

# **CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN URBAN PRIMARY SCHOOL SETTINGS**

A Thesis Presented to the  
Institute of Educational Development, BRAC University



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# I. Ethical Approval Form

Date: 7.9.2013

Student Name: **Nahid Parvin**

Title of Thesis Topic: **Corporal Punishment in Urban Primary School Settings**

1. Source of population
2. Does the study involve (yes or no) ✓
  - a. Physical risk to the subjects
  - b. Social risk
  - c. Psychological risk to subjects
  - d. Discomfort to subjects
  - e. Invasion of privacy
3. Will subjects be clearly informed about (yes or no) ✓
  - a. Nature and purpose of the study
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  - e. Benefits to be derived
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  - h. Compensation and/or treatment where there are risks or privacy is involved
4. Will Signed verbal consent for be required (yes or no) ✓
  - a. From study participants
  - b. From parents or guardian
  - c. Will precautions be taken to protect anonymity of subjects
5. Check documents being submitted herewith to Committee
  - a. Proposal ✓
  - b. Consent Form ✓
  - c. Questionnaire or interview schedule ✓

## II. Ethical Review Committee

### Research Authorization

**Title: Corporal Punishment in Urban Primary School Settings**

The Research Checklist indicates

- Approved without amendments
- Approved with advice to research
- Not Approved. Resubmission is required

Authorized by:

Name: ERUM MARIAM, Ph.D

Position in Ethical Review Committee:

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*Erum Mariam*

Date: 7. 9. 2013

### III. Thesis Approval Form

Name of the Student: **Nahid Parvin**

Expected Date of Graduation: 30. 4. 2014

**Thesis Topic: Corporal Punishment in Urban Primary School Settings**

Examiner's comments

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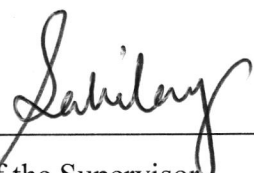
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- Excellent
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Thesis Committee Signature: Eren Mariani

#### IV. Approval from the Supervisor

In my judgment the thesis and the candidate meet recognized academic standards for the degree and is therefore ready to submit her thesis to Theses Committee.



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## **Dedication**

This Thesis is dedicated to my beloved parents and my husband.

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## Executive Summary

Corporal punishment is a common phenomenon in Bangladeshi schools. On 13 January, 2011 The High Court division of The Supreme Court issued a ruling on prohibiting of corporal punishment. Subsequently, The Ministry of Education published a circular stating that corporal punishment is prohibited in schools. Despite the prohibiting, newspaper and some research revealed that the practice of corporal punishment is still remaining in schools. A study report of BLAST showed 77.1% students were inflicted corporal punishment in their schools (Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, 2012).

The aim of this study was to explore teachers', parents' and children's perception towards corporal punishment in urban settings. An In-depth Interview-based, qualitative approach was carried out to collect data for the study. In this study, four children (2 girls and 2 boys) aged 6-8 years studying in grades one and two were selected from two Government and a non-Government primary schools. The other participants were the parents of these children and their teachers. All participants were selected through the convenient sampling technique. Twelve IDIs were conducted with twelve participants (4 teachers, 4 parents and 4 children). Data were analyzed according to the content analysis approach.

The findings revealed that there were mixed perceptions come out from the participants towards corporal punishment in schools. More than half of the participants (parents and teachers) perceived that corporal punishment is necessary to maintain discipline in the classroom, because it is the easiest way to manage overcrowded classrooms as well as it is useful for better academic achievements. But they suggested using it more lightly. The rest of participants believed that corporal punishment would not be needed to maintain discipline. The perception of children was that corporal punishment is not a good method, because punishment is shameful and painful for everyone. Most of the children feel embarrassed when they are punished.



Study results indicated that when teachers fail to control class, they use corporal punishment as well as when children talk with each other in the classroom, make noises, do not bring their homework, disobey the teacher, violate teacher's orders, tell lies, repeat mistakes then children are subjected to corporal punishment. Study also revealed some other factors like large class, poor salary, low level of job satisfaction, heavy workload including other administrative work and traditional thinking of corporal punishment that indirectly stimulate teachers for applying corporal punishment.

The findings of the study showed that almost all of the participants were aware of the negative effects of corporal punishment, but most of them perceived that corporal punishment is one of the most effective disciplining measures in schools that work immediately. For using of corporal punishment, children might show disrespect to teachers, lose their self-confidence and lose their interest that could be lead to poor learning as well as absenteeism and dropout rate might be increased.

The result also identified some possible alternative options to maintain discipline such as small class sizes, co-teacher for large classes, talk to children, counseling, listen to them and value them as well as teach them in interesting ways in a child friendly learning environment. In conclusion, corporal punished should be stopped and teachers should be trained on creating supportive environment for learners and classroom management without using corporal punishment.

The study made some recommendations that the government to make explicit the rule of prohibiting corporal punishment in legislation as well as to provide teachers training on classroom management and alternative strategies to control discipline problems in school.

The study suggested for further studies to identify the current practice of corporal punishment after banning in both urban and rural context. The other research would be required on how teachers can use alternative methods other than corporal punishment. Awareness raising is essential since corporal punishment is a violation of the rights of children.

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## CHAPTER 1: Introduction and Background

Corporal punishment in school is a common phenomenon all over the world. In most countries children spend more time in the care of adults in educational settings than anywhere else outside of their homes, so educational institutions are one of the primary places children grow up. Therefore, schools should have a responsibility to protect children from any kind of hostility and to provide safe environments that support and promote children's dignity and development. Presently, the roles of schools are being discussed adversely throughout the world. In this regard, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) calls on States Parties to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity and in conformity with the principles and provisions of the Convention (U. N. Doc.CRC/C/BGD/CO/4 , 2009). Currently, many incidents have occurred in the name of school discipline. The alleged discipline that has turned into corporal punishment affects the holistic development of children.

Corporal punishment is a term derived from Latin word which means body. It meant physical punishment and in the past it was very common. The practice of corporal punishment was recorded as early as 10th century BC in *MishlêShlomoh* (Solomon's Proverbs) and it was certainly present in classical civilizations, being used in Greece, Rome, and Egypt to maintain discipline and justice in their kingdoms. In the Ancient World teachers were strict and would often beat the students. In the middle ages, discipline methods were also severe. In the 19th century, hammering pupils with a bamboo cane became popular. In the 20th century the cane as well as ruler was used in both primary and secondary schools. In the late 20th century and early 21st century public opinion turned against corporal punishment and several countries took steps toward abolishing the different forms of corporal punishment (Lambert. T. 2012).

## 1.1 Statement of the Problem

Since a long time, corporal punishment in school settings has been practice in many cultures. It is culturally approved as a method of enforcing discipline in school and home settings. It is practiced in different forms like physical or psychological punishment. Corporal punishment is emotionally destructive and affects the quality of the teacher-student relationship and cut off all modes of effective communication that play a crucial role in promoting student's emotional health and well-being (Youssef, Attia, &Kamel, 1998).

In Bangladesh, UNICEF has conducted a collaborative research with Save the Children and Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs on the corporal punishment on children at home and school. Result showed that about 91% children experienced physical punishment in schools (UNICEF, 2009). In 2012, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust & Institute of Informatics and Development revealed a national study on Violence against Children in Education Institute Settings. From this study it has been seen that, 77.1% of students stated that physical, psychological or financial punishments were inflicted on students in their schools. Nearly half of parents (48.4%) said that these punishments happened in their children's schools and just over a third (34.9%) of teachers said that they happened in the schools they worked in (Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, 2012).

It is seen that traditional beliefs, culture, values, childrearing standards, attitudes, conservative ideology, religion as well as family practices influence the attitude toward corporal punishment. Some conservative families actively give their opinion for the use of corporal punishment and they believe that it is a part of their cultural tradition and it is supported by certain interpretations of religious texts. Furthermore, teachers believed that it is normal to use corporal punishment for maintaining

discipline. A comment by the Principal of Rajuk Uttara Model College, one of the top colleges in Dhaka city indicates the ongoing practice of corporal punishment in schools after prohibiting corporal punishment. He said that “punishment is to a certain extent necessary for children but it should only be a punishment that evokes discipline in the student, not to harm the student physically or psychologically” (Ahmed, S. 2012). Bangladesh is obliged under national and international law to eliminate corporal punishment and to provide effective remedies for children. Corporal punishment is unlawful in schools under a ruling by the High Court Division of Supreme Court in January 2011, but this is not yet reflected in explicit prohibition in legislation passed by the parliament (Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, 2011). However, the practice of corporal punishment in schools is still prevalent according to the studies. Different incidents are often published by the press that received more attention from the civil society. The use of corporal punishment by teachers has always been a topic of mixed responses, with many supporting the practice because it is supposed to improve children’s behavior and many believing it damages children development.

## **1.2 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to investigate briefly how teachers, parents and children perceive corporal punishment in schools and the key factors that contribute towards using corporal punishment in spite of it being prohibited. The study also explored to what extent teachers and parents understood the effect of corporal punishment and the alternatives ways that could be used in disciplining children it.

### **1.3 Significance of the Study**

In Bangladesh, despite of national and international declaration against corporal punishment, it is practiced in many schools across the country. In fact, there are several policies in relation to child welfare and protection but, implementations of these laws are very weak and no concrete steps have been taken to fulfill the commitment. There have been several articles published in newspapers that have shown the prevalence of corporal punishment. A recent incident occurred is that a 10 years old boy committed suicide after he had been beaten by his school teacher. In the southern part of the country, eight students were allegedly treated in hospital after being beaten for not bringing colored pencils to the school (Ethirajan, A. 2010). As mentioned earlier that the prevalence of physical punishment in school is about 91 percent in Bangladesh (UNICEF, 2009). In 2009, UNICEF has documented high prevalence of corporal punishment in school settings. There is however inadequate qualitative data on the parents and teachers perceptions towards corporal punishment and its impact on children's development and their learning.

In this regard one of the significant contributions of this study will be to find out how far teachers and parents understand the current decision of prohibiting corporal punishment and what factors persuade teachers to use corporal punishment.

Moreover, it is necessary to identify the views of parents and teachers toward the corporal punishment. The findings of the study could also be used to create public awareness to enforce existing laws and explicitly prohibit corporal punishment in all kinds of educational institutions. In addition, the result of this study would help to reduce corporal punishment and encourage the use of more humane methods and identify the appropriate interventions or techniques to manage classroom discipline. The findings may take part an important role to explicit the rule of prohibiting

corporal punishment in legislation passed by the parliament. Ultimately, the study will promote less threatening and more positive learning environments that ensure early childhood development.

#### **1.4 Research Objectives**

The main objective of the study is to explore the perceptions of teachers, parents and children towards corporal punishment in school settings.

##### **Specific Objectives**

1. To find out the factors that contributes towards the use of corporal punishment by primary school teachers.
2. To explore how teachers and parents understand the effects of corporal punishment on children.
3. To reveal the disciplining methods that can be used in substituting corporal punishments and to identify whether parents and teachers know about these alternative methods of disciplining.

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

The study will be conducting to find answers to the following questions-

1. How do teachers, parents and children perceive corporal punishment?
2. What are the factors that contribute towards the practice of corporal punishment?
3. What are the effects of corporal punishment and do parents and teachers know about it?
4. What are the disciplining methods that can be used as substitutes to corporal punishments and do parents and do teachers know the alternatives methods of disciplining?



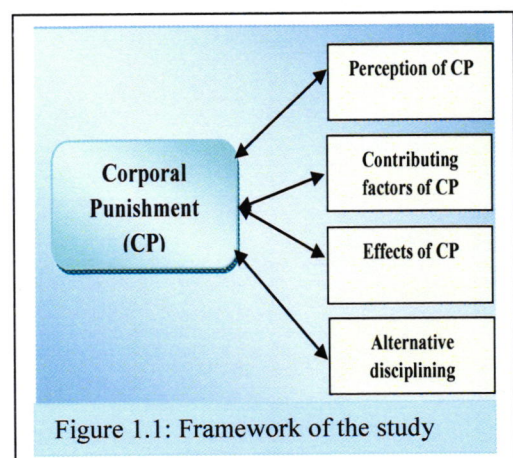
## 1.6 Operational Definition of Terms

Corporal punishment and urban primary schools are the key terms of this study. So it is needed to define and clarify these terms as follows:

### Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment has been defined in various ways. The Oxford English dictionary defines corporal punishment as “punishment inflicted on the body; originally including death, mutilation, branding, bodily confinement, irons, the pillory, etc (Oxford English Dictionary, 1989)”. According to the UNICEF, “Corporal punishment is the use of physical force causing pain, but not wounds, as a means of discipline (Save the Children, 1999)”. The Committee on the Rights of the Child in the General Comment No. 8 defines “corporal” or “physical” punishment as “any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light”. “Most involve hitting (“smacking,” “slapping,” and “spanking”) children with the hand or with an implement. In the view of the Committee, corporal punishment is invariably degrading ( U.N. Doc. CRC/C/GC/8, 2006)”. In keeping with this definition this study defines the corporal punishment as “any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree

Municipal, civic, metropolitan and the city are considered as urban areas in the Dhaka city. In this study the term urban primary schools is defined as government and non-government schools with primary grades (1-5) situated within these areas. On the basis of research objectives the following framework was designed to conduct the study (see figure 1.1).



## **CHAPTER 2: Literature Review**

This chapter reviews and discusses the pragmatic literature relating to corporal punishment. Throughout this chapter it focuses on the practice of corporal punishment in school level, the consequences of corporal punishment, influential beliefs and culture of corporal punishment. This chapter provides the different research findings and information studied by many researchers and professionals all over the world.

### **2.1 Corporal Punishment**

The eminent psychologist Straus, (2001) defined corporal punishment as, “the use of physical force with the intention of causing a child to experience pain but not injury for the purposes of correction or control of the child’s behavior”. According to Hyman, punishment is reflected practices in school situations. He also has stated that, when a student does an offensive task then gets pain or confinement as a penalty that is corporal punishment (Hyman, 1990). International human rights treaties, especially the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, set the standards and provide legal obligations for states to protect children from all forms of violence, including all forms of corporal punishment. Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child requires states signatories to “protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence while in the care of their parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child” (Campaigns Manual, 2010). In 2009, the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) confirmed the obligation of member states, “to prohibit all corporal punishment and other cruel or degrading forms of punishment or treatment of

children in all settings within the schools and the family” (Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, 2011).

## **2.2 Types of Corporal Punishment**

Corporal punishment for young children can mainly be distinguished in two forms: one is parental or domestic corporal punishment- when children are punished by the parents or guardians within the families; and the other is school corporal punishment- when students are punished by the teachers or school administrators within the schools premise. Another form of corporal punishment can happen within the work place that can be called work corporal punishment, and is more commonly against adults. Globally, different types of corporal punishment are practiced. Different studies have mentioned diverse forms of corporal punishment. The most common forms of punishments are hitting with hands or a stick, pulling hair and ears, and asking the children to stand. Threatening is also used as a punishment. The writer Mercurio includes a variety of techniques of corporal punishment such as hitting, slapping, spanking, punching, kicking, pinching, shaking, shoving, choking, use of various objects (wooden paddles, belts, sticks, pins or others), painful body postures (as placing in closed spaces), use of electric shock, use of excessive exercise drills or prevention of urine or stool elimination (Mercurio, 1972).

## **2.3 Impact of Corporal Punishment**

The impact of corporal punishment was hotly debated in 1970s to 1980s (Newell, 1972). Still it continues to be used. The effects that result from the use of corporal punishment are harmful to children and the damage can be felt well into adulthood (Bitensky, 1998). A report from UNICEF states that, corporal punishment inflicts psychological damage upon the child and to physical pain. This psychological damage

includes increased feelings of humiliation, anxiety, anger and vindictiveness in children. The report also divulged that corporal punishment reduces a child's sense of self worth and to increases his/her vulnerability and depression which indicates that corporal punishment early in life affects cognitive development. (UNICEF, 2001). In accordance with Straus, corporal punishment affects not only the families, but also the larger society. He further said that, the association between academic achievement and success later in adult life experienced during adolescence is inversely related to graduation from college and is associated with lower economic and occupational achievement in adulthood (Straus, 2003). A recent meta-analytic study has shown that, the impact of mild and moderate corporal punishment such as spanks and slaps not only caused physical injury but is also associated with multiple negative outcomes including increased aggression, delinquency, mental health issues, parent and child relationship problems, and the likelihood of being physically abused (Gershoff, 2002). Another study has revealed that punishment introduces emotion, such as anxiety and fear in the child, which is counter-productive to good learning (Kopansky, 2002). As said by Hyman, the experience of corporal punishment in schools can be a significantly traumatic experience for children and the symptoms experienced as a result are comparable to symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). He also mentioned that, children who experienced psychological abuse because of corporal punishment or other forms of abuse may suffer from sleep disturbances, and somatic symptoms such as stomach-aches, headaches, fatigue, and bowel disturbances (Hyman, 1990).

In terms of suicide rates, the World Health Organization ranks South Korea as number two on the list of countries and it is number one on the list of Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries. Though the causes for

South Korea's high suicide rate may not be clear, but it seems to that, a major contributing factor can be the continual widespread use of corporal punishment in Korea (Mamatey, A. 2010).

The Committee on Psychosocial Aspects of Child and Family Health of the American Academy of Pediatrics identified that the use of corporal punishment as controversial. According to the committee, 90% of American families reported having used spanking as a means of discipline (Academy of Pediatrics, 1998). Another study (Wong, P. (2011) showed that, the academic debate is largely divided into those who argue that corporal punishment in some circumstances is effective and sometimes necessary to discipline children and those who state that there is very little benefit and rather a substantial risk of harm from using corporal punishment on children.

Through the above discussion it appears that corporal punishment and child maltreatment not only affect children's childhood but also it carry with it long-term negative consequences. Furthermore, the practice of corporal punishment also goes against child development theories.

#### **2.4 Culture and Attitude to Corporal Punishment**

Some studies have found that parental perception on corporal punishment influenced by their culture, heritage, beliefs as well as family practice. For example, one study showed that cultural values, childrearing standards, attitudes that devalue children, conservative ideology, religion, and ethnicity play an important role in defining what is child abuse and what it is not (Deater-Deckard et al. 2003).

