice it regularly? If not, why.
9. Is it important to challenge students to be engaged and perform well? How is this done? Please explain your answer.
10. What are the important ways of making the classroom interactive?

Section D: Required support in practicing child-friendly/ interactive teaching learning process

1. What challenges do you face in practicing child friendly/ interactive teaching in early primary grade?
2. What are your suggestions to overcome these challenges?
3. How favorable is the school and classroom environment to practicing child friendly/ interactive teaching learning process in early primary grade?
4. What type of support do you need to conduct the class in a child friendly/ interactive way? From whom?
5. What is your idea about the training that teacher should receive in order to perform in this interactive process? From whom would you expect this support?
6. As a teacher, what are your expectations from the school authority/Government? List five items in order of priority.

Annex 2: Observation Guideline

Research Title: Teachers' Perceptions about child friendly interactive teaching learning process in early primary grades of Government Primary Schools (GPS)

Date:	Observation duration:	Serial No,
School:	Teacher's Name:	
Total Students:	Number of Students with Special needs	

1. General Observation:

- School Environment Building type, safety and look, location
 - Class environment (ventilation, light, seating arrangement, space for activity):
 - Toilet facility
 - Outdoor game facility
2. Do the teachers make an effort to make the class child friendly? How does the teacher interact with the student in his/her class?
 3. Students pay attention to the teacher's directions and act in response positively.
 4. Students show interest in answering questions. Students ask the teacher for clarification /explanations of instructions.
 5. Teacher follows the lesson plan, pay attention to content of the lesson and ask open-ended questions.
 6. Types of activities initiated for student's engagement. How does teacher encourage them in participating in class activities?
 7. The teacher takes action to encourage participation when student t appears to be losing interest.
 8. Teacher involves herself/himself during play activity.
 9. How does teacher maintain class discipline? Teacher maintains flexibility as needed.
 10. Does the Teacher praise students' performance? How? Does he/she discriminate between boys and girls?

- 11.** What are the challenges/obstacles, the teacher faces in the class while practicing child friendly interactive teaching? What does he/she do cope with such obstacles?
- 12.** How does he/she give support when children fall into any kind of difficulty as they engage in activities?
- 13.** Does he/she model for stimulation? [Not clear. Indicate what “model” means.]
- 14.** Does he/she encourage different types of student engagement/activity? Group, individual, pairing etc.
- 15.** Does teacher plan learning activities according to individual differences?

Annex-3: Consent Form for the Teachers

Research Title: Teachers' Perceptions about child friendly interactive teaching learning process in early primary grades of Government Primary Schools (GPS)

Principal Investigator: Md. Mahfuzur Rahman Jewel

Dear Teacher,

Purpose of the research:

The aim of the current research is to explore teachers' perceptions about child friendly and interactive teaching learning process in early primary grades of Government Primary Schools (GPS). This research will be conducted by the researcher, as a part of my Masters thesis under BRAC University Institute of Educational Development.

Expectation from you:

If you agree to participate you will be asked to share your knowledge, attitudes and practices about child friendly/ interactive teaching -learning in early primary grades of Government Primary Schools (GPS).

Risk and benefit:

There is no risk to you for participating in this study. However, teachers and students may benefit directly or indirectly, if the research leads to intervention programs incorporating your experiences and views on child friendly and interactive teaching- learning in early grades.

Privacy, anonymity and confidentiality:

All information collected from you will remain strictly confidential. We will maintain your privacy and confidentiality about any information provided. We would be happy to answer your questions about the study and you are welcome to contact me over mobile phone any time if needed. My mobile number is 01711346957.

Future use of information:

Some of the information collected from this study may be kept for future research, however, in such cases information and data will not conflict with or violate maintenance of privacy, anonymity and confidentiality of information or identify individual participants in any way.

Right not to participate and withdraw

Your participation in the study is voluntary, and you are the sole authority to decide for and against your participation in this study. Refusal to take part in the study will involve no penalty.

If you agree to my proposal of enrolling yourself in my study, please indicate your consent by putting your signature at the specified space below.

Thank you very much for your cooperation

Signature of Investigator	Signature of Participant
Date:	Date: