

PRACTICES OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN GOVERNMENT PRIMARY SCHOOLS

By

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The thesis submitted is my own original work while completing my degree at BRAC University.
2. The thesis does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The thesis does not contain material that has been accepted or submitted for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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Approval

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Ethics Statement

Throughout this study, all the required ethical guidelines has been strictly maintained by underlying comprehensive procedure consistently. And also to remain unbiased. Electronic mail have been sent to all the participants with a consent letter to obtain their permission to participate in the conversation beforehand conducting all the interviews and FGDs. All of the participants sent back the consent letter by signing on it. In terms of rural parents, the consent letter was forwarded to a recognized teacher's email address, who thereafter transmitted the signed document with required parental approval due to the fact that the rural parents lack of the email address. Each conversation was initiated by establishing self - identity, a brief explanation of the research topic and a statement that clarified the purpose of the conversation. Furthermore, participants' approval have been obtained for the audio recording throughout the conversation. Assurance have been given that confidentiality would be uphold that participants' identity remain unrevealed when incorporating their quotation in the study. . All the interview and FGDs were arranged according to the participants' preferred scheduling availability. Most importantly, no effort have been made to modify their perspective s and maintained a respectful approaches during the discussions.

Abstract

This study addressed the significance of parental involvement in children's education as an essential factor in achieving children's academic success. However, the existing practices of parental involvement concern challenges to the stakeholders in government primary schools. This study endeavored methods of optimal parental involvement strategies perceived by parents and teachers. Furthermore, this study also explored ways of effective parental involvement practices according to the opinion of parents and teachers. This study undertook a qualitative research framework and semi-structured interviewing procedures to obtain data from 6 primary school teachers. Besides this, 12 parents were chosen for the focus group discussion from both rural and urban primary schools. This study addressed a high requirement of having stronger communication between parents and teachers, which was acknowledged by them, this investigation also uncovered numerous challenges associated with parental engagement process, which are: miscommunication between parents and teachers, parents' ignorance, illiteracy, poor economic condition. From the teachers' side; overloaded classroom, workload, and ineffectiveness of PTA activities. In the final analysis, this study revealed certain factors that has been proposed as recommendations by the participants for facilitating productive parental involvement initiatives. These are: Parents' close connection with children, strong communication with teachers, facilitating parents' workshops, and strengthening PTA activities by the school authority. The findings determined that respectful collaboration between parents and teachers is crucial for promoting children's academic performance and comprehensive growth.

Keywords: Parental involvement, Parent-teacher communication, Parents' awareness, close-connection, Academic development, primary school children.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my respected uncle, Mr. Mizanur Rahman, and my beloved husband, Shafawat Khan, whose tremendous Inspiration and support encouraged me to complete this Thesis.

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I would like to express my gratitude to my previous supervisor, Md. Mokarram Hossain and my current supervisor, Hridita Islam, for their indispensable guidance and immense support throughout the process of this thesis.

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Glossary

Parental Involvement: Parental involvement defines parents' close attention and engagement in their children's education. This study explored the practices, problems, and prospects of different parental involvement in Government primary schools.

Strong Communication: Parents and teachers' strong communication can strengthen the partnership between parents and teachers and also minimize the problem of the parental involvement process.

PTA : Parent Teacher Associations (PTA) are made up of both parents and teachers, where they work for how school will plan and implement effective family engagement activities or strategies to improve students' academic development and school performance.

Academic Achievement: Academic achievement refers to a student's illustrated progress in education, including critical thinking, performances in extracurricular activities, measured through assessments showing the accomplishment of educational objectives.

Chapter 1

Introduction and Background

1.1 Introduction

Parents' participation in children's education is crucial to ensure students' academic success and effective learning. Parental involvement refers to parents' active participation in children's ongoing learning process, such as attending school programs like parent-teacher monthly meetings, volunteering in different school events related to students' academic learning, and participating in extracurricular activities that support children's education (Bower & Griffin, 2011). Parents' participation in education encourages children to do well in school and attend regularly, which has a positive impact on children's general development and reinstates parents' belief in their children's education (Garcia & Thornton, 2014). According to Maina (2010), as parents engage in children's learning activities, they are considered the first teachers of the children.

Primary education is the first formal education system in Bangladesh. Most importantly, primary education forms the basic foundation of a student's life. To make this Foundation stronger, parents' participation in children's education is a fundamental factor that needs to be prioritized. Parental participation has a significant impact on children's learning. To improve the standard of primary education, several interventions have been taken by the government of

Bangladesh. Parental participation in children's education is one of such approach to enhancing children's learning development at home and in school (Jabeen & Karkara, 2005). In Bangladesh, almost every child of elementary school age is enrolled in school; according to UNESCO, Bangladesh's net enrollment rate is roughly 98.2% in primary education (UNESCO, 2020). However, several drawbacks still exist regarding the quality of education in Bangladesh, which cause major challenges. Recognizing these challenges, the government of Bangladesh introduced parental involvement in education as an effective initiative.

Although Bangladesh has achieved higher success in this term in recent years. There are still several disadvantages to parents' involvement in education, particularly in government primary schools, and these are the communication gap between parents and teachers, the lack of monitoring systems, and the lack of practices of parental participation programs.

This study investigated parental participation in rural and urban primary schools by underlining the barriers, opportunities, and current practices associated with parents' involvement in primary school education. Additionally, there was an effort to determine what initiatives need to be taken to make parental involvement more effective. A qualitative approach was used to gather data through FGD and interviews with several stakeholders. I interviewed 6 primary school teachers who are associated with primary school education and well known about the concept of parental involvement. I have arranged two focus Group Discussions among 12 rural and urban primary school parents. There were two primary schools as the research site, one was a primary school in Dhaka other was a rural primary school.

The sections of the following chapter were arranged as follows: research topic, problem statement, research questions, study purpose, and study significance.

1.2 Research Topic

The topic of my study is “**Parental Involvement in children's Education in govt. primary schools.**” Globally, parental involvement in education has been acknowledge as a crucial

component in improving student achievement in elementary school (Jeynes, 2012). Children expend most of their time with their parents, and it is more likely they are influenced by them. Parental involvement has been noticed to be connected to increased attendance, decreased behavioral issues, and greater academic accomplishment (Epstein, 2018). Moreover, several studies suggest that parents' active involvement in children's education can enhance children's performance and motivation towards learning (Kabir & Akter, 2014). Therefore, it is a required and demanding concept in the primary education field to practice and promote for children's effective academic outcomes. For this, The Title of this study is "Practices of Parents' Involvement in Children's Education in Government Primary Schools in Rural and Urban Areas of Bangladesh".

1.3 Statement of the Problem

According to UNESCO, all the children of primary school are enrolled in school in Bangladesh, which reports that Bangladesh's net enrollment rate in primary education is approximately 98.2% (UNESCO, 2020). However, several drawbacks still exist regarding the quality of education in Bangladesh, which cause major challenges. Recognizing these challenges, the Government of Bangladesh introduced parental involvement in education as an effective initiative. Although Bangladesh has achieved greater success in parents' participation in recent years, there are still several drawbacks to parental involvement in education. Particularly, current practices of parental participation are inadequate in primary schools. Although the student enrollment in primary school is expanding daily at a quicker rate, there hasn't been much progress made in guaranteeing student engagement and democratizing the educational process. A number of institutional initiatives, Such as parent-teacher associations (PTAs) and parents' meetings, have failed to engage parents in their children's education (Islam & Helal, 2018). Parental participation opportunities aren't fully investigated in order to improve student performance.

Parents are children's first teachers. Those children who gain higher grades on tests, appear at school regularly, complete homework, and show more positive behavior, whose parents are actively engaged in their children's learning (Jabeen & Karkara, 2005). Comparatively, the children of indifferent parents are left behind and attend school irregularly, hardly scoring better grades on test exams. Consequently, a large number of children struggle with reading and writing and dislike school. Eventually, they quit school. A report from Education Watch (2004) revealed that 37.5% of children dropped out of school, mostly because they found it unpleasant. The role of parents is crucial to the daily lives and academic achievement of children, even in class, where it is minimal in terms of their learning. According to Ferguson (2008), collaborations between parents and teachers involved in promoting children's education and holistic growth are essential.

Since I had an experience of working in a government primary school as an associate teacher, I got the actual scenario of practices of parental involvement in primary school, which was not at all satisfactory. Very few parents are actually concerned about their children's education. Most working parents can hardly pay attention to their children's education except by checking results and attending parents' meetings once a month. The most challenging part in my context was to reach out to them on an urgent issue and was make flexible regular communication with parents. Teachers hardly got immediate responses from the parents. Therefore, only parent-teacher meetings in a month and other inactive activities could not meet the goal of parental participation in children's education. It is difficult to say that the situation is much better now. . But if this situation continues it will cause a serious problem in children's learning at the primary level. According to Haque's (2017) study, In Bangladesh, PTAs had minimal influence on parents' engagement in children's education. The study further discovered that PTAs lacked sufficient resources to carry out initiatives that would have increased parents' involvement in education. The study's results indicated that PTA should be reconstructed to increase parental engagement in education.

From my personal experience, I have seen that parents are not engaged in children's education in my context. Most of parents do not feel the importance of their involvement in their children's learning. Besides, existing parental involvement practices are not that effective and cannot increase parental participation. Those are the reasons I intended to study this topic in the context of Bangladeshi culture.

1.4 Research Questions

This study tried to uncover the ongoing practices of parental participation in children's education in Rural and Urban areas in Bangladesh and what the existing problems were with parental participation. The research questions are given below—

- 1) What are the practices of parental participation in children's education in Government primary schools?
- 2) What are the problems government primary schools are facing in involving parents in children's education?

1.5 Purpose of the Study

Primary school forms the basic knowledge of children in their lives. In that stage, children need support from parents as well as school teachers. In this regard, parent-teacher communication and parental involvement in children's education are significant aspects of their academic success and development in primary schools. With Parents' engagement in the children's learning process, they do better academically and express better social expertise and behavior (Ntkein, 2018). The intent of this study is to explore current practices, challenges, and prospects of parental engagement in government primary schools. The study aimed to determine the current methods of imparting between parents and teachers on children's learning in order to recommend better interventions that could increase students' learning outcomes and parental involvement too.

The purpose of this study was also to identify issues that function as obstacles to parents' effective participation in their children's education and parent-teacher communication. Finally, this study strived to know the process of how to minimize the interlude between teachers' and parents' communication for effective parental involvement in primary schools.

1.6 Significance of the Study

Parents are the first teachers of children's early years. Children learn basic knowledge, personal traits, discipline, and human behavior from their parents. The more parents are concerned about children's education, the better children perform at home and school at an early age (Cotton & Wikeland, 2001). Since children spend most of their time with parents, they are the ones who have the most influence over their children.

Considering the above-mentioned fact, this study will help parents be more concerned about paying attention to their children's homework and maintaining regular communication with school teachers to be aware of their children's academic progress and personal development. However, parents' cooperation will also help teachers and school administrators receive greater assistance by informing parents about their children's progress and bringing them to school regularly. This study will attempt to identify gaps in practices in order to help schools and their students properly implement the parents' participation pathways of learning in elementary school. These findings may prove highly beneficial for SMC members, educators, and parents in collaborating toward the betterment of their children's education in primary schools. Apart from these, my one-year teaching experience in a government primary school made me feel the necessity of parental participation in children's education, and additionally, how parents who are actively involved in their children's learning and who continue effective communication with teachers can help students bring out their best abilities.

Thus, this study's inclusions could help rethink parental participation practices on the part of both parents and instructors. By implementing the suggested methodology that might stem

from the findings of this research, educational institutions might be capable of involving more parents in their children's education as well as in the school management and running process.

Chapter 2

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

2.1 Literature Review

Globally, parental involvement in children's learning has been recognized as one of the important components of increasing student outcomes in primary school (Jeynes, 2012).

Parental involvement in education can take place in several ways, including participating in teacher conferences, involving school-based decision-making programs, and regular communication with teachers (Epstein, 2018).

To learn more about the topics of parental involvement in children's education, I came across several peer-reviewed papers, journals, articles, and other related documents. The points I will discuss in the literature review are given below:

2.2 Practices of Parental Involvement in Bangladesh

In developing nations like Bangladesh, where education is viewed as a means of achieving success and upward social mobility, parental participation is especially important. Despite the value of parental involvement, some Bangladeshi parents encounter obstacles when trying to be involved in their kids' education. Poverty, illiteracy, cultural perspectives on education and distance from schools are some of these obstacles (Rahman, 2021). To address these issues, the government of Bangladesh established parent-teacher associations (PTAs) in primary schools as a way to encourage parental involvement in the educational process (Kabir & Hossain, 2015). According to Kabir & Akhter (2014), urban schools set up a variety of activities with parents to encourage them to get involve in their children's education. In school meetings arranged by the teachers, they share different education plans with the parents.

Teachers also have to inform parents about students' academic performance and explain to them how to help students at home prepare for their everyday lessons to improve academically and also develop social skills. Besides this, school teachers communicate with parents to discuss different problems related to their studies. To enhance children's learning and general development, parents can share their children's areas of weakness with teachers, and teachers can ask parents for assistance in their discussions (Kabir & Akter, 2014).

The School Managing Committee (SMC), the Parents Teacher Association (PTA), and other forums are some commonly organized practices of parental participation specifically designed to encourage parental involvement in primary schools in Dhaka. Kabir & Akter (2014) state, regarding rural parental involvement, home visits, uthan boithok, and maa somabesh are well-known practices. Among them “home visit” is important aspect where teacher and parent can share each other limitations, aspects prospects about how to guide children at home in studies and improve their performance at school with informal manner and Some common areas of parental participation are, helping children with their homework, reviewing test scripts, and results, assisting children in solving arithmetic problems at home, etc.

2.3 Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

Parent-teacher associations, or PTAs, are school-based corporations that work to enhance the quality of education by encouraging parent participation in classroom activities (Rahman, 2021). PTAs can give parents a forum to express their ideas, participate in school decision-making, and participate in class activities. PTAs can also help parents and teachers communicate, which can increase parental engagement in education. PTAs and parental involvement in their children's education were found to be positively correlated in China (Lopez et al., 2019). PTAs were established in Bangladesh to encourage parental involvement

in education; nevertheless, there is still debate about how effective PTA are at raising parental involvement and raising student outcomes.

The National Education Policy for 2010 suggests creating a parent Teacher Association (PTA), which is made up of parents and teachers who set up meetings to discuss student performance and work on school development projects (National Educational Policy, 2010). There is no regulatory body to monitor the regular activities of the PTA. Therefore, nobody is directly in charge of its operations and improvements (Islam & Helal 2018). Most parents and educators are unaware of the PTA and its actions. Lack of connections among stakeholders, including instructors and SMC members, parents, and education officers, makes them ignorant of its importance (UNICEF, 2009). While parents are among the most significant stakeholders in school improvement, teachers typically don't focus much on them (Islam & Helal, 2018).

PTA plays a crucial part in the educational advancement of a school. Parents who get involved in PTA have the opportunity to be involved in school improvement planning and students' learning processes. When parents are involved, they are aware of how schools operate and can help children reach their goals. (Morgan, 2006). Parents' involvement in education fosters a culture of answerability and accountability, which benefits children by enhancing their performance and assisting them in reaching their goals (Halses et al., 2004).

2.4 Influence of PTA on student outcomes

Different studies showed that PTAs have an essential impact on students' outcomes, but they also have mixed results. The level of parents' participation in PTAs is one of the components that influences the effect of PTAs on children's learning process. According to a study by Barton and Coley (2010) in the USA, student achievement was higher in schools where PTA activity was active. The study compared student achievement in schools with and without active PTAs using data derived from the National Assessment of Educational Progress

(NAEP). The findings indicated that, in comparison to schools without active PTAs, schools with PTAs had excessive standard scores in reading and arithmetic. The study also discovered that PTAs had a stronger positive effect on student achievement in schools where there was a higher level of parental participation.

Similar findings were made by Noh et al. (2018) in their study in Malaysia, which showed that student involvement in extracurricular activities was higher in schools with active PTAs. The researchers proposed that PTAs are crucial in encouraging students to participate in extracurricular activities since this could improve their overall school experience and lead to favorable results. Nevertheless, not all the studies have the same results. According to Haque's (2017) study, PTAs had little effect on student outcomes in Bangladesh. The study discovered that PTAs lacked the means to carry out initiatives that could improve student outcomes, using data from a survey of 200 schools.

2.5 Factors that affect a successful PTA relationship

According to Keyes (2000), there are a number of significant characteristics that drastically affect teachers' ability to create a productive parent-teacher connection. Parent-teacher partnerships are influenced by a variety of factors, such as cultural and value alignment, societal dynamics, and the individual perspectives of parents and teachers on their roles. Again, Epstein (1995) asserts that educators may provide parents with strategies and ideas to help them become better parents, support their kids' reading at home, and enhance their academic performance. To address this, educators might set up parent workshops, send computerized messages, supply children's education materials, and provide parent education sessions. Parents can learn how to assist their children at home. Teachers can demonstrate to parents how to promote their children's reading using a variety of strategies during home visits, which is another crucial approach to assisting parents.

When parents and teachers become aware of their roles and responsibilities, parental involvement occurs. Parents' guide their children at home, and teachers guide students at school. It occurs when teachers value and respect parental feedback, and when parents reply to calls from teachers, show up to meetings, and talk about matters connected to their children's education (Waterford.org, 2020). Turnbull (1983) distinguished the four fundamental duties of parents. They are parents, educators, decision-makers in education, and advocates. Planning and collaboration between teachers and parents are essential since parents are crucial to their children's growth and learning.