The Office of Civil Rights reported on how corporal punishment was perceived by teachers. Most of the teachers responded by arguing that without punishment discipline could not be maintained. They also stated that a form of corporal punishment was needed to keep order in their classrooms (Office of Civil Rights,

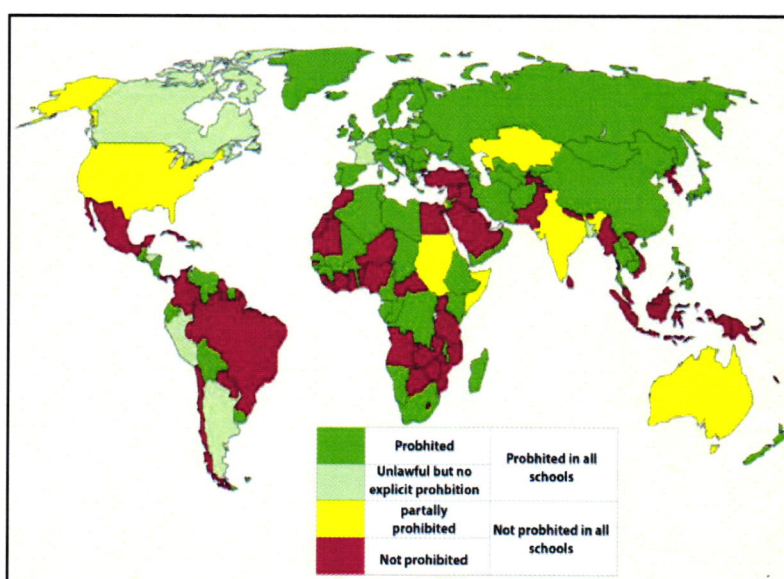
2006). A Kenyan study has shown that, although teachers were aware of existing laws prohibiting the use of corporal punishment in schools, they still used corporal punishment. This is because of their belief that it was the most effective way to discipline children and parents had also authorized its use (Mweru, M. 2010).

## **2.5 Global Context and Corporal Punishment**

Corporal Punishment occurs in both developed and developing countries and occurs among privileged as well underprivileged sectors of those countries (Straus, 2008). Children are subject to corporal punishment in almost all societies and across all cultures. There has been extensive research to find out the prevalence and nature of corporal punishment. For example, in Botswana, from a baseline study it was found that, 92% of students had been beaten at school. Another study on child abuse in India showed that 72% of 5-12 year olds and 62% of 15-18 year olds had experienced corporal punishment (India, country report, 2011). In America the other study had shown that 2006-2007, over 223,000 children were subjected to corporal punishment (paddling) in schools, with almost 40% of these in Texas and Mississippi (Campaigns Manual, 2010).

To address the corporal punishment, the Global Initiative was launched in Geneva in 2001 under the context of United Nations Convention on Child Rights and supported by UNICEF, UNESCO, Human Rights institutions, and many international and national NGOs. It aims to encourage more action and progress towards ending all corporal punishment in all continents, to promote active participation from governments and other organizations and to support national campaigns with relevant information and assistance (Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, 2011). To further this commitment, the SAARC Members States came together and set up South Asia Initiative to End Violence Against Children

(SAIEVAC). SAIEVAC's main objective is to identify the necessary actions and measures to prohibit all corporal punishment in all settings and to reinforce positive parenting practices and positive classroom management programs in all member states (SAIEVAC, 2011). Several countries have been taken steps to prohibit or to limit corporal punishment in response to global initiative and research suggestions. Sweden is the first country to prohibit all kinds of corporal punishment in 1979. As on June 2011, corporal punishment is unlawful in schools in 117 states. All countries have made significant advances towards ensuring non-violent education for children (Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, 2011). The figure 2.1 shows the progress towards prohibition of corporal punishment in Schools worldwide.



Many South Asian countries have been taken initiatives to address corporal punishment at various levels. Some countries have passed or are developing new laws to ban corporal punishment in some settings, in particular schools. But no country in South Asia has legislation that bans corporal punishment in all settings. As a result millions of children are still affected by the corporal punishment, which have harmful impacts on their development and wellbeing. An analysis of on child population figures shows that 54.7% of the global child population lives in countries where they

are not legally protected from corporal punishment in schools and 44.7% of these live in South Asia (SAIEVAC, 2011).

## **2.6 Bangladesh Context and Corporal Punishment**

In Bangladesh, corporal punishment and teaching are integrated parts of the educational institutions including primary schools, high schools as well as Madrasas since a long time ago. The use of corporal punishment in school has been rooted during the British colonial practices. At that time corporal punishment includes the widespread caning to maintain student discipline when teachers perceived that their students are breaking school rules and norms or even performing badly in academics. The third anniversary of banning corporal punishment in all educational institutions in Bangladesh falls on the 13th of January 2014. The Supreme Court judgment issued petition on 13 January 2011 (Writ Petition No. 5684 of 2010) and stated, “Corporal punishment in schools violate the constitutional prohibition of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment or treatment.” The Ministry of Education subsequently published a circular (Circular No. 37.031.004.02.00.134.2010) stating that corporal punishment is prohibited in schools, that it constitutes misconduct and that measures will be taken against perpetrators under the Penal Code, the Children Act and through departmental action. Ministerial Guidelines on the issue came into effect in April 2011. Prohibition is yet to be confirmed through law reform (Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, 2012). Additionally, most of the educational institutions have got the circular that was issued by the Ministry of Education.

The basic principles regarding child protection has been drawn by the Constitution of Bangladesh itself as it (Article 27, 28 and 31) recognizes the fundamental right to equality before the law and equal protection of all citizens by the law (Writ Petition



No.5684 OF 2010). Bangladesh being a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), 1966 and the Convention on the Prohibition of Torture and Other Forms of Cruel, Degrading and Unusual Treatment or Punishment, which specifically identified corporal punishment as degrading, physically harmful and constituting a denial to children of their protection from cruel and unusual punishment and equal protection under the law (Ain o Salish Kendra, 2012). The Committee on the Rights of the Child (26 June 2009, CRC/C/BGD/CO/4, Concluding observations on third/fourth report, paras. 48 and 49) remains concerned about the ineffective implementation of existing laws to prevent corporal punishment and the existence of certain regulations in schools that permit forms of corporal punishment. Furthermore, the Committee is concerned that although the Constitution prohibits cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, children continue to be victims of corporal punishment and other forms of cruel and degrading treatment because of its acceptance in law and in society (Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, 2012).

The National Children Policy prohibits all forms of punishments meted out to children at educational institutions. It states that, “All forms of physical and mental punishment in educational institutions shall be prohibited and a child friendly system of imparting lessons be introduced so that the children and the adolescents do not have any physical and mental injury” (Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, 2011). The National Education Policy states that for students’ welfare and counseling provision should be made “to determine and implement effective systems directed toward the development of academic environment in the primary and secondary schools and also to create an improved environment for higher education”(Ministry of Education, 2010). The Comprehensive Early Childhood Care and Development

Policy Framework states that, “to create a child friendly environment in every sector for children and to ensure safe family & social environment” (Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, 2009).

In sum it can be concluded that corporal punishment is a social phenomenon all over the world. Being a part of the world, Bangladesh has practiced it in last decades. In spite of the above mentioned international and national obligations, the literature reveals that the corporal punishment has been considered globally and nationally as one of the most effective disciplining methods.

## CHAPTER 3: Methodology

### 3.1 Study Design

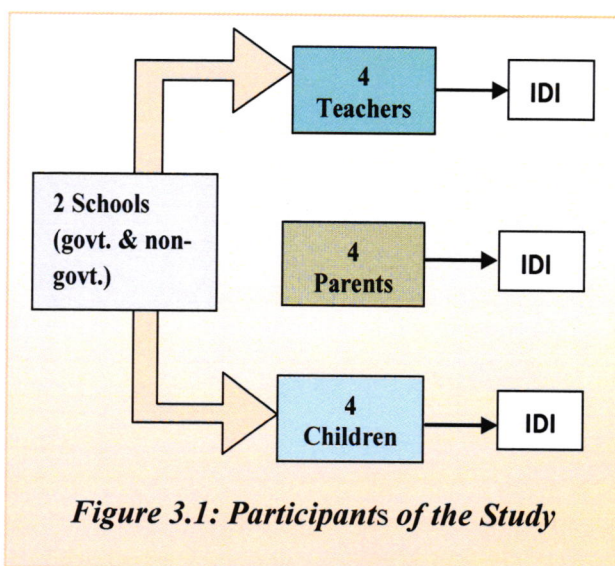
This study adopted qualitative approach to explore the perception of teachers, parents and children towards corporal punishment in urban primary schools. As such, the data collection method employed in this study was in-depth interviews. These in-depth interviews were conducted with four children aged 6-8 years, their parents and four teachers from the two schools these children attended.

### 3.2 Study Site

The study was conducted at Mohammadpur area in Dhaka city. It was situated in the North-West corner of Dhaka City Corporation (North). Total population of this area was near about 355,843 (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2011).

### 3.3 Study Participants Selection Procedure

The main participants of the present study were children aged 6-8 years studying in grades one and two in two selected Government and a non-Government primary schools. This sample consists of both girls and boys in equal numbers (2 girls and 2 boys). They were selected through the classroom observations. The other participants were the parents of these children and their teachers. The teacher sample consisted of only females, since the work experience matters in a study of this nature the teachers



with a minimum 5 years teaching experience were selected for the study. The parent sample consisted of both two males and two females. In this study all participants were selected through the convenient sampling technique (see figure 3.1).

### **3.4 Measures**

The measures employed in this study were the In-depth Interview (IDI) questionnaires and guideline. The In-depth Interview (IDI) questionnaire was developed according to the research objectives and questions. In addition, it was developed based on questionnaire used in other studies on corporal punishment (Wasef and Bremer, 1999; Wong, 2011). The developed questionnaire and guidelines were presented to five experts to check its validity. The instruments were further refined according to the suggestions made by the experts and resubmitted for their judgments. After that, the questionnaire and guidelines were pre-tested with 2 mothers and 2 children to test its reliability. The experts expressed that the questions were clear and open-ended. They stated that the questionnaire did not contain any sensitive and misleading questions. Further, they noted that the questions were sequential as well and unstructured. The length of the time allocated to each interview questionnaire was 40 to 50 minutes.

