Bullying in Early Years at School: Case Study

A thesis presented to the

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Ethical Approval Form

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1. Source of population

2. Does the study involve (yes or no)
    1. physical risk to the subjects
    1. social risk
    2. psychological risk to subjects
    3. discomfort to subjects
    4. invasion of privacy

3. Will subjects be clearly informed about (yes or no)
    1. Nature and purpose of the study
    2. Procedures to be followed
    3. Physical risk
    4. Sensitive questions
    5. Benefits to be derived
    6. Right to refuse to participate or to withdraw from the study
    7. Confidential handling of data
    8. Compensation and/or treatment where there are risks or privacy is involved

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

    1. From study participants
    2. From parents or guardian
    3. Will precautions be taken to protect anonymity of subjects

5. Check documents being submitted herewith to Committee:

    1. Proposal
    2. Consent Form
    3. Questionnaire or interview schedule

ETHICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

Research Authorization

Title: Bullying in Early Years at School: Case Study

The Research Checklist indicates:

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

Authorized by:

Name: ERUM MARIAM, Ph.D

Position in Ethical Review Committee: chair/co-chair/other

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☐ Fail

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Approval from the supervisor

In my judgment the thesis and the candidate meet recognized scholarly standards for the degree and is therefore ready to submit his/her thesis to the thesis committee

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Executive Summary

Bullying is an old, widespread and worldwide problem. According to Pinheiro (2006); Bullying is recognized as a form of violence in schools as well as in educational institutions. Several negative long term consequences both for students who bully and for their victims were reported in different literatures for years. School, teachers, and the rights of a student to learn in a safe environment without fear may get affected by bullying. People in different countries have different perceptions on bullying concepts and bullying may occur in different forms; verbal or physical aggression.

The effects of being bullied and bullying others in elementary school on education, health and risky behaviors were also investigated in several researches (Vlachou, Andreou, Botsoglou, & Didasakalou, 2011; Synder, Brooker, Patrick & Synder, 2003; Kirves & Sajaniemi, 2012). It has also been found that being bullied and bullying reduces GPA by around 20% of its standard deviation (Eriksen, Nielsen & Simonsen, 2012).

The objective of this research was to gain insight about the effect of being bullied based on student's individual experience. This study was a qualitative research where three cases have been developed based on real experience of three students from early grades. Their parents were also interviewed in reference to their experience. Themes have been discussed to gain deeper understanding on bulling incident in the context of Bangladesh.

While exploring nature of bullying in early childhood, most of the bullying was found in the form of physical bullying and verbal bullying and place of bulling incident is inside the school. The aggressive behavior of bully and playing pattern was found mostly as reason behind bullying or being bullied. Hence, a gender difference in

bullying also found that boys are more likely to be involved in bullying and being bullied. Effects of bullying on students as individual was studied rigorously based on three student's experience. It has been found that, bullying effected children not only physically but also they get depressed and in some cases suppressed. As bullying is a social phenomenon, it was found that children tended to avoid bully or socially withdraw. Moreover, different findings came about teachers' perception and their management of bullying incidents. Parents' understanding on bullying incident was also come into light.

Based on findings a set of recommendations were developed for school level, for teachers and also idea for a larger scale study was suggested to develop anti-bullying programme.

Chapter – I: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Children during their early years spend more times in care of adults-such as parents, caregivers or teachers during their times at daycare, pre-school or school outside of their homes. During this time many children become quite self-assured, independent and social. They acquire the desire and ability to interact with adults and other children. They can persuade peers, participate into games or play activities and resolve conflicts. Thus, its adult's responsibility to make sure appropriate developmental environment around them, guide them to act non-violence, teach non-discrimination, tolerance and mutual respect. Otherwise, children's social and emotional development may hamper through presence of violence in their early stage of life.

Bullying is an old, widespread and worldwide problem. According to Pinheiro (2006) bullying is recognized as a form of violence in schools as well as in educational institutions. Negative long term consequences both for students who bully and for their victims are reported (James, 2010). Therefore, it also affects schools, teachers, and the rights of a student to learn in a safe environment without fear.

Bullying actions may occur in different forms; verbal or physical aggression. Sometimes also as social aggression such as: making threats, spreading rumors, beating or pushing someone and exclude someone from group. People in different countries have different perceptions on bullying concepts. Even within countries, different terms are used to refer bullying. For example, in England; bullying is described as "teasing", "harassment" and "victimization" (James, 2010).

After investigation Bidwell, (1997) said that bullying is a common occurrence in the schools, and its nature is comparable with the international research literature on

bullying. In discussion about nature and extent of bullying at school, author stated that bullying behavior declines as student's progress through the grades. A relationship also exists between student's bullying behavior and school issues such as: academic achievement, school bonding and absenteeism (Dake, Price & Telljohan, 2003).