2.6 Problems of Parental Involvement

Numerous problems have been identified while going through multiple sources of information regarding effective parental involvement. Some teachers find it difficult to communicate with parents in an efficient manner, while others enjoy involving and conversing with parents (Laloumi-Vidali, 1997). Parental involvement and its results might have a limited impact if there is limited diversity in PTA action. For instance, parents who are not able to make financial contributions may feel left out and disengaged if the PTA emphasizes fundraising events. As such, it is crucial that the PTA interacts with all parents and attends to a range of requirements, such as community involvement, teacher communication, and academic assistance. Also, most parents and teachers from rural areas are unaware of the importance of parents' involvement. Sometimes, school authorities show indifference when dealing with the parents unless there's a crucial situation arises at school with the children. Parents hardly get invited to school meetings and engage with decision-making regarding their children's education (Kabir & Akter, 2014). They stated again: "Parents from a rural background are unaware of their children's schooling as well as their Participation in children's learning at school. Consequently, school authorities barely get a Response from parents about children's education as well as school-related issues. These situations demotivate schools from taking any action to involve parents in school activities."

Moreover, inadequate funding is another issue facing PTAs in underdeveloped nations like Bangladesh. Sometimes, due to the need for financial support and the required staff, PTAs are unable to carry out initiatives that would improve student results and parental involvement. For instance, PTAs might not have the funds to arrange workshops, parent-teacher conferences, or other gatherings that could improve parental involvement in education and foster parent-teacher communication. Furthermore, the efficacy of PTAs may be hampered by the administrator's lack of support at the school. As a result, there would be less cooperation between PTAs and school administrators, which would reduce their influence on parent involvement and student outcomes (Islam & Helal).

2.7 Advantages of parental involvement in children's learning

Although the advantages of parental participation are widely recognized, there is continuing discussion regarding what types of parental participation have significant effects on student academic achievement. The six categories of parental involvement determined by Epstein (2018) – parenthood, communication, volunteering, home learning, governing, and community cooperation have been constantly utilized to conceptualize parental participation. Nevertheless, current studies advocate that not all kinds of parental engagement have the same effects on student development (Lopez et al., 2019). For instance, it has been identified that parental involvement that emphasizes academic support and making connections with teachers is more successful in uplifting academic achievements (Fan & Chen, 2020).

The strong relationship between parents and teachers can profoundly impact students' learning outcomes. When parents are invited by the school authorities to participate in their children's learning, they feel delighted. Parents' thorough understanding and strong relationship with teachers increase children's academic achievement (Llamas and Tuazon, 2016). Parents' involvement also helps teachers perform better as they are concerned about how empathetic teachers are working for their children. As a result, teachers are automatically respected by parents, which encourages them to deliver lessons effectively in the classroom (Paulette

Delgado, 2019). Parents' participation encourages children to develop a range of social skills and norms, including empathy, integrity, discipline, teamwork, and good peer relationships (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003).

2.8 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework for this study is based on Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) framework, which emphasizes the importance of socialization and growth in children's learning. According to the theory of the zone of proximal development (ZPD), children acquire learning through social interaction that includes their family, school, and daily context. It indicates that there must be an involvement of parents in academic development. Parental influence is one of the prime interactional components that facilitates children's learning and academic achievements. (Vygotsky, 1978).

The concept of this study is aligned with the framework that connects parental participation in children's learning by considering parents as essential guides in a child's ZPD. According to Vygotsky, a child's development is determined by the zone of proximal development (ZPD), a shifting from social to personal, mirroring the higher cognitive functions, common social roots. With the connection of the theory, Parents can scaffold by providing children appropriate supports, guidance, or involving activities that expand their capacity with encouragement.

Throughout my literature review chapter, I have discussed several factors like parents' core connection with children, parent-teacher strong communication, parents' eagerness to get involved, and the advantages of parental involvement in children's learning. These factors can enhance the possibilities that eventually lead to children's capabilities towards their mental and academic development. The discussion of my literature review chapter indicates that it connects the theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) framework by Vygotsky, where parents can work as facilitators with their support, guidance, encouragement, and

involvement in different learning activities for their children's ultimate academic growth and development.

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Research Approach

A qualitative research method was used in this study to investigate the practices of parental involvement among Government primary schools. The goal of qualitative research is to comprehend the richness and complexity of life events and occurrences (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). It highlights assembling rich and vivid data by using methods like interviews and focus group discussions, which allows for a thorough examination of the research topic. The qualitative research method was considered appropriate for this study since practice encompasses a comprehensive phenomenon that requires extensive analysis. The feature of qualitative research's gathering data and fieldwork methods includes researchers' participation and their own experience, which allows them to think critically and understand the situation and phenomenon (Patton, 2002).

The objective of this study was to analyze prevailing strategies of parental participation in children's learning, how teachers and guardians think about it, and the challenges and opportunities associated with parental involvement in their children's education. For that purpose, a qualitative approach was used for gathering data. Descriptive and narrative data addressing the extent of parental engagement in children's education were compiled. Formal discussions have been conducted with primary school teachers, parents, and school committee members to obtain their insights. Qualitative research is concerned with real-world situations that occur in unstructured, natural environments. It highlights a holistic approach and uses descriptive data, emphasizing both processes and outcomes (Gay & Airasian, 2003).

The interview is an integral part of the investigation. In-depth interviews have been described as a characteristic of qualitative research by Rossman & Rallis (2003). Furthermore, two focus group discussions was arranged that helped to learn about the problems and perspectives of the participants.

Therefore, the implementation of a qualitative approach for this study was intended on the alignment with the research objectives and the study's proposed methodological structure.

3.2 Research Site

The government's primary schools are directly related to the study. The study was based on data from the government primary school participants. Therefore, two government primary schools have been selected. The reason behind choosing these two primary school is researcher's personal acquaintance with this two schools management and administration which helped to collect data from these two schools. One in the neighborhood of Dhaka, the name of the school is Sher E Bangla School and College in Modhubag, Mogbazar The school was established on January 1st, 1969. Overall, there were around 260 students in that primary school. The total number of primary teachers was 15. Another was in the rural area of the Brahmanbaria district. The primary school was West Kuttapara Govt. Primary school. The total number of students was nearly 300. The total number of teachers there were 12. The location was selected based on the diversity in terms of both the school management and administrative system, the socio-economic and cultural background of the area, and the participants as well. Most importantly, both of these schools had different practices of parental engagement, and there was an opportunity to have flexible communication with the stakeholders regarding the practices of parental involvement.

The rationale behind choosing two different government primary schools was to bring out diverse data from the participants and find out what steps could be taken to increase parental participation in their children's studies.

3.3 Research Participants

The methodology of this study required the integration of two kinds of participant categorization: teachers and parents. Six research participants have been chosen for interviews, among them there were two head teachers, two assistant teachers, and two SMC members of two Government primary schools from rural and urban area. The first head teacher was from Dhaka, held a master's degree from Dhaka University had twenty years of teaching experience. The second head teacher belongs to a rural primary school and also holds a master's degree from Chittagong University, and has almost 8 years of teaching experience as a head teacher. Both teachers had several training experiences in distinct areas and also have long years of experience in teaching and learning in primary schools, along with the ins and outs of parental involvement. Again, both of the two assistant teachers were female. The assistant teacher from Dhaka has twelve years of teaching experience and has a master's degree from Jahangirnagar University. Another rural assistant teacher has 5 years of teaching experience in the government primary school has an honors degree from National University. Both of them has completed PTI and other relevant training. They were well familiar about the concept of parental participation. Distinctive insights of parental approaches has been collected from these teacher. Last two interview participants were two SMC members from two govt. primary schools. Among them one was male, another were female. The rural SMC member was male, has honors degree from Chittagong University. Another SMC member from Dhaka has a Master's degree from National University. Both of these SMC members have long-term interactions with parents, and teachers and good communication with school affairs. I got varied and rich data regarding parental involvement from these participants for my study.

Furthermore, 12 parents (6 from each Govt. primary school) have been chosen for focus group discussion. Among them, I have selected 8 female and 4 male participants. The ratio of female participants was higher than that of male participants. Since children spend most of their time

with their mother. In most cases, mothers keep up the communication with teachers and attend most of the parents' meetings and school programs for their children's education purposes. Mothers have always been more concerned and more aware of their children's needs. They provided valuable information regarding parental engagement according to their experience. Their insights enabled addressing various obstacles to parental participation and identifying the need for more effective parental involvement procedures through their opinion.

3.4 Sampling Procedure

Sampling is a fundamental procedure for a research design. Considering the nature of the study, a purposeful sampling technique was employed for this study. Purposeful sampling is a sample strategy that is designed to be used to find participants who can provide appropriate, in-depth, and specific information on the study. (Rossman & Rallis, 2003).

The participants in this study were primary school teachers and parents from both rural and Dhaka. Especially teachers and parents who were well acquainted with the concept of parental participation in children's learning at the primary school level. Since, during the timeline of conducting the thesis procedure, I was not physically present there, I had to communicate with all the participants online. For that reason, I needed to ensure whether all the participants had internet availability and a smartphone.

For the interview, my selected population was two SMC members, two head teachers, and two Assistant teachers from two diverse govt. primary schools. Some criteria were followed for selecting participants for the interview, such as for teachers;

- Minimum 3 years teaching experience,
- Their consciousness and eagerness regarding parental engagement in children's education.
- Internet connectivity

For school committee members, the criteria were:

- Their educational qualifications, which was a minimum Honors degree,
- Their keen participation in school activities and persistent correspondence with parents and educators as well.
- Internet access with a smartphone.