### **3.5 Data Collection Procedure**

Prior to commencement of data collection, an appropriate relationship was established by the researcher with two schools' authorities in order to obtain permission and conducted the study. The researcher submitted letters to the schools' authorities to obtain their permission to observe the relevant classrooms and interview teachers. For child participation, consent was taken from the school authority as well as their parents. As, the study topic was insightful and sensitive as well as children may feel hesitant to state their experiences of corporal punishment during the interview

sessions, the researcher made additional arrangements to ensure that the children were interviewed in a time and place where they felt comfortable. Before the interview, the researcher communicated with all research participants (teachers and parents) to gain consent and to arrange comfortable schedule for the interviews. The researcher conducted all the interviews herself and kept both an audio recording and note taking with the permission of the participants.

### **3.6 Data Management and Analysis**

Data were managed and analyzed from the starting point of the data collection procedure. In this study, all data were collected through IDIs. There were different types of approaches for data analysis. Content Analysis was one of the strategies for analyzing data. Researcher analyzed data according to the content analysis approach as presented below:

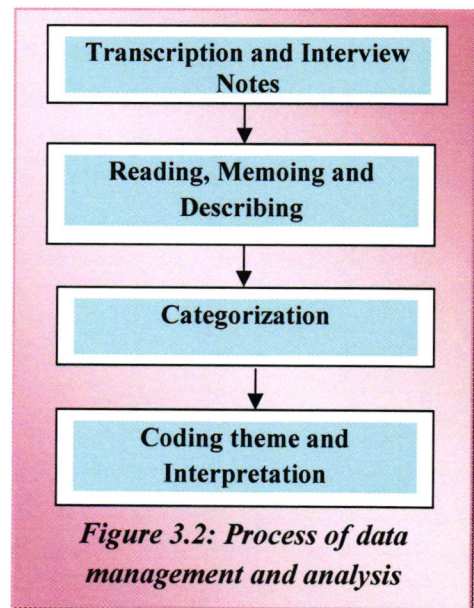
***Transcription and Interview Notes:*** After data collection from the participants, researcher started to scrutinize data manually, check data sheets and find out if there were any gaps. One interview was transcribed. In details notes were taken for rest of 11 interviews. Additionally, research participants were checked for accuracy of the interview.

***Reading, Memoing and Describing:*** In this step, a thematic framework was identified by the reading and memoing. The process has been started during the IDIs as well as describing data were gone whenever needed. The researcher wrote memos in the form of short phrases, ideas or concepts that helped to develop categorizations.

***Categorization:*** The researcher examined all data several times and discovered the direct relation between data and research questions. Then, data were categorized according to the relation of research questions. After categorization of all data, researcher kept the important categories of data that showed the situation and made

the data set in a manageable format. Then researcher made it controllable through selecting very powerful and precise data from each category.

**Coding theme and Interpretation:** In this step, researcher started coding data from In-depth Interview. After coding, the data themes consistent with the research questions were created. After constructing the themes from every coded data that were selected, the themes were interpreted and composed to draw a conclusion. Emphasis was given on reading



every steps of data analysis to construct the ideas to answer the research questions. Figure 3.2 represents the process of data management and analysis (see figure 3.2).

### 3.7 Ethical Consideration

Research proposal was submitted to the Institute of Educational Development (IED) of BRAC University for ethical approval. After getting approval, researcher started work. Researcher maintained full confidentiality and anonymity to data collection process. Where necessary, pseudo names were used for quotation. Before data collection, consent was collected from all participants. Researcher provided information about the study objectives to the participants. All participants were assured that, they had the right to refuse answering any question and withdraw their participation at any time from the study. Furthermore, the data were not be used anywhere else except for this study

### **3.8 Limitations of the Study**

During the study, the researcher faced some challenges. These challenges are named as limitations. Among these challenges, some were overcome and some limitations provide the basis for further research in this area of corporal punishment.

**Sample size:** This study was conducted with a small number of subjects i.e. children, parents and teachers. It would have been better if the number of subjects in the sample were higher to represent the population adequately. However, in spite of the small sample size the study had revealed important data on corporal punishment practiced in schools and the perceptions of children parents and teachers.

**Sample Representation:** The study was limited only in two schools and the sample size is small. The findings of the study could not be generalized to all the schools, teachers, children and parents due to this reason.

**Sensitive Research Topic:** As the study topic was insightful so it was very difficult to ensure the utmost confidentiality and anonymity among the participants especially teachers. The formal written consent was not a convenient option for this sensitive issue. For some teachers, the privacy and anonymity had been ensured without formal written consent and keeping it verbal and informal consent to encourage them to answer the questions. But they might not be much more open. In addition, it had been decided that through the class observation, four children would be selected as a sample from two schools but one school did not give permission to observe school by the researcher.

**Data collection Period:** In this study, data collection period was the month of November to December. During this time, most of the schools were busy with the final examination. As a result, schools did not permit the expected date of class

observations as well as interviews. Furthermore, Data collection plan was rescheduled due to the political unrest situations.



## **CHAPTER 4: Result**

The purpose of the study was to explore the perceptions of teachers, parents and children towards corporal punishment (CP) in school settings. In-depth Interviews (IDIs) were conducted to collect information from teachers, parents and children. The total study participants were twelve, which included four teachers and four parents with their four children of 6-8 years old. The main results have been presented under the four broad themes that emerged from the data analysis. In addition, under the main theme there are several subthemes which have been presented in different sections, such as: teachers' perceptions, parents' perceptions and children's perceptions. In addition, some general findings are also presented in this section.

### **4.1 Demographic Information of Participants**

In this study, demographic profile was examined based on age, educational qualification, teaching experiences and their socio-economic condition.

Four teachers participated in four In-depth Interviews (IDIs). They were selected from one Govt. primary school and one non-Govt. primary school. There were no male teachers in both schools so all the participants were female teachers. Their age range was between 30 to 55 years. All teachers had 5 to 15 years of teaching experiences. All the teachers obtained masters degree from different public universities and they came from middle class society.

In this study, four children were selected, aged 6-8 years. They were in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades in those two schools. Among them two were girls and two were boys.

Four parents of selected children were selected for IDIs. Among them 3 parents were mothers and one was father. The age range of parents was 25 to 45 years. Educational qualifications of mothers were from below SSC to M.A. and the father had a master's

degree. The participants came from the same economic status. The demographic details of the participants are presented in the following table.

Table 4.1: Demographic details of the participants

Sequential No	Participant category	Number	Age range	Gender		Education	Teaching experience of category 01
				Male	Female		
01	Teachers	04	30-55 years	0	04	Master's Degree	5-15 years
02	Parents	04	25-45 years	01	03	S.S.C to master's Degree	---
03	Children	04	06-08 years	02	02	Grade 01 & 02	---

## 4.2 Theme1: Participant's Perception towards Corporal Punishment

### Teachers' Perceptions

#### *Corporal Punishment as a form of Discipline*

Teachers were asked to provide their views on the use of corporal punishment in schools. Almost half of the participants admitted using corporal punishment. They emphasized that it is necessary to maintain discipline in schools. They also shared that it is difficult to manage discipline without corporal punishment.

One of the teachers believed that corporal punishment could be used lightly to maintain discipline, so that children would not get much hurt, physically or mentally. Teachers shared the view that traditionally corporal punishment was used in order to make children obey rules. When children are afraid of teachers they will perform better in academic work. But, it should be used sparingly. One teacher mentioned, *"It is difficult to manage classes without punishments. Prohibiting corporal punishment in schools is not a right decision. It is necessary for teaching"*.

The other teachers showed their disagreement on the necessity of corporal punishment to control children in the classroom. They thought physical punishment would not be needed to maintain discipline at schools. Among them one teacher stated,

*“Through punishment it is not possible to ensure that children will not repeat the mistake. When children are punished, they will not do the wrong thing for a while. But after a certain time he/she can do the same thing again. Therefore, teachers should convince them rather than use corporal punishment”.*

Another teacher believed that physical punishment created fear psychosis among children. As a result they lose their attention in the class, so it is a bad system. She also mentioned,

*“From my side, to maintain discipline I speak with a loud voice so that they get afraid of me and I ask them to be silent when they make a noise”.* Apparently, the teacher did not know that discipline means not maintaining silence in classroom.

### ***Prohibition of Corporal Punishment in Schools***

During the interview, it became clear that all the teachers were aware that corporal punishment is banned in schools. However, a majority (03 out of 04) did not know that the ruling had come from the Supreme Court of Bangladesh. They appeared not ready to accept the ban on the use of corporal punishment. One teacher said,

*“Children are not afraid of us. As a result, it is very hard to control the classroom. I think it would be better if the policy makers or lawmakers do extensive research on grassroots level and unprivileged with overcrowded class, then they could make decision on banning corporal punishment”.*

She also pointed out that it is not possible to manage the class without punishments. A single teacher cannot manage the overcrowded or large classrooms. Further a teacher has to take 6/7 classes per day.

This was a clear piece of evidence that shows teachers' have misinterpreted 'respect' as 'fear'. Teachers need not expect fear response of students. Instead they should expect respect from students through use of child centered teaching methods. On the other hand, teachers are also helpless when student teacher ratios are high. It seems that only method they know are forcing power on children.