Therefore, bullying perspectives in school from children's viewpoint was investigated during this research. Key focus was to identify the nature of bullying in early childhood years and children's experience. In Bangladesh, school bullying issue is only limited to bullying incidents with adolescent students. Thus, the issue was explored in the perspective of early childhood years.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Bullying is a wide spread and common phenomena in schools also consider incidents in preschool and elementary level schooling. The nature and extent of bullying in schools may not be same in different levels but it obviously impede academic progress as well as social life of student. Impact of preschool behaviors, family characteristics and parental mental health on bullying and victimization were investigated through a longitudinal study in Netherland. Results showed that, aggressive children in preschools were more likely to be bullied. Preschool behavioral, emotional and motor problems, socio-economic status and family breakup were related to involvement in bullying at a later age (Jansen, Veenstra, Ormel, Verhulst & Reijneveld, 2011).

Not only this, according to Dake, Price & Telljohan (2003), it was found that, bullying affect academic achievement, school bonding and absenteeism. This may result fall in grade and poor attention. It may also result poor peer interaction. Because children may suffer physically and emotionally, they may not be able to give

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attention what teachers say, even may afraid to go to school. Several researches proved that, bullying have adverse affect in student's ability to participate in educational activities. As well as students may have low self-esteem and hyperactivity (James, 2010; Wolke, Woods, Bloomfield & Karstadt, 2000; Dake, Price & Telljohan, 2003).

In preschool, children may not be able to do intentional bullying as they are just developing their social skills. Therefore, their experiences may differ from other bullied students at higher grades. So, preschool and primary school teachers need to know the signs of behavior when a young child experience bullying. If teachers may not have clear understanding on bullying that occurs in classroom, this may affect over-all teaching learning process. Mostly, effects of bullying in academic performance and in socialization of students are undermined in the context of Bangladesh. Besides, teachers in Bangladesh may not have clear understanding on the concept of bullying as it is not a well-known phenomenon in schools. However, teacher's lack of sufficient knowledge on bullying may result harmful consequences on student's personal life as well as academic performances.

1.3 Purpose of the study

Early years are the foundation of one's life. Therefore, in-depth understanding on bullying incidents and its effect on students as individual is required to be explored. Therefore, student's experience and viewpoint is needed to consider to get an idea about how bullying exists in early years in Bangladesh. Comprise of all findings from this study might be used to improve the existing situation of bullying in the context of Bangladesh.

Hence, it has been defined that the purpose of this study was to identify the nature of bullying behavior in early childhood and to explore how children experience bullying in early childhood.

1.4 Significance of the study

One aspect of bullying was explored through observation done on large scale kindergarten students (Snyder, Brooker, Patrick, & Snyder, 2003). Some of the well-known techniques or questionnaire, i.e. Olewus Bullying Questionnaire, self-report, usually consider for bullying research on prevalence. In Bangladesh, the Bengali version of the modified "Life at School Survey" was used by Ahmed & Braithwaite (2006, p. 356). Vlachou, Andreou, Botsoglou, & Didasakalou (2011) reviewed demonstrated some important dimensions of bullying in preschool children such as; it's process of development and prevalence, family and genetic factors in bullying, gender and age differences, different roles during bullying incidents and peer victimization process. It also proved that it has long term affects on development aspect of children. Therefore, it seems, assessing bullying in preschool children is difficult.

From the study done by Laura & Nina (2012), in Finnish kindergarten settings, it was found that, the most common form of bullying was exclusion from peer relationships. But peer relationship is one of the most important aspects of socialization process of young children. Therefore, a common goal for most parents and caregivers is the development of pro-social behavior.

As children grew older, their social-emotional development becomes advanced. Erikson's theory suggests that adults must be aware of student's developmental stages those are related to learning and development. The stages, Initiative vs. guilt crisis

recognized at 3-6 years children and industry vs. inferiority crisis occurs at 6-12 years children. Preschoolers' interactions with others are marked by the development of behavior patterns that range from helpful and considerate to hurtful and aggressive. This behavior became prominent when children started to go to school.

From Alsaker & Helfenfinger (2010); recommendation for future research in kindergarten was also found. As already it has stated that very few remarkable study is found in the context of Bangladesh in Bullying at school and those are on adolescence students. In Bangladesh, there are several policies that indirectly silently address bullying behaviors but that actually are not enough to consider the impact of the issue. Plan International (2008), reported the legal status of bullying of school children in Bangladesh as "No" that means there is no such policy that could act against bullying in school.

Thus, this research could be a significant study on generating the evidence of bullying at early years in Bangladesh. It also could be a background for a larger scale study in the context of Bangladesh to gain understanding about bullying. Therefore, this study was designed to gain an in-depth understanding on bullying in early years through detail case studies of bullying incidents at school.

OBJECTIVES:

The specific objectives of this study are given below:

- To identify the nature of bullying behavior in early childhood

- To explore how children experience bullying in early childhood

1.5 Research Topic

Bullying in early years at school:

Bullying is a common social phenomenon in schools around the world and it does mostly recognize for adolescent students. It is a form of aggression and a particular form of violence in school setting. A clear definition of bullying is stated as "Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance" (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2012, para.1). The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both children who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems. Bullying is a repeated