This approach ensured that the participants were selected following research goals thus this approach enhanced the depth and significance of the collected data.

And finally, for the FGD (Focus group Discussions) my selected participants were 12 parents from two govt. primary schools. The criteria I followed for the participants:

- Parents' active engagement to their children's learning,
- Regular communication with school teachers and school activities were the criteria for those participants.
- The Availability of an internet connection with a smartphone

My target was to examine participants' beliefs, existing problems, prospects, and practices of parents' involvement in two govt. primary schools from my selected participants through interviews and FGD.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

Two types of data collection methods interview and FGD were used to collect the necessary information about parental involvement. Semi-structured interviews was used for this process. Semi-structured interviews offer an adaptable and open-ended method of gathering data (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). The reason behind choosing semi-structured interviews is that I needed to gain detailed information about participants' opinions and perspectives regarding the topic. This approach allows for an in-depth discussion with every teacher to explore their opinions and experiences. Moreover, a semi-structured interview would be a rich source of data collection. Secondly, I have selected a focus group discussion as another data collection

method. According to Johnson & Christensen 2004 FGD is helpful for exploring ideas and concepts, provides a window into participants' internal thinking, can obtain detailed information, and can assess how participants react to each other. Therefore, through FGD, I identified the existing practices and obstacles to parental involvement in govt. primary schools from the point of view of parents.

Data Collection Method & Total Participants

School Name	Semi-Structured Interview (6 Participants)	Focus Group discussion (12 Participants)
School-1 (Urban) Sher-e-Bangla school & college, Dhaka.	1. Head Teacher 2. Assistant Head Teacher. 3. S.M.C Member	6 purposively selected parents
School-2 (Rural) Kuttapara West govt. primary school, Brahmanbaria.	1. Head Teacher 2. Assistant Head Teacher 3. S.M.C member	6 purposively selected parents

Table # 1, Data collection method and participants.

3.5.1 Interview method

“Qualitative research usually makes use of the interview guide. The researcher creates categories of subjects to explore, but is willing to look into anything that people bring up” (Rossman & Rallis, 2003, p. 181). I interviewed 2 head teachers, 2 assistant teachers, and 2 SMC members from two primary schools to get detailed information regarding their opinions, current practices, and problems with parental participation in children’s education in their school. The thoughts of the participants regarding the issue might not be the same. Therefore, diverse findings might come from the participants through the interview guidelines in a one-to-one discussion. Different perspectives are obtained from the same individual during an interview (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

First, I sent a consent letter to all the interview participants via Gmail. They signed and sent it back to me. Since I was not physically present at the place of interview, I had to conduct all the interviews through Google Meet. Each interview lasted 40-60 minutes. I started the interview with opening warm-up questions to create rapport. I record the interview with the participants permission. I also took important notes during the interview to grab the details of the participant's answers, to make sure that the collected data was authentic and complete. Each interview was distinct and participant-centered research since the strategy remained changeable and permitted the use of the questions to look deeper into the participant's responses.

Teachers from Dhaka Primary School	Interview time	Teachers from rural primary schools	Interview time
Participant 1	40 minutes	Participant 4	50 minutes
Participant 2	47 minutes	Participant 5	48 minutes
Participant 3	50 minutes	Participant 6	44 minutes

Table # 2, Participant's total time of Interview.

3.5.2 Focus group discussion

Focus group discussions (FGDs) are a type of qualitative data collection research technique where a professional, outside moderator leads a group of participants in a detailed discussion about a particular topic or issue in order to gather essential information (Silverman, 2006).

Two FGDs have been arranged with 12 parents via Google Meetings. Two of the FGDs conducted purposively with the parents from two different schools to get their perspective on their involvement in their education. Each FGD consisted of six parents. It was a bit challenging for me to conduct the FGD with rural parents because none of them use smartphones and are unable to access the internet. For that reason, with the help of a familiar associate teacher of the rural primary schools it became easier to communicate with all of those participants via Google Meet using her device. And it was required to turn on the video from both sides so that their facial expression can be seen while talking. At the beginning, I introduced myself to them, told them the reason for the meeting and its importance, and started the conversation with a

warm-up question. Data have been collected on different themes, and there were pre-prepared guidelines for two FGDs.

During discussions, the whole conversation was recorded with participants' permission and wrote down the whole conversation in detail soon after the FGDs. Through the discussions with 12 participants, 12 different views emerged about the barriers and prospects of the concepts. Most importantly, their given suggestion shows possible ways about how to make parental involvement in education more feasible, effective for them to get involved.

3.6 Role of the Researcher

The responsibility of a researcher is to ensure that participants are adequately presented and addressed with respect to the research topic and expectations (Silverman, 2006). As Mehra (2001) stated, researchers are a crucial, essential component of the qualitative research process, and I am aware of my own biases during the investigation. Since the researcher may be prejudiced while selecting the topic and determining the issue, as well as when collecting and analyzing data (Creswell, 2003).

. I made an effort to ensure that my personal opinions or experiences did not affect the results or interpretations of this study by strictly clinging to established research methods and protocols. During data collection, I tried to keep my biases aside in the data collection. And continued a positive relationship till the end of the conversation with the participants.

Before starting an interview and a FGD with the participants, I tried to build a good rapport with them. And then, showing respect, I introduced them to the topic and gradually ask them questions whenever they feel comfortable. I didn't add any of my personal opinions while collecting data. I collect only what happened and then took note with participant's permission. The collected notes refreshed immediately after the interview and the FGD. I tried to write notes separately, which helped me with the data analysis and think critically as well.

3.7 Data Analysis

The most essential aspect of research study is data analysis. For this study thematic analysis technique altered by Braun and Clarke (2006) was applied to obtain relevant insights from the gathered data. Thematic analysis is a commonly used qualitative analytical method that allows investigators to investigate and assess essential themes from collected data that has been transcribed. It implies using a structured and rigid approach to identify the main concepts and perceptions carried in the data.

I have followed a few methodical methods of thematic analysis approach to examine the collected data.

Since all the interviews and FGDs were recorded, after listening to the recordings multiple times, I became familiar with the data at the first step. Soon after than all the recorded data was typed in Bangla first, then I translated it into English later. Then I sent the transcriptions to the participants if any necessary changes were needed to ensure their accuracy about what they wanted to say. I reviewed the transcription thoroughly several times. Afterwards, getting familiar with the data, I started building initial codes and marked them with various colors. Then the potential themes were identified.

And then, the collected data was analyzed thematically for the nature of the research study. After gathering and comparing all of the information from the focus group and interviews the determined research questions were analyzed under categories. The theme was then examined once again to ensure its relevance and validity.

The themes were verified to be clear and accurate by deriving the main ideas and views included within them. This phase developed a framework for rigorous and assembled data analysis, simplifying the identification of key patterns and trends. I thoroughly discussed all the information inside the themes. I attempted to maintain a difference between concepts. Finally, I summarized the key findings under each theme in the final phase by presenting my data.

I have followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) six steps of the thematic analysis process to examine the information collected from Interviews and Focus group discussion:

1. Familiarizing with Data
2. Generating Codes
3. Identifying potential codes
4. Reviewing themes
5. Defining themes
6. Locating Exemplars

3.8 Ethical Issues and Concerns

According to Johnson and Christenson (2004), ethics is the set of rules and norms that support our morals. It is the ethical duty of researchers conducting qualitative research to protect the privacy of information and data and to utilize pseudonyms. Ethical issues are considered when the research is conducted in an impartial manner (Kumar, 2005).

Following all the ethical rules, I tried my best to maintain all ethical issues during the time of my data collection and all throughout the time of my research study. Being a researcher, I carried out this study according to ethical concerns since they are based on moral precepts that the researcher should abide by (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). I shared a consent letter with the participants, where there was clear clarification of my research purpose and objectives. By signing the consent letter, the participant permitted me to take all the necessary steps I needed to take for my study. I took notes and recorded conversations with their permission and according to their convenience. The participants had the freedom to leave the discussion at any time, and there was no influence on them from my side. I kept every informant's and resource's

identities private and the data confidential. I made sure that the participants in this study did not experience any bodily or psychological harm.

3.9 Credibility and Rigor

Credibility and rigor contribute to a research increased dependability and authenticity in its investigated field. I carefully followed the rules and procedure of this study through guidelines. My study was completed by following some theoretical steps. Since I was working as an associate teacher in a govt. primary school around 1 year, I had the experience of pedagogical teaching learning patterns and I was also familiar with parental involvement in a primary school. Therefore, my experience working with children and involving their parents makes me realize the problem of parental involvement in our country. Most importantly, as a parent, I was also concerned about the existing practices of parents' participation in primary schools. On that basis, I have selected my research topic.

Furthermore, as a Master's student (MEd. in educational leadership and school improvement) at IED, BRAC University helped me acquire the required knowledge that strengthened my capability of doing this thesis study. Addressing the problem of my topic and the feasibility of conducting this study, I formed a matrix with the topic, question methodologies, and appropriate theories. I chose my research site and participants based on their needs for the study. I have selected the data collection method: Interviews and Focus group discussions, developing the guidelines of the data collection tools based on the research participants.