Other two teachers who agreed on prohibiting corporal punishment in schools were of the view that children would be de-motivated by the punishment. They would be disappointed on studies and lose their interest in coming to school. They believed that children could not be developed through punishments. One teacher who conveyed a controversial opinion stated,

*“Children have some rights; education is one of them, in that sense, I agree on this point. But academic performance could be affected by the decision of prohibiting corporal punishment. Children are scared to see the teacher with cane; it helps the teachers to control them immediately. Presently, it is not possible. I think by observing this class now you are realizing what`s the real picture”.*

Her statement showed although she knows that corporal punishment should be prohibited. In reality she needs it since it is the easiest way of controlling the classroom.

### **Parents' Perceptions**

#### ***Corporal Punishment as a form of Discipline***

Half of the parents commented that corporal punishment is essential for school because children continuously repeat negative behaviors. However, one parent noted that it would be used but not to an extreme level. When teacher does not use corporal punishment children do not fear the teachers, and then it will be difficult to take

classes properly. So it is necessary for better academic performance and keeping children disciplined. It instills good morals.

The rest of the parents reported that there is no need for corporal punishment. One of them specified,

*“Sometimes it can be used but it should be the ultimate measure and not yet hardly. Firstly, teacher should warn or counsel them, after that it can be used lightly with the consideration of necessity and situation”.*

Another parent noted that corporal punishment had been banned globally and it is against child rights. In Bangladesh, it is also banned, so it should not be used in schools.

### ***Prohibition of Corporal Punishment in Schools***

In Bangladesh corporal punishment is banned by the verdict of Supreme Court. At this point, it was found that almost half of the parents did not get this message. In this regard, parents expressed their mixed opinions. For example, one mother said,

*“It seems to me that the judgment is not right. When children make noise, teacher should control the class. Otherwise, they will not study. As a mother, I beat my child but I also have affection for him. In the same way, even if the teacher punishes children once, he/she shows love to them seven times”.*

The other parent agreed partially on the issue of banning corporal punishment. According to her, it is necessary to discipline children. She thought that teachers care more about the children’s learning than parents do.

Only one parent completely agreed with this decision. He pointed,

*“Actually, if children get affection and love from the teacher, and if they explain the rules then they will obey the teacher and follow commands. They will also realize*

*what they have done is wrong because teachers are very important to children and are the role models for them”.*

### **Children’s Perceptions**

Almost all the children feel negative about the impact of corporal punishment. They believed that teachers use it because students do not pay attention to listening to teachers’ advice. Therefore, teachers are angry with them and punish them. All the children mentioned that it is not a good method, because it is painful as well as embarrassing, it does not give good feelings at all. They also shared that teachers could talk to us instead and explain things or activities and teach interestingly. One child said,

*“I feel ashamed when my teacher asks me to hold my ears”.*

Children also shared that teachers can talk to us, explain the things or an activity and teach interestingly instead of using punishment.

## **4.3 Theme 2: Factors that Contribute towards the Practice of Corporal Punishment**

### **Teachers’ Perceptions**

#### ***When do teacher use corporal punishment?***

Most of the teachers shared that generally teachers need to use corporal punishment when they fail to manage the class. Children are punished when they interrupt the class by talking or doing any illegal things as well as they do not bring assigned tasks or homework. In fact, children are mainly punished for talking too much in class.

One of the teachers said,

*“Actually, it is impractical to control the class through politeness. Children keep quiet for some time when the teachers speak loudly, but it is not permanent”.*

Another teacher of them noticed that educational institutions used physical punishment in the past, but now teachers more use verbal punishment like shout loudly to maintain the class discipline.

Responses received under this theme reveal that corporal punishment is used mostly when it is difficult for teachers to manage the class. It also shows corporal punishment is mainly linked to classroom situation and punishments are meted out in the classroom.

### ***Why do teacher use corporal punishment?***

Almost all the teachers stated that teachers apply corporal punishment to children for not doing their work properly, talking too much in the classroom, not doing their homework, disobeying the teacher, violating teacher's orders, telling lies, repeating the same mistakes after being warned several times.

Teachers also mentioned some other issues like overcrowded class, poor salary, low level of job satisfaction, heavy workload including other administrative work. One of the teachers shared that it is a traditional method to maintain discipline. These answers highlight teachers' job satisfaction, their attitudes towards this noble profession and their knowledge of child psychology.

### **Parents' Perceptions**

#### ***Why was the child punished?***

Half of the parents specified that their children were punished by the teacher for not paying attention, making noise in the classroom and not doing their homework according to the instructions of teachers. The other half of the parents said that they don't know about their children's punishment because the children have not informed about being punished.

### ***Why do teachers use physical punishment?***

Most of the parents mentioned that teachers used punishment to manage the class.

One parent said,

*“In most of the cases, teachers are bound to hit children. If children don't abide by the teachers' instructions, then they will be punished”.*

Another mother stated that when teachers lose their patience, they punish the children.

The other parent added,

*“When teachers cannot manage the classroom, she/he applies physical punishment. Moreover, if the teacher becomes upset and disturbed by family issues, then it affects his/her behavior in the classroom”.*

These responses show that parents too perceive that teachers' mental status as well as lack of management skills contributes towards the use of corporal punishment in schools.

### **Children's Perceptions**

#### ***When are children punished by the teacher?***

Most of the children reported that almost every day they are reprimanded and lightly physically punished by their teachers. The teacher gets annoyed with them every day.

One child said,

*“When we make a noise, talk loudly, fight with each other, cannot tell what was learnt when the teacher asks, then they punish us. Even if we want to go to the toilet more than once, teacher rebukes us”.*

Another child stated that she has never got punished, but her classmates were punished. She added,

*“When they do bad work, chat with other children during class time the teacher gets annoyed and rebukes them”.*



#### **4.4 Theme 3: Effects of Corporal Punishment**

##### **Teachers' Perceptions**

###### ***Children's reactions after punishments***

On the issue of children's reactions after getting punished, there were mixed opinions.

For example, one teacher said,

*"I don't see that much of reaction among the little children. Actually, we don't give them any kind of hard punishment".*

But another teacher shared her experiences differently. She pointed out,

*"Children, who get a lot of punishment become mentally upset, feel ashamed of themselves and sad also may not come to school the next day".*

According to the other participants after getting punished or rebuked children become calm for a while and after sometime they start their disruptive behavior again. Not coming to school after receiving a punishment never happened. One teacher informed that, she did not see any reactions from among the children of grades one and two.

She also mentioned,

*"The older children feel shy and angry towards the teacher who gives punishment and dislikes the subjects that he/she teaches".*

###### ***Effects of corporal punishment***

All the teachers were aware of the negative impact of corporal punishment. One teacher said,

*If we mete out severe physical punishment to children, they may not come to school on the following day; interest towards studying will decrease. As a result dropout rates will increase".*

Another teacher shared her opinion in this way,

*“If children receive a lot of punishment, they will lose their fear for punishments.*

*Children do not respect teachers who give a lot of punishment. As a result they will perform badly in that subject, who makes them become unsuccessful in future”.*

Almost all the teachers agreed that corporal punishment is definitely harmful for children. Punishment boosts up fear in children, which leads to a distaste towards learning and teachers.

### **Parents’ Perceptions**

All of the parents mentioned that too much punishment is bad. They too were of the view that if the teachers punish children all the time, they will not come to school the next day; they lose their self-confidence, courage and mental strength, which are not good for the children. Moreover, children will not behave well with the teacher and they may develop distaste for studies. One parent shared,

*“Any kind of punishment is harmful for children, because they are very young.*

*Sometimes little children are traumatized by the fear of punishment”.*

One parent expressed her opinion in a diverse way. She said,

*“Massive punishment is destructive for all children. But it is true that if teachers punish children, they will develop to be good and lead a well-established life in the future”.*

### **Children’s Perceptions**

A majority of the children reported that they react negatively to punishment. They admitted that they feel bad and become very sad after punishment.

They reported that it is not a good method and it is painful to them. One girl shared, *When I get punished, boys smile and I feel embarrassed and ashamed of myself.*

Another child said, *“I feel a little bit sad. My teacher doesn’t scold me much, but I feel ashamed when my teacher asks me to grip my ears”.*

In response to their reflections of the effects of punishment, one child mentioned, *“I cannot say because my teacher doesn't rebuke or punish me”*.

#### **4.5 Theme 4: Alternative Method to Corporal Punishment**

##### **Teachers' Perceptions**

As mentioned earlier it is hard for one teacher to manage a large class. Sometimes teachers are also engaged in administrative works and other activities like child survey, election etc. Besides they are under paid. Under these circumstances teachers lose their patience and are unable to manage the class. Therefore, they often use corporal punishment to manage the class.

Almost all the teachers suggested some basic points, such as small class size that helps teachers to give attention to individual needs of children and manage the class smoothly. They also mentioned that reduced workload and job satisfaction would help them to carry out their duties without using any kind of corporal punishment. One teacher said,

*“It would be better, if two teachers are allocated for one large class, so that they can ensure the participation of all children”*.

Another teacher specified that presently teachers have no satisfaction with their salary. For that reason, teacher cannot teach cordially. If teacher's demands are unfulfilled, how could they sincerely teach their students? In the same way, if a child feels hungry then he/she will not pay attention to learning. So school should provide tiffin for those who come to school without breakfast. She also believed that overcrowded classroom is not appropriate for good teaching, so teacher can teach according to their requirements only.

The other teacher also noticed that teachers should use guidance and counseling method. To correct inappropriate behavior teacher can talk to the children, make them

understand that what they have done is wrong and inculcate good morals as well as model good behavior. Teachers can also talk to parents. She said,

*“Teacher can inform or talk with child`s parents about his/her disruptive behavior. Also teacher should maintain a diary where child`s mistakes or wrong actions could be recorded, so that parents can be notified about their child`s mistakes. Besides teaching, teacher should organize extra-curricular activities, such as quiz competition, storytelling, reciting etc”.*

### **Parents’ Perceptions**

All of the parents emphasized that teachers should teach children patiently, carefully and compassionately rather than with punishment. One mother shared,

*“We know, children listen to the teacher`s advice. Teacher should understand that not all the children have the same capacity, so they have to give more time for each child to cope up with the situation. If teacher makes them understand clearly, children will not create much trouble in the classroom. It`s true, the teacher have to provide joyful learning to children”.*

The other parents mentioned that teachers can talk with parents about their children`s wrong activities. Among them one of the parents narrated,

*“A teacher should teach children through, counseling and motivating them to correct their mistakes. Actually, teacher should have knowledge on the child education management. Classroom size should be wider and number of pupils should be decreased. So that, teacher can manages the class easily. School should ensure a child friendly atmosphere, where children will not rote learning only, they will learn with hands on experiences”.*

### **Children's Perception**

Regarding children's views on the alternative ways of corporal punishment, all children believed that if teacher makes them understand the lesson nicely, talk with warmth and patience, listen to them, teach in interesting ways, repeat lessons for more than once, then they will study properly and behave properly. One child said, *"Actually, it is hard for our miss to take the class alone, because we talk continuously with each other and shout. It would be better if two teachers are allocated for one class, one teacher will control the boys and other will control the girls"*.

The other child expressed her opinion in this way,

*"It seems to me, if teacher makes the children explain, what she/he has done wrong, then they will realize and will not do the same mistake again"*.

### **Findings related to classroom observations and informal discussions with the teachers**

The researcher observed the classrooms of the school prior to select the children's sample and had some informal discussions with teachers on corporal punishment. There were some interesting findings which helped to get the idea on the nature of corporal punishment that was practiced in schools. These findings are summarized as follow:

- Most of the children did not inform their parents when they were punished in schools. As a result, most of the parents were not aware that their children were being punished. That may be one reason why the parents have not complained to school authorities about corporal punishment.
- From the teachers' interviews, it was revealed that training is very important to increase their teaching capabilities and updating their knowledge of different teaching methodologies and recent educational developments as well. It was clearly expressed

that adequate training on effective classroom management strategies will help teachers to maintain discipline in difficult classroom situations.

- The study also revealed that sometimes teachers use children's textbooks or note books (khata) to hit children lightly. This showed that teachers act on impulses rather than reflecting on child's wrong doing and applying a suitable method to correct him or her.

- From the classroom observations it was found that most of the children were found talking to each other loudly, they did not respond to teacher's instructions. They wanted to go to the washroom frequently. Once the teacher became very angry and said that next time children would not get permission to go to the washroom. The researcher also observed that at times, teachers warned children by saying that if they did not keep quiet, they would be beaten, but children did not take this threat seriously.

- From the observations, it was revealed that though children were not always punished physically, they were punished mostly orally. A teacher shared that she usually beats them, pulling their ears or hair and make them stand on the bench. The teacher also said that if girls talked to each other in the classroom when she was teaching she would make them sit among boys. Boys also got the same treatment for the same offence. From this incident, it can be confirmed that mental punishment is another form of corporal punishment that is constantly practiced by the teachers.

## **CHAPTER 5: Discussion and Conclusion**

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of teachers, parents and children towards corporal punishment. Firstly, this chapter discusses the issues that emerged during the study and provides an analysis of the research evidence with reference to the literature review in chapter two. Secondly, this chapter presents conclusions and some insights for future studies. Lastly, some recommendations are suggested.

### **5.1 Discussion**

#### **Theme 1: Teachers', Parents' and Children's Perceptions towards Corporal Punishment**

From the findings, it was revealed there were mixed views in relation to practicing corporal punishment in schools. Half of the teacher sample agreed that corporal punishment is necessary to maintain discipline in the classroom. It is the way to modify inappropriate behavior of children, make them behave well through the fear of punishment and be attentive to their studies. This finding is supported by the other findings (Office of Civil Rights, 2006). It was evident that teachers believed through corporal punishment children would have model good behavior and they consider that it was the easiest way to inculcate morals in them. They preferred corporal punishment to manage overcrowded or large classrooms, but they suggested using corporal punishment more lightly, not very harshly, so that children do not get hurt. In contrast, the other halves of the teachers do not agree that corporal punishment is necessary to maintain discipline. They also added that it creates a fearful feeling among children, so it is a bad practice and if the practice continues, children may be drop out from the school. The finding is consistent with other study (Mamaty, 2010).

From the study, it has been highlighted that most of the parents believed that corporal punishment is necessary to manage children in the classroom and it is the right of teachers. It makes the children fear the authority and is necessary to make them attentive to the class and prevent them from doing wrong things. Though they support corporal punishment in school, but they suggest using light punishment. They also thought that corporal punishment is necessary for children`s better academic achievement and to be successful in their future life. This finding is also supported by the other study (Sonia-Hassan et. al. 2009). The study has showed that most of the parents agreed physical punishment is a good disciplinary method and sometimes necessary to bring up children. Only one parent believed that corporal punishment should not be used in school, because it is against the child rights.

With relation to the necessity of corporal punishment, most children feel uncomfortable when they are punished. The perception of children towards corporal punishment was that it is not a good method and it will not help them feel good about themselves, because punishment is shameful and painful for everyone particularly for girls. One girl noted that she experienced a feeling of humiliation when she saw boys enjoying the situation (a girl being punished publicly).

In this study, it was also found that all the teachers were informed about the government decision to stop using corporal punishment in schools, but none of them was prepared to agree with it. Half of the teachers believed that corporal punishment should not be the only method to maintain the classroom discipline. Other factors are responsible for mismanagement of class. Conversely, rest of the teachers suggested corporal punishment is an important tool for classroom management especially for overcrowded classes. The findings are supported by the other study (Kilimci, S. 2009). Corporal punishment works instantly and helps children to achieve academic



success. The other researcher also supports this suggestion. From the study, it has been showed that the teachers argued that corporal punishment had been used to correct bad behavior and it had always been an effective child-rearing practice to maintain discipline. Therefore there was no need to ban it (Mweru, M.2010).

The results presented in the previous chapter revealed that that half of the parents have reported that they did not know about the Supreme Court on prohibiting corporal punishment in schools. However, it was also revealed that most of the parents did not support this rule. They regarded this as a violation of teacher's right. Further, without corporal punishment children will not be attentive to studies. One parent agreed partially on the issue of prohibiting corporal punishment. According to her, it is needed for controlling disruptive behaviors of children, but it should be limited. Only one parent completely agreed with the Supreme Court order to stop using corporal punishment in schools. He thought that children need love and affection as well as teachers should explain clearly the faults of children.

Through the above discussions it has been clear that participants (teachers and parents) are conscious about the existing rule of prohibition of corporal punishment, but they had a skewed perception in their mind that it is required to control the class. Another perception of participants is that corporal punishment is essential for better accomplishment in future. Due to this perception, the practice of corporal punishment is still prevalent in schools, because it is a matter of belief and practice. Participants support this belief that corporal punishment has negative impact on children but the reality has shown that it is being applied to address disciplinary problems in classes. On the basis of the findings and discussions the following framework is designed to understand participants' perception towards corporal punishment (see figure 5.1).

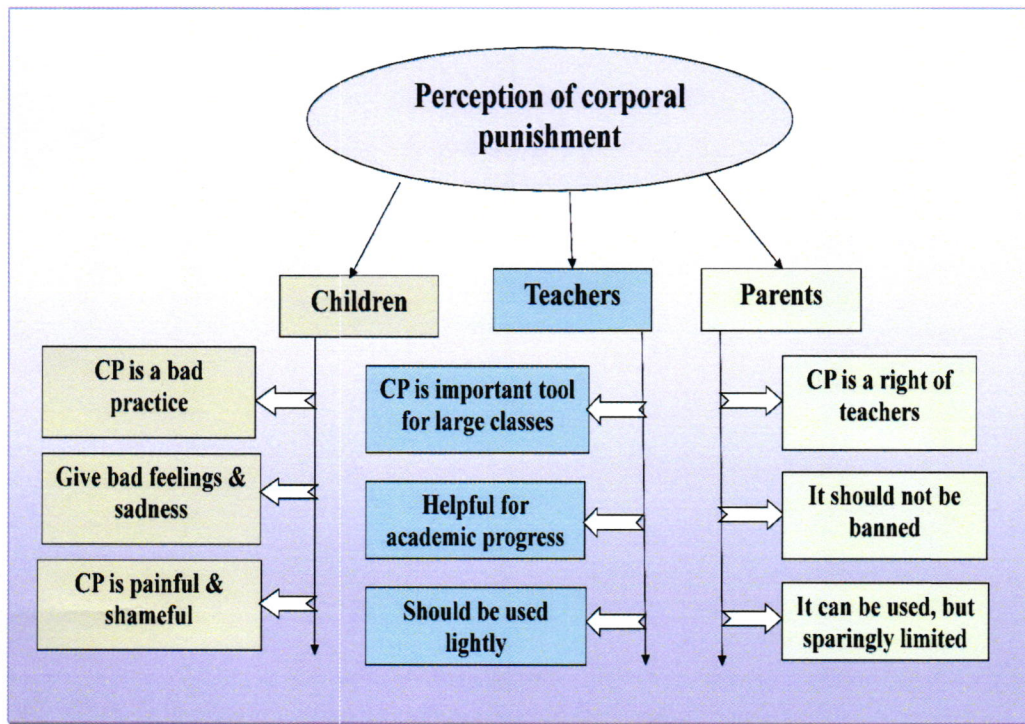


Figure 5.1: Perception of the participants towards corporal punishment

## Theme 2: Factors that Contribute towards the Practice of Corporal Punishment

The results of the study highlighted another concern that is, when and why teachers use corporal punishment. Although most of the teachers stated that they did not use physical punishment, they use verbal assault to make children fear the authority. Nevertheless, at this point during the conversation they expressed that when teachers fail to control the class, they apply corporal punishment. Besides this, children are subjected to corporal punishment when they talk with each other in the classroom, make noises, do not bring their homework, disobey the teacher, violate teacher's orders, tell lies and repeat mistakes in spite of being notified several times. Regarding this point, a conventional thinking has come out from the teacher that without any corporal punishment (it may be lightly) it is impossible to create ideal learning environment. It is revealed that corporal punishment is a more traditional method for maintaining discipline in school in many countries that was supported by other study (Kimani, Kara & Ogetange, 2012). In this study, it was also found that half of the