Recognizing the probable influence of my academic background and personal experience, I was well aware not to introduce any kind of personal biases in the investigation. I was also aware of my personal experience regarding parental involvement that can impact data analysis. I tried to increase the study's credibility and validity by assuring the importance of the teacher's opinions in the analysis. Additionally, I didn't show biases on any specific points while

carrying on the interviews. In order to get reliable data from the participants, I maintained all the data collection methods (Interviews, FGDs) in a very open and transparent manner.

3.10 Limitations of the study

The concept of parental engagement in children's education is not a new concept in Bangladesh, though there is very limited literature regarding the concept. Compared to other developed countries in the world, Bangladesh has limited parental involvement in children's studies. Except for PTA, there is hardly any association that can enhance parental involvement practices. That is the reason I have limited information about the background of parental involvement in Bangladesh.

To be more specific, there were also other limitations. Due to the participants' overloaded teaching schedules, they were not always available, which impacted the data collection procedure. Additionally, some respondents may have responded in such a way that they assumed that their answers were acceptable or socially preferable, which might have resulted in participants giving more nuanced answers. Alongside, some teachers were hesitant to express their ideas in front of other teachers, while asking for better recommendations for effective parental involvement.

Chapter 4

4.1 Results

This chapter highlights the opinions of parents and teachers regarding the concept, problems, and practices of parental involvement in children's education in government primary schools. I conducted a total of 6 interviews and two FGDs (with 12 parents from both rural and Dhaka city). The findings I gathered from interviews and FGDs were outlined considering the research questions, key questions, and conceptual framework. After gathering the data, I attempted to

organize it in a consistent manner with the research design and key themes. Three main themes have emerged from the results, and besides each theme, there are also some sub-themes. The following list is sub-themes under the main themes.

1. Concept of parental participation

- Parental participation in children's learning
- Significance of parental participation in children's learning

2. Current practices of parental involvement in children's learning

3. Problems of parental participation in Government primary schools

- Problems faced by parents
- Challenges for teachers

4.2 Concept of Parental Participation

4.2.1 Parental Participation in Children's Learning

(Interview # 1, 06.02.2025) Addressing my question about the concept of parental involvement in children's learning, one teacher said that "parental involvement means how parents take proper care of their children's all kinds of activities. Specifically, what they do and how they do it in the schools. Furthermore, how parents associate with their children's study and help them with home tasks. So that they can do well in school". (Interview #2, 07.02.2025) Another teacher from a rural school added his opinion by saying that "parental involvement is an essential component of children's education. It is important because parents know better what his/her child actually needs and what's not. Besides this, parents' awareness and concern also improve children's mental development".

From these two interviews, it shows that the first participant conceptualizes parental participation as being associated with all kinds of activities, both at school and at home. In this

respect, other participant gives importance to parents' awareness and concerns as involvement since they better know their children than teachers. So it can be said that without having awareness and proper association with children, parental involvement cannot be defined. (Interview # 3, 0702.2025) Another teacher from Dhaka Primary School explains other aspects of parents' involvement. He stated,

“To me, parental involvement means the close connection of parents with their children. Because their positive Involvement reflects their children's positive behavior and attitude at school with other peers and teachers. Sometimes we call the parents not only for academic concerns also call them for certain students' behavior issues. As a teacher, I do believe being a good human being comes first, before being a good student. This is vital for their mental development because children like to follow what elders do.”

This data shows one of the strong elements of parental involvement, which is a positive, close connection with parents. From the opinion of the participant, it clarifies the concept very well. The element of this concept signifies that parents' positive close connection helps children to develop their mental growth as well as academic progress. Since children spend most of their time with their parents, it's very natural that parents have a great impact on children's behavior. For future citizens, children's positive behavior traits are a significant aspect that comes out of participants' opinions. (FGD # 2, 02.02. 2025) Meanwhile, while asking a follow-up question about how parents get connected with their children, one participant from the Focus group discussion explains,

“I help my child as much as I can, for instance, take him to school and get back home regularly, try to help him to finish homework sometimes, but not always, because I have to do my household chores. Besides these, I take him to the coaching classes as a school teacher cannot complete the whole syllabus on time. For me, this attachment to daily routine is parental involvement. On top of that, there's an overload of homework pressure. Almost all of the teacher gives homework, and my child finds it trouble to complete all the homework at home.” (FGD # 2 02.02.2025) The other parent shared almost the same opinion. She said that, as a mother, “I always try to support my children in every way, such as preparing their food, taking them to school, and completing their homework. My elder son is in class four. For his better academic results, I also sent him

to a private tutor. Since I am a working mother, I cannot give him enough time for his studies. While the school teacher can complete around 50 percent of the total lesson, the private tutor completes the rest of the syllabus.”

The Data from the above-mentioned FGD explains that parental involvement is also defined as parents’ daily attachment with all routine activities with their children. The two participants shared a similar opinion about their involvement with children. These data strongly support the idea that, since they are concerned about their children’s academic progress at the same time they have limitations providing full attention to their children’s study, they don’t hesitate to take their children to private tuition. Therefore, it can be said that, no matter how they get involved with children but as a parent, their concern stimulates their attachment with children in any way, which is important. Regarding parents’ concerns and communication with teachers, the participants from the interview shared that “we feel delighted when parents communicate with us by themselves and show their concern about their children’s academic issues, but it’s not possible for us to solve every issue they brought to us.” (FGD # 1, 25.01.2025) On the other hand, parents shared lots of concerns about their participation in their children’s learning through communication with teachers. One parent from a rural school said,

“We try to do everything to support our children.. But we can’t afford other necessary things. The government only provides board textbooks only but our children also need extra books and paper to read and write, uniforms, and nutritious food, which we can’t afford because of being poor”. (FGD # 2, 02.02.2025) Regarding this, another parent claims in response to the practices of the parental involvement program in school that, “Teachers never called us for a meeting, even in a month. They mostly call us only on the day of the result publication. Since they are too busy on that day, we don’t get any chance to discuss other important issues with them. Teachers only tell us to take care of our children at home, but they do not provide any guidelines about how to help our children with a particular subject.

The above-mentioned data clearly shows that there’s a communication gap between parents and teachers, which is a big challenge for parental involvement. Besides these, parents from a rural background bring out financial issues that could be a barrier to their participation. It can

be said from their opinion that by minimizing the communication gap and providing financial support, parental participation could be ensured more effectively.

4.2.2 Significance of parental participation in children's Learning

Almost all the participants strongly supported the importance of parents' involvement in children's early learning. (Interview #4, 10.02.2025) While asking about the importance of parental participation in children's learning the head teacher of Dhaka Govt. primary school said:

“I think parental involvement in children's learning is fundamental for children's consistent academic growth. Parental involvement means parents' awareness and concern regarding his/her child's education. I believe that for successful academic achievement, we need the partnership of teachers and parents to work together for the betterment of children's education. Children stay only a few hours with teachers. The rest of the time, they spend with their parents. That's why students need parents' full attention and guidance. When a student possesses positive character traits that he inherits from his parents, he becomes a good student. A good student will become a good citizen and an asset to their parents and also to society. For that reason, parents' cooperation is essential for the overall child's development.”

(Interview # 3, 07.02.2025) By supporting almost the same opinion, the assistant teacher of rural primary school mentioned that it is necessary for parents to be associated with their children in all activities. Parents should not only send their children to school regularly but also should be aware of their problems, learning limitations, and need to share these problems with teachers. Parents should know better what is best for their children. Most importantly, they should provide children with a good learning environment at home. He strongly emphasized that Parents can also make a good relationship with their children while assisting them with homework or other learning activities. (Interview #3, 07.02.2025) He added, “Parents should remain concerned and motivate them in every possible way toward learning. Parents' positive

attitude makes children think positively, show positive behavior toward others, and inspires them to do better in their learning outcomes. When parents show their concern and seriousness for their children's learning activities, children become automatically serious in their studies.

The data from these interviews explains that two of the interviewed teachers support the idea of parents' eagerness and the mental support needed for their involvement in children's education. Both of the participants emphasize that without eagerness and a supportive mentality by parents, their involvement would not serve the purpose. Along with this, two important factors again emerge from the data through both of the interviews: 'parents' positive behavior' and 'a good learning environment' at home, which are also needed for children's consistent academic and personal growth.

(FGD # 1, 25.01.2025) A parent from a rural government primary school shared a different perspective regarding the importance of their involvement in children's education. She said that,

“We were left behind and deprived of numerous opportunities only because of being poor and illiterate. But I don't want my children to have the same future ahead. I wholeheartedly want my children to be educated, independent, and respected by others, which was her dream”. (FGD #1, 25.01.2025) She believes in fulfilling all her dreams by educating her children in every way possible. For that reason, she thinks being associated with her children's education is fundamental for achieving her dream and brightening her children's future.

One of the fundamental factors came from the data of the above focus group discussion. Around four out of six participants share the same core reason for not being able to help their child properly. Parents don't want children to have the same consequences as their lives, as they are poor and illiterate. According to the parents, because of these two problems, illiteracy and poverty, they cannot help their children with their education. These data suggest that by taking action to minimize these two problems, parents' involvement would be easier in the rural sector.