parents were not informed about the punishment to their children because children did not share with their parents. The rest of parents shared that normally the teacher punishes children for their faults e.g. making noise in the class, breaking the rules etc. In addition, the findings revealed that overcrowded classrooms motivate teachers indirectly to use corporal punishment, since controlling a large number of children in a class makes a teacher lose his/her patience. As a result, the teacher uses corporal punishment as an immediate action. Additionally, some factors as poor pay, low level of job satisfaction, other administrative workloads, traditional thinking of corporal punishment pursued teacher to use corporal punishment. During the interview, almost all of the children informed that they have experienced verbal and physical punishment daily. Most of the time teachers scold and are angry with them for talking and fighting with each other and making noises in the class.

The study revealed some underlying factors that contribute to the use of corporal punishment. In this case, it is to be an important step towards the development of interventions and strategies promoting the use of positive disciplinary methods in schools.

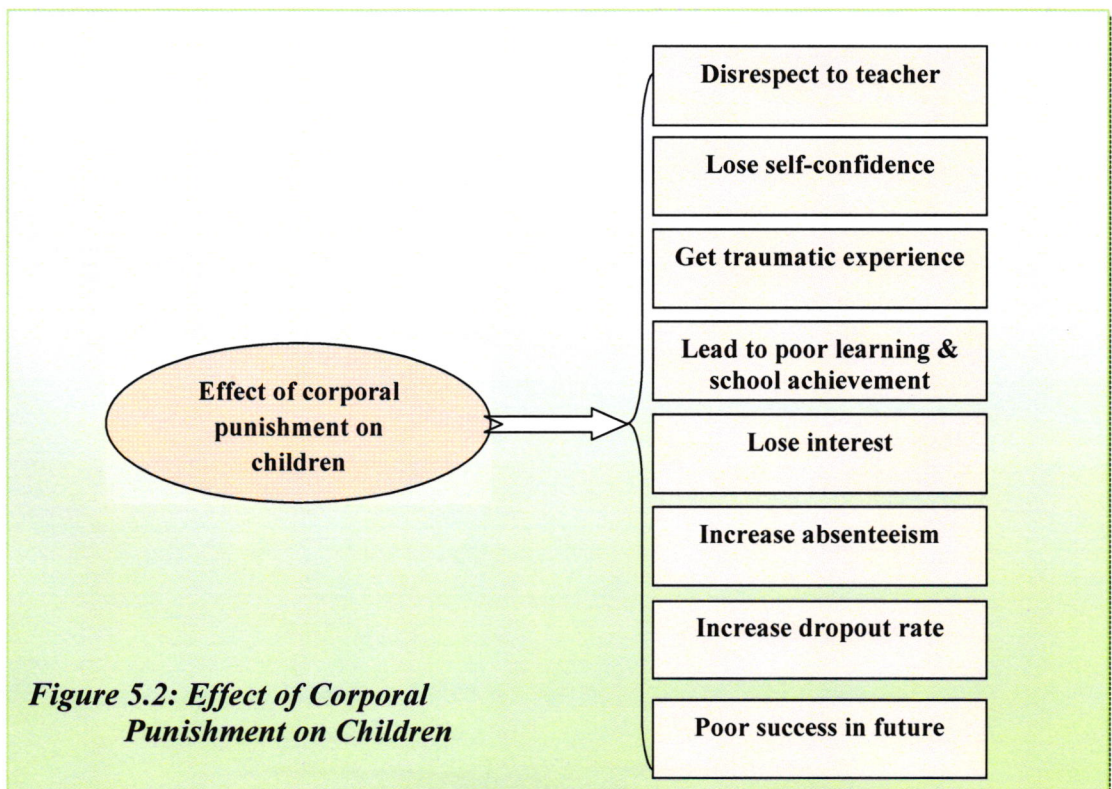
### **Theme 3: Effects of Corporal Punishment**

In this study, it was found that all the teachers accepted that corporal punishment has a negative impact. By using of corporal punishment, children have lost respect to teachers. Furthermore, they dislike the subject taught by the teacher who gives a lot of punishment. In addition, children may lose their interest in studies and may get absent from school which in turn affects the gross enrollment rate of school. However, an interesting point is that there is a contradiction between the teacher's statement and the classroom practice. Through the class observations, it was revealed that most of the time teachers kept children in fear of beating if they talked; continuously the

teacher was shouting and using threatening languages. The researcher witnessed a teacher beating a child using his notebook during the observations.

From the parents interviews it has been identified that some parents were concerned about the excessive punishments, which are harmful for young children. They believed that through punishments children might lose their self-confidence and mental strength, but a majority of parents believed that corporal punishment is needed; sometimes it is helpful for children's future success.

In this study, children admitted that corporal punishment cannot be a healthy practice in the classroom. When children are subjected to corporal punishment, they feel bad about themselves and become sad. Especially, girls feel embarrassed in front of the boys because later boys bully them on that. By the class observation, it was found that children are frequently subjected to mental punishment and common experience of humiliation and shame. According to the Hyman (1990) and Kimani, et, al. (2012), the use of corporal punishment in schools can be a traumatic experience for children.



**Figure 5.2: Effect of Corporal Punishment on Children**

As a result, in primary education dropout rate may be increased day by day. A UNICEF report (UNICEF Asia Report, 2001) showed that corporal punishment can affect children's concentration, motivation, anxiety that leads to poor learning. On the basis of findings the following diagram represents the effects of corporal punishment on children (see figure 5.2).

The findings document the negative effects of corporal punishment on children and also indicate that there is increasing need for teachers and parents to be aware of effective alternative discipline methods and embrace them.

#### **Theme 4: Alternative Disciplining Methods to Corporal Punishment**

Based on research objectives, the study found that teachers want to use alternative methods to corporal punishment, but they believe that these are less useful compared to corporal punishment. You gain immediate results from the corporal punishment and it is the easiest way to maintain discipline in the class. However, teachers suggested that guidance, counseling, showing positive approach and reinforcements can be alternative methods of corporal punishment. But in this regard almost all of the teachers emphasized the issue of overcrowded classroom. They noticed that class size should be small as well as teachers administrative work should be decreased. This finding is also supported by the other studies. Mweru, M. (2010) found that the relationship between overcrowded classrooms and the use of corporal punishment is also important and indicates that the Kenyan government needs to increase the staffing of teachers in schools and to re-examine teacher-student ratios in primary schools.

From the findings it was also evident that teachers were dissatisfied about their salary and their position that lead to practice corporal punishment, so the government should notice at this point especially for government teachers. Moreover, the authority can

provide snacks for government school children, because starving is one of the reasons for less attention.

In the present study, the parents suggested guidance and counseling as alternative methods. Some parents reported that teacher should teach the children patiently, and make them understand clearly rather than using punishment. They should provide joyful learning and school should create a child friendly environment where children will have scope to learn with hands on experiences.

Children suggested alternative methods such as teacher can talk to them, make them understand nicely, value them as individual, listen to them and teach them in interesting ways. Moreover, an important point has come out from the children that two teachers could be allocated for one classroom where a large number of children are in the classroom. It will help teachers to maintain discipline and address individual need.

The findings strongly indicate the need of alternative methods for managing discipline in the school. The ultimate goal of discipline is to inspire learners to make smart choice and develop positive behavior (Canter, 2007). Discipline management is a collaborative effort on the part of learners, teachers, administrators, parents (Mtsweni, 2008). Positive discipline creates an encouraging climate to promote positive behavior and self-discipline that helps children to maintain self-control that is associated with their performance and learning.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

This study sought an in-depth understanding of teachers, parents and children's understanding of practicing corporal punishment at schools and its' consequences. The study also looked at alternative ways of discipline. The study accomplished that in spite of banning corporal punishment in school, teachers use corporal punishment

in school to manage discipline in the classroom. The study also concluded that corporal punishment has short and long term effects on children. Children who are subjected to corporal punishment are less motivated toward learning and hesitate to participate in activities that lead to poor performance and school drop-out. They also develop low self-esteem and low self-control. The study also suggested alternative methods to manage discipline in the classroom. The study suggests that teachers should be trained on discipline and classroom management without corporal punishment and how to create supportive learning environment at schools. Finally, it can be concluded that corporal punishment should be stopped because it violets the children`s rights.