4.3 Current practices of parental participation in Government Primary School

In this part, several example have been given about of what type of current practices of parental involvement primary schools have. The first research question of my study, which is relevant to this section, and needed to determine what practices are working effectively and what practices need more involvement from the perspective of parents and teachers by collecting data through interviews and focus group discussions.

(Interview # 2, 07.02.2025) The interviewers provide information on different ways of parental involvement. While asking about the current practices, the teacher from Dhaka primary school shares that “there are several ways parents get involved in children’s learning. The most common and frequent way is parent meetings. It could be a weekly meeting or a monthly meeting, depending on the school authority. Sometimes parents are called for urgent meetings in the case of any individual child’s emergency learning issues”. She also added that, generally, parent meetings are conducted once a month as a formal and regular procedure. Through this meeting, teachers and parents share concerns about children’s learning with a suitable solution.

(Interview # 4 10.02.2025) Another participant said,

“Phone calls and parent-teacher group chatting are currently easier and more convenient ways of communication between teachers and parents now a days. Sometimes parents miss important meetings and classwork because of being children's absent from class. In that case, parents can easily reach other parents and teachers through group chatting and phone calls. The teacher also conducts Zoom meetings with parents if needed, said an associate teacher from the Dhaka government primary school.”

(Interview # 5, 10.02.2025) However, teachers from rural primary schools shared a different opinion by saying that in most cases, when they send important messages or notices through

contact numbers, online portals, and links to online groups for meetings, many of them aren't able to get access. The teacher hardly gets any responses from the parents, then the teacher needs to write this into notebooks for parents' attention. And this happens because of parents' lack of basic ICT knowledge.

The data from the participants' responses explain the very common and frequent ways of communication with parents to get them involved, which are mostly in the Dhaka primary school. The teacher asserts that most common methods of communication with parents are phone calls, texting, weekly and monthly parents meetings. These data show that sometimes it depends on the teacher's eagerness about how they want to conduct the meeting with parents and how important it is to contact parents, as one participant explains that sometimes they make an urgent call to the parents if any emergency situation comes up in case of academic or behavioral issues. However, in that case participant from rural primary school shows concerns by explaining that most of the time they don't get any responses from the parents by making calls, sending messages, or any online contact because most of the parents from rural areas lack of ICT knowledge. Therefore, from the data, it can be said that a lack of ICT knowledge is a fundamental issue in the rural sector that hinders communication between parents and teachers. This problem could be reduced by providing parents with basic ICT knowledge by the school authority.

(Interview # 6, 12.02.2025) One SMC (school committee member) member from rural primary school said that they have several programs as the practices of the parents' engagements like maa somabesh, home visit, uthan boithok e.t.c. where teachers and parents can engage in one-to-one discussions and could have an effective solution. These practices are really fruitful if the school authority could implement them properly and regularly. (FGD #2, 02.02.2025) In regard of these practices, parents added negative aspects. Many of them heard about these programs of Maa Somabesh, home visits, uthan boithok, but never experienced them practically. Nowadays, no teacher visits students' homes. Teachers only call parents for urgent

issues, like distributing report cards or parents' monthly meetings. However, with a limited-time meeting, parents cannot share all of the problems regarding their children's education. Sometimes they can't attend immediate meetings since they have lots of household activities, other younger child responsibilities, and so on.

It is mentioned from the data of focus group discussion and interviews that there are some common practices of parental involvement in rural primary schools, like: maa somabesh, uthan boithok, home visit, etc. However, these practices are not that effective since it hardly implemented properly. According to the data from the FGD, parents also shared that they had never experienced these practices practically. The policymakers and school authority needs to take strong initiative to run these practices effectively.

4.4 Problems of Parental Involvement in Govt. primary schools

To illustrate the opinions of parents and teacher about the problems of parental involvement practices I wanted to know to the participants about what type of problems, obstacles they are facing while trying to involve parents in their children's education. According to the diverse views and experience of parents and teacher I divided the data into two sub groups, which are given below:

4.4.1 Problems faced by parents

Both urban and rural school parents come from different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. So they have diverse experiences having their own context. I tried to get their genuine opinion and experience regarding their children's learning process while communicating with teachers and schools.

(FGD #1, 25.01.2025) Parents from the Dhaka government primary school shared almost the same experience with the issue. One of the participants said,

“Being a working mother, in addition to other family responsibilities, they are unable to provide their children with full attention towards their studies. Because of this, most of the parents sent their children to coaching classes taken by the same school teacher to cover the syllabus”. In this regard, another parent who, more often, schools provide the complete syllabus just a few days before the exam, adding extra lesson parts that teachers never complete in class. Children don’t understand anything, finally. So, as a concerned parent, they need to send their children to the class teacher’s private coaching, where the teacher tries to cover the whole syllabus short. (FGD #1, 02.02.2025) About the teacher’s responsibilities, one parent suggested,

“I think in this regard, the teacher should be more responsible for completing the lesson of the whole syllabus in class because parents can’t always take care properly at home as we have other responsibilities”. She also added, “I consider it a major problem that without preparing the students about the whole syllabus teacher lets the children appear for the exam. As a result, they felt pressure always before the final exam and couldn’t do well in the exam. The teacher should, by any means should complete the lesson at school”.

(FGD # 2, 02.02.2025) Overloaded homework is another problem, said one parent. Almost all of the teacher gives homework that children find trouble completing in a limited time. In terms of communicating with teachers, they never want to provide their personal contact numbers to the parents. That’s why parents can’t contact teachers when they need. Besides these, it is also sometimes impossible to meet teachers at school, most of the time, since they are very busy.

(FGD # 1, 25.01.2025) Rural primary school participant shared some different perspectives about their involvement in their children’s learning. Illiteracy and poverty are their core problem. The parent from rural primary school said that,

“The government only provides their children with board textbooks only but children need extra books, uniforms, notebooks, other necessary accessories, and Nutritious food for lunch, which we can’t afford. She further said, I don’t know how to access the internet and get children’s learning information. I don’t even have guidelines about how to help them in their studies at home”.

All of these barriers tremendously impact children's education in rural primary schools.

The data from these three focus group discussions indicate several issues associated with parental involvement, which I discussed earlier from the parents' perspective. Now, I will explain the identified factors that participants mentioned in the discussion. Participants from Dhaka Primary school brought up the issues, for instance, Parents' work pressure, sending their children to a private tutor as school teachers are unable to complete the syllabus on time, children's overloaded homework pressure from the school teacher, and the inability to communicate teacher in times of need. These factors highly indicate again the miscommunication between parents and teachers. The data I got from rural parents while discussing the problem of their involvement, almost similar results came out from the six participants, they have an extreme financial crisis, which is the reason they cannot always provide all the required resources their children need, cannot attend school meeting since they have to work. Most importantly, parents' illiteracy is the biggest problem behind all of those issues, as well as poor economic conditions.

4.4.2 Challenges of Teachers

(Interview # 5, 10.02.2025) Primary school teachers also face numerous problems in ensuring parental participation in children's education. Both rural and urban primary school teachers shared that they have overloaded students in one class, which becomes impossible to manage. The teacher said, "It is difficult for a teacher to help and guide every individual student personally. However, it is true that the school authority sometimes provides the syllabus quite late, so we as teachers always remain under pressure to complete the syllabus in a limited time". Moreover, with dissatisfaction, the teacher said that the salary they get is not enough at all for their livelihood.

(Interview # 6, 12.02.2025) A headmaster from a rural primary school mentioned that parents' illiteracy, ignorance about parent meetings, disrespectful attitude toward teachers, and inattention to children's education are the major reasons teachers can't involve parents in children's education. He added that some parents didn't show up once in six months. They never respond to messages or online meetings. Besides, some parents have extreme economic crises, so most parents prefer to spend their time finding income sources rather than spending proper time on their children's education.

(Interview # 6, 12.02.2025) Along with these, parents sometimes showed a disrespectful attitude towards teachers, he also added. The teacher finally mentioned that Parents' illiteracy and poor economic condition are the vital reasons for these challenges.

The data from these interviews suggested that teachers are also facing numerous challenges while trying to involve parents in the children's learning process. From the discussion of the teachers, it was clear that they are also struggling with overloaded classroom management, huge work pressure other than teaching, and sometimes a disrespectful attitude from parents. During the interview, more than two teachers expressed their concern about the insufficient salary they got. This data clearly suggests their limitations to work without motivation and recognition in the workplace.

4.5 Process of Effective Parental Involvement

This section illustrates the results of my final question asked of both the participants collected through interviews and Focus group Discussions. In this part, I wanted to know about the process of effective parents' involvement with the participants. The participants shared their views about expected ways of ensuring parental participation. The Findings I got from this data are varied and distinct in their qualities. Now I am going to discuss the findings of the process of effective parental Involvement. Parents' willingness to communicate with the teacher comes

from the opinion of one of the teachers. These elements contribute to strengthening the relationship between parents and teachers. (Interview # 3, 07.02.2025) the teacher explains,

“We believed that parents have a significant role in their children’s education, working with the school by communicating with school teachers anytime they want, either in person or by making a phone call at a convenient time”. As a teacher, we really feel delighted when a parent wants to know about their children's learning update. It means that they are concerned and aware of their children’s studies. She also added, “Nowadays it’s become very convenient to communicate with school teachers through phone calls, emails, and so on if they really want”.

This data comes from the teacher’s perspective, suggests that parents’ willingness to communicate with the teacher plays a vital role in ensuring their involvement. According to her, if parents want and are more serious about children’s learning, they can communicate with the teacher in any way they want. This indicates that building strong communication with school teachers is a way of effective parental involvement. (Interview #5, 10.02.2025) While asking a follow-up question about how to make the communication more effective and addressing to question of the effectiveness of PTA (parent-teacher association), the teacher recommended,

“PTA is the most productive practices that enhance parental participation in several ways. This is the way we can directly share our opinions with the parents and get an instant solution to an arising issue. Sometimes we can suggest how to prepare children for exams and help them complete their homework”. (FGD #2, 02.02.2025) While asking the same question to one parent, that participant also said that, “It would be more engaging and children's learning would have benefited if the PTA were arranged by the school authority more frequently. On this platform, we can talk openly with each other. The teacher can provide parents a guidelines about how to help or take care of children’s study-related issues at home”.

This data strongly indicates how both participants (parents and teachers) support PTA as the most effective practice of parental involvement and how it works to create a close connection with the stakeholders, along with it can solve several issues associated with children’s

education. Along with PTA, another important component comes from the opinion of the participants, and that is ‘Guidelines for parents’ about how to help their children at home. This identified practice component can help parents become more engaged and capable in terms of helping children at home in studies. During the discussion of the same topic with rural primary school participants, an important piece of the findings came from the participants’ responses. (Interview # 1, 06.02.2025) The participant said,

“It would be better if the Government could initiate a food program during lunchtime for students of rural primary schools. In rural areas, several families couldn’t provide proper Nutritious food for their children because of poverty and a large family. Which is essential for their children’s mental and physical growth. This initiative could encourage parents and students' spontaneous participation in schools”. In regard to building a partnership between parents and schools, he also added, parents should regularly visit the school, communicate with the class teacher, can share any problems related to their children’s education.

(Interview # 5, 10.02.2025) The teacher from the primary school of Dhaka mentioned that “parents are the first and closest people for children’s education and overall development. Children spend only a few hours with school teachers; most of the time they spend with their parents at home, so parents should build up a sound and consistent relationship with their children and also with school teachers for the sake of their children’s better academic future.”

The data I obtained from the rural participants regarding the process of effective Parental involvement suggests a different aspect regarding these issues in rural primary schools. The suggestion came from the participants, focusing on introducing a food program for rural, low-income family children. Through this initiative, families, parents would be more encouraged to send their children to school and in their education. Providing food and other required resources will help rural children to be consistent on school activities and support their mental and physical growth since families cannot provide those requirements. From the opinion of the participant, another prospect comes out that is to maintain a sound and consistent relationship between parents with their children. Parents with a strong bond with their children are the root

of every success and achievement in children's lives. Along with these, findings also indicate that having proper and regular communication with the school teacher can ensure the process of effective involvement.

From the above-mentioned data, this study also outlined some visible differences between rural and urban participants' perspectives, experiences regarding the topic of the study. With the three main themes; the concepts, practices, and challenges of parental involvement rural and urban participant's distinction have been shown as an evidence in their opinion. In regards of the concepts of parental involvement a parents from rural school said,

“I help my child as much as I can for instance, prepare his food, take him to the school and get back him to home regularly. Also I tell him to finish his homework sometimes but not always because I have to do my household chores. For me, this attachment to daily routine is parental involvement.” On the other hand, with the same question the other parent from urban school shared, “To me parental involvement means my awareness about my child's academic activities, concerns about his behavior, manners to others and also how to support him mentally when he is in trouble situation. I try to support my child psychologically too, not only academically.

Regarding practices, parents from Dhaka primary school shared, “The other parental involvement is not that effective, but we have monthly meetings and regular phone group chatting with the teacher for any urgent issues.” (FGD #2, 02.02.2025) In contrast, one parent from rural school said, “The School teacher never called us for a meeting nor visited home. If I try to meet teacher for seek help about my child teacher ignores to meet by claiming that they are busy.”

About the challenges of parental involvement, both rural and urban participants have different types of problems. (FGD #1, 25.01.2025) Parents from the Dhaka government primary school shared, “Being a working mother, in addition to other family responsibilities, I am unable to provide my children full attention towards their studies. Because of this, like most parents, I also sent my son to coaching classes taken by the same school teacher to cover the syllabus.” On the contrary, parents from rural primary school expressed, “The government only provides

our children with board textbooks only but children need extra books, uniforms, notebooks, other necessary accessories, and Nutritious food for lunch, which we can't afford. She further said, "I don't know how to access the internet and get children's learning information. I don't even have guidelines about how to help them in their studies at home". There were also differences shown by the opinions of rural and urban teachers. Urban primary school teachers reported that they have too many students in one class, making it impossible to manage. (Interview # 5, 10.02.2025) The teacher said, "It is difficult for a teacher to help and guide every individual student personally. However, it is true that the school authority sometimes provides the syllabus quite late, so we as teachers always remain under pressure to complete the syllabus in a limited time". On the other hand, (Interview # 6, 12.02.2025) A headmaster from a rural primary school mentioned that parents' illiteracy, ignorance about parent meetings, disrespectful attitude toward teachers, and inattention to children's education are the major reasons teachers can't involve parents in children's education.

Chapter 5

Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Discussion

This chapter presents a thorough outline of this study and the outcomes acquired throughout the course of the study. Also, this discussion will discourse the suggestions taken from the results and examine the substantial implications of this study. Moreover, based on the data and findings discussed in the earlier section, this chapter aims to carry the perception and exploration gained from the existing research activities.

Based on the data and findings, a comparison have been made and shown the difference between rural and urban participants' shared opinions and different experiences based on the themes, concepts, practices, and problems in the previous chapter. Visible differences have

been shown by stating rural and urban participants' views, which is clear evidence of diverse data.

(Interview # 1, 06. 02. 2025) Regarding the concept of parental involvement in children's education, most of the rural participants think that preparing food for children, sending them to school, are the only things that mean their involvement in their children, while participants from urban schools defined it more intensely as they emphasize their involvement overall academic, mental, and behavioral development of children. (Interview # 2, 07.02.2025) About the practices of parental involvement majority of Dhaka primary school participants shared that they attend in-person and virtual parent-teacher meeting once in a month, phone group chatting with teacher and PTA exist in the school but not that effective though, whereas rural participants expressed they don't have such kind of practices, they only heard about these. They also suggests that teacher's ignorance to them, their illiteracy are reason behind this. (Interview # 6, 12.02.2025) With regard to problems of parental involvement participants from rural backgrounds explain they have numerous problems associated with their involvement, among them their lack of ICT knowledge, illiteracy, poor- economic condition, and lack of proper communication with teachers are the most. Compared to the rural participants, urban school participants suggest that they mostly faced problems while communicating with schools and teachers. Therefore, from both rural and urban participants' point of view the most common problems appeared communication gap between parent and teacher.

The outcome of the study indicates that parents' involvement and students' academic performance in Bangladesh primary schools are interrelated, and that actions to develop parents' involvement in these schools should be undertaken. The study's results are consistent with earlier research on the value of parental participation in enhancing student performance. According to Fan and Chen's (2001) study, student achievement was positively related to parents' involvement, and the influence of parents' participation in school on student performance was stronger than that of parents' involvement at home. Likewise, Jeynes (2011)

found that parents' engagement developed students' performance with a stronger impact in low-income families, especially in rural areas.

This findings demonstrated an entirely divergence to the present study. Whereas, global research (e.g., Fan & chen, 2011; Jeynes, 2011) indicates heightened impacts of parental involvement within economically underprivileged families the current research establishes that in the rural context of Bangladesh, structural constraints, in particular economic deprivation and educational deficiencies typically obstruct the commencement of family participation in children's education. A respondent from rural primary school expressed this concern by establishing supporting evidence (Interview # 6, 12.02.2025).

Additionally, the study found there was a positive correlation between student outcomes and other aspects of parental participation, such as parenting, communicating, volunteering, and decision-making. According to research by Henderson and Mapp (2002), student outcomes are positively correlated with different types of parents' involvement, including assisting children with homework, attending several school functions, and volunteering at school activities. Furthermore, a study carried on in 1997 by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler found that several parental participation activities, including communicating with school teachers, visiting school programs, and volunteering at school activities.

The perspective extracted from the previously mentioned statements are inconsistent with the results of the present study. The outcome of the present study clearly indicates that the primary schools of Bangladeshi rural context demonstrate the lack of parental engagement among critical sphere of child improvement support, voluntary participation, communicative exchanges and collaborative decision making approaches. While the international researcher (Henderson et al., 2002) substantiates that multiple dimensions of parental participation, including, incorporates homework guidance, participation in school activities correlate positively with children's academic outcomes.

In my first research question, which is about the current practices of parents' involvement in children's learning. From the participants' opinion, some common practices came out like: monthly meeting, result distributing ceremony, mothers meeting, and P.T.O. (Interview # 5, 10.02.2025) In response, each participant shared almost same opinions regarding the effectiveness of these practices. Most teachers said they send parents invitations, messages through students, and phone calls, but only a few parents respond to their invitations who are concerned about their children's education. On the other hand, in my first FGD, parents mentioned school authority only calls them on the day of the result publishing and on emergencies. (Interview # 4, 10.02.2025) According to them, PTA is conducted hardly by the school authority. So it can be said that if these common practices were implemented properly, parental involvement would be more effective. During the FGD, they also added that since the class teacher cannot finish the syllabus on time, they need to send their children to private tuition with the same class teacher for better academic results. This shows one kind of involvement by parents. It shows that if these common practices were implemented properly, parental involvement would be more effective.

In rural primary school, some of the common practices are maa somabesh, uthan boithok, home visit, result publishing ceremony, and PTO. (FGD #1, 25.01.2025) Regarding these practices, parents shared that these practices had never happened except result publication. The summary of responses shows that without strong communication, parental involvement could never be effective.

The Existing study demonstrated discrepancy between observed data and conventional methodologies of parental engagement that employed in Govt. primary schools across both rural and urban context as evidenced by this study. The engagement of parents in Govt. primary schools lacks effectiveness. It is manifested from participants' responses that Parent teacher communication is entirely insufficient.

In rural primary school, some of the common practices are maa somabesh, uthan boithok, home visit, result publishing ceremony, and PTO. Regarding these practices, parents shared that these practices had never happened except result publication. The summary of responses shows that without strong communication, parental involvement could never be effective.

In my second research question, there was an effort to know what problems are associated with developing Parents' participation in Govt. primary schools. The summary of the participants' perspective about this question shows there were multiple problems associated with the issue. These are like: Both the teacher and the parents have objections about each other, several challenges in communication, insufficient budget for initiating PTA, teachers' extra workloads other than teaching. (Interview #4, 10.02.2025) During my fourth interview with the head teacher, he mentioned that in rural areas, parents' illiteracy and ignorance are major issues that prevent them from being involved parents in their children's education. He added further that he wholeheartedly wants parents to get involved with children's learning; otherwise, no initiative will work further. (FGD # 2, 02.02.2025) In contrast, in my second FGD, parents from rural backgrounds shared that, being poor and low-income, they had to work hard and could not attend school anytime. Also, because of being illiterate, they are unable to help their children with their studies.

In my opinion, the concept of my study is aligned with the conceptual framework of Vygotsky's ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development) framework that connects parental participation in children's learning by considering parents as essential guide in child ZPD. According to the theory parents can scaffold by providing children appropriate supports, guidance or involving activities that expand their capacity with encouragement. The alignment was manifested by the perceptions of the participants of the interview and FGDs. The result of this study identified four aspects: parents' close connection, parent-teacher strong communication, facilitating parents' workshop, and strengthening PTA programs for children's academic achievement, which support the aspects of Vygotsky's ZPD framework in parental involvement in the

context of Bangladesh. As this conceptual framework determines that children, with the help of parents or surroundings, can achieve overall development, likewise, the findings of this study also suggest that with the four aspects of parental involvement practices can enhance children's academic growth, which was proved by the opinion of the participants of my study.

The unique insights I gained from my study regarding parental involvement were the need to strengthen PTA activities more effectively, both in urban and rural settings, along with building stronger parent-teacher communication. These insights came from both urban and rural participants' opinions. By implanting these two elements effectively, parental involvement would be more active, and children's learning would be ensured.

The summary of the stakeholders' opinion explains that both of them acknowledge that children need parental support to improve their learning. Parents' and teachers' active participation, mutual understanding, and most importantly, showing respect to each other, are needed to develop children's academic performance.

5.2 Conclusion

This study aimed to explore the concept of parental involvement in children's education, the significance of the concept, existing practices of parental participation, challenges that work as a barrier to engaging parents in their children's education, and ways to develop practices of parents' engagement. The purpose of my study was to learn about the current practices, problems, and prospects of the concept in government primary schools, both in rural and urban areas in Bangladesh. I think my study achieved its purpose, which was determined by the authentic information from the participants' opinions.

Most importantly, I have gained a great deal of learning, insights from the teachers and also from this study about the concept. Especially from the multiple sources and studies, I have come to know that the practices of parental involvement in our country are not satisfactory and

ineffective. The policymakers and school authorities should come forward and work together to raise awareness among parents about the importance of their involvement in children's learning. Additionally, both teachers and parents should respect each other's opinions for the sake of children's academic development.

5.3 Recommendations

I put forward the following recommendation based on the result of my study, which I believe will to improve the current parental participation in children's education:

- School authorities can provide a wide variety of opportunities and activities to engage and encourage parents to get involved. First, through open communication, where parents can share problems and concerns with teachers on one platform. Secondly, schools can offer adaptable volunteer opportunities where parents can help teachers and the school with different activities. Additionally, the school can also support initiating several parent workshops as a guideline to help children at home, such as basic English learning, basic math, and digital literacy. Furthermore, parents' feedback could be an encouraging strategy to engage them by surveys, through school apps, open suggestion boxes, and through social media.
- The education ministry or UEO (Upazila Education Officer), AUEO (Assistant Education Officer) should emphasize initiating a well-established PTA (Parent Teacher Association) in government primary schools where both parents and teacher can share their opinions, problems, and concerns regarding children's academic improvements.
- Every primary school should maintain a parent-coordinator who will serve as a liaison between the school and families who will provide workshops on the assessed needs and

ensure welcoming and inviting to all parents. Who can also maintain a log of events and activities

- To acknowledge teachers' vital role in children's education Government should motivate them through recognition as well as provide them with other facilities, for instance, financial assistance and incentives, recruitment benefits, to attract them to their job.
- Both teachers and parents should respect each other's opinions and should acknowledge their role in children's academic progress through mutual understanding.
- Finally, school authorities, SMC members, and HT should bring out effective strategies to encourage parents to get involved in their child's education, considering the social context.

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Appendices

Appendix A. Consent Letter

Sample Consent Letter

Research Title: Practices of parental involvement in children's education at govt. primary schools.

Dear respondent,

My name is Rebeka Sultana. I am a student from BRAC University, Master of Education (M.Ed.) in Educational Development and School Improvement, from the Department Institute of Educational Development. I am here to reach out to you to seek your cooperation for my research project. For my course, I must conduct a research project. The title of my research is: **Practices of Parental Involvement in Children's Education at Government Primary Schools**. For this, I need to interview teachers and parents. In this regard, I want your generous cooperation to permit me to conduct your interview as part of my research. Your valuable insight and experience will have a tremendous impact on my study and on further research. I need to take no more than 50 minutes of your valuable time.

I can assure you that this conversation will not cause any kind of risk or harm to you. And further, I would like to inform you that this interview will be used only for academic purposes. Your name, institute name, and all the information will remain secret, and I will maintain confidentiality strictly. I am seeking your permission to record our conversation and to take some notes while interviewing you. Please feel free to ask me any questions regarding my study. More importantly, you have the right to withdraw your participation at any time during the interview if you do not feel comfortable sharing anything. I need to mention that, the information about the conversation and the transcript will not be shared with anyone except my research faculty. I will not mention your identity or organization name while presenting the proposal. I would appreciate it if you could provide your real and unbiased answer.

I have read all the above-mentioned information and with my conscious, I agree to participate in this study.

Name of the Participant:

Signature:

Date:

Thanks for your kind cooperation and support.

With regards,

Signature of the Investigator

Rebeka Sultana

Date:

Appendix B. Interview Guide

Interview Guide for Participants

Date
Participants Name
Designation
Teaching Grade

- 1) What is parental participation in children's education, according to you?
- 2) How important is parental participation in children's education?

- 3) What are the various ways of parental involvement in government primary schools?
- 4) How do these practices affect students' education?
- 5) What is be the role of parents to ensure parental involvement and partnership in school?
- 6) What are the benefits of parental participation in schooling?
- 7) What are the common problems of practicing parental involvement in government primary schools?
- 8) How effective is PTA in engaging parents' participation in school?
- 9) How do the problems affect children's education?
- 10) What improvements can make existing parental participation practices more effective in government primary schools?

Focus Group: Demographic Details & Questionnaire

Name of the participants
Age
Gender
Occupation

Ground Rules of the conversation:

Since I am conducting this conversation online because of my absence in person, the participants need to follow some basic rules to continue the discussion.

- Please try to talk only one person at a time. And try not to interrupt while the other person is talking.
- Raise your hands before you want to say something.
- There is no wrong answer in this discussion, so try to share what you actually believe or think.
- You don't need to follow any order for your answer.

Guiding Questions:

1. What do you know about parental involvement in children's education?
2. Why do you think taking part in children's learning is important?
3. What are the common practices of parental involvement in government primary schools?
4. What are the barriers to parent's participation in government primary schools in children's education?
5. What are the reasons behind these barriers?
6. What is your recommendation to improve parent's participation in children's learning?