### **5.3 Implications of Findings**

The study revealed some possible alternative options to maintain the class and make it more effective. For example- i) small class size ii) co-teacher for large classes iii) talking to children iv) making children understand v) counseling vi) teacher- parent sharing sessions etc. Some of these methods are not alternatives to corporal punishment but can be used as preventive measures. Teachers must be educated and trained on alternative methods. They should be trained on how to speak kindly to children, how to tackle problems of children etc.

The study also revealed how children feel about themselves after being subjected to a punishment. Girls have mentioned their feelings when punished in front of boys. Teachers have to understand the humiliation children suffer in the hands of teachers; it affects their self-esteem. Since most of these children are in the primary school and in the early childhood, there is likelihood that these punishments will affect their future behaviors as adults. This has been proved in many studies (Gershoff, 2002; Bitensky, 1998 & Wong, P. 2011).

Another revelation in this study was that parents are not aware of the fact that corporal punishment is prohibited in schools. Awareness raising in parents is essential since this is a violation of the rights of children.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

In accordance with the perceptions of participants towards corporal punishment the following recommendations can be made-

- Future studies can be carried out to know the current practice of corporal punishment after banning in both urban and rural context.
- Further in-depth research is required on how teachers can use alternative methods other than corporal punishment.
- A qualitative study can be conducted to find effects of corporal punishment on the learning.
- Government should take initiative to make explicit the rule of prohibiting corporal punishment in legislation passed by the parliament.
- Teachers Training Institutes should more emphasize the “Classroom behavioral management” that course would be helpful for new teachers who would need to control the children properly when they start teaching. Teachers should also be taught the effect of corporal punishment on the child and the reasons which lead to it being outlawed in schools.
- The Ministry of Education should provide training to the Head teachers and other teachers on alternative strategies to control discipline problems without using corporal punishment. There is also need for routine monitoring and feedback for teachers to ensure that ban on corporal punishment in schools is enforced.
- Guidance and counseling at school level should be introduced for children that would be helpful to convince them and overcome their misbehavior and make



them motivated. School can arrange workshop or parenting sessions for parents on how they can support the teachers for reforming the child behavior.

- Mass media and print media should take the initiative in social mobilization and conducting awareness raising campaigns to prevent corporal punishment in schools and make the general public aware of the consequences of corporal punishment.

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## ANNEX

### Annex A: Teachers' Questionnaire

#### A. Personal information

- a. Teacher's name: .....
- b. School's Name: .....
- c. Age: .....
- d. Gender:  Male  Female
- e. Education:  SSC  HSC  BA  MA  others
- f. Teaching experience:  0-1 year  2-3 years  4-3 years  More than 5
- g. How many classes do you teach in per day? .....
- h. What is the average number of students in class? .....

#### B. Teachers' responses on corporal punishment

1. Do you think corporal punishment is necessary to maintain discipline in the school? If yes/no, please explain your answer.  
.....
2. In your opinion what types of children's behaviors generally prompt teachers to use corporal punishment?  
.....
3. Do teachers in your school use corporal punishment? If yes what are the types of punishments teachers in your school generally use?  
.....
4. Do you know the effects of corporal punishment? Please explain your answer.  
.....
5. In general, how do most children behave after being subjected to corporal punishment?  
.....
6. Do parents complain to the school authorities on corporal punishment received by their children? If yes, how do school authorities deal with such complaints?  
.....
7. Do you know that corporal punishment is prohibited in Bangladesh schools?  
.....
8. Do you agree with this rule? If Yes/No, why do you think so?  
.....
9. Do you feel need for in-service training on alternative methods of classroom discipline? If Yes/No, why do you think so?  
.....
10. What method would you suggest to alternate corporal punishment in schools?  
.....

## Annex B: Parents' Questionnaire

### A. Personal Information

- a) Parent's name: .....
- b) Age: .....
- c) Gender:  Male  Female
- d) Education:  SSC  HSC  BA  MA  others
- e) Occupation: .....
- f) Name of the child: .....
- g) Child's school name: .....
- h) Child's Class:  Grade 1  Grade 1

### B. Parents responses on corporal punishment

1. In your opinion, is physical punishment necessary to keep children indisciplined?  
.....
2. Have any of your children been physically punished at school? If yes, what are the types of physical punishments your child received?  
.....
3. Please tell me why your child was punished?  
.....
4. In your opinion, why teachers use physical punishment?  
.....
5. Does your child tell you that he/she has been physically punished? If no, Please tell me why .....
6. Have you ever complained to school authorities about the physical punishments received by your child? If no, please explain why .....
7. If yes, how did the school authority deal with your complaint?  
.....
8. Do you know the effects of physical punishment? Please describe it.  
.....
9. Do you know that corporal punishment was prohibited in Bangladesh schools?  
.....
10. Do you agree with this rule? If Yes/No, why do you think so?  
.....
11. In your opinion, what is the best way to keep children in discipline?  
.....

## Annex C: Children's Questionnaire

### A. Personal Information

- a) Children's name: .....
- b) Gender:  Male  Female
- c) Age: .....
- d) Class:  Grade I  Grade II
- e) School's name: .....

### B. Children perception on physical punishment

1. Do your teachers use corporal punishment in school?  
.....
2. If yes, what types of punishments teachers use in schools?  
.....
3. What do teachers commonly used when punishing you?  
.....
4. When have you punished by the teacher?  
.....
5. Describe your feelings, when you are physically punished by the teacher.  
.....
6. Do you tell your parents that, you have been punished by teachers in the school?  
.....
7. If yes, what do your parents do when you informed them that you have been punished?  
.....
8. If no, why did you not tell your parents?  
.....
9. Why do you think children in your class are being punished?  
.....
10. Do you know that corporal punishment is prohibited in Bangladesh schools?  
.....
11. In your opinion, what are the alternative ways of corporal punishment in schools?  
.....



## Annex D: Teachers' Consent Form

I am Nahid Parvin, doing my masters in Early Childhood Development (ECD) from the Institute of Educational Development, BRAC University. As a part of the course I have to conduct a research on **corporal punishment in urban primary school settings**. The aim of the study is to explore the perceptions of teachers, parents and children towards corporal punishment in school settings. The following questionnaire asks for your opinion on a number of issues relating to corporal punishment and your perception on this topic.

You are cordially invited to participate in this research work. Your participation is completely voluntary and you may change your mind and withdraw at any time. If you agree, I will come to your home or other place at your suitable time to take your interview. It will take 40 to 50 minutes for the questions-answers session. I hope that you will agree to participate in this session.

You can rely that all information will be preserved with confidentiality and your name must not be written on any kind of materials. Please answer the questions freely. Your opinion is greatly valued. Thank you for your time and co-operation.

Do you agree to participate in this research? Yes/No

(If yes)

Name of Teacher.....

Signature of the Teacher.....

Name of Researcher.....

Signature of the Researcher.....

Date.....

## Annex E: Parents' Consent Form

I am Nahid Parvin, doing my masters in Early Childhood Development (ECD) from the Institute of Educational Development, BRAC University. As a part of the course I have to conduct a research on **corporal punishment in urban primary school settings**. The aim of the study is to explore the perceptions of teachers, parents and children towards corporal punishment in school settings. The following questionnaire asks for your opinion on a number of issues relating to corporal punishment and your perception on this topic.

You are cordially invited to participate in this research work. Your participation is completely voluntary and you may change your mind and withdraw at any time. If you agree, I will come to your home or other place at your suitable time to take your interview. It will take 40 to 50 minutes for the questions-answers session. I hope that you will agree to participate in this session.

You can rely that all information will be preserved with confidentiality and your name must not be written on any kind of materials. Please answer the questions freely. Your opinion is greatly valued. Thank you for your time and co-operation.

Do you agree to participate in this research? Yes/No

(If yes)

Name of Parent.....

Signature of the Parent.....

Signature of the Researcher.....

Name of Researcher.....

Date.....

## Annex F: Children's Consent Form

I am Nahid Parvin, doing my masters in Early Childhood Development (ECD) from the Institute of Educational Development, BRAC University. As a part of the course I have to conduct a research on **corporal punishment in urban primary school settings**. The aim of the study is to explore the perceptions of teachers, parents and children towards corporal punishment in school settings. Please answer the following questions to the best of your knowledge. You do not have to reveal your name and we will keep your profile confidential. Please take your time. You are cordially invited to participate in this research work.

Do you agree to participate in this research? Yes/No

(If yes)

Name of Children.....

Signature of the Children.....

Name of Researcher.....

Signature of the Researcher.....

Date.....

## Annex G: Timeline of the study

The study was conducted from May 2013 to July 2014. The timeline of study is as follows—

<i>Name of Task</i>	Year 2013								Year 2014						
	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
<i>Research Proposal Development</i>															
<i>Research proposal finalize</i>															
<i>Research Presentation Development</i>															
<i>Advanced Seminar</i>															
<i>Preparation &amp; Data collection</i>															
<i>Data Analysis &amp; Report Writing</i>															
<i>Draft Thesis Development</i>															
<i>Thesis Finalize</i>															
<i>Final Thesis Presentation</i>															
<i>Final Dissertation submit</i>															

## **Annex H: Acronyms**

BLAST - Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust

CRC - Convention on the Rights of the Child

ICCPR - International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

IED - Institute of Educational Development

NGO - Non-governmental organization

OECD - Economic Co-operation and Development

OIC - Organization of the Islamic Conference

PTSD - Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

SAARC - South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation

SAIEVAC - South Asia Initiative to End Violence against Children

UN - United Nations

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization

UNICEF - United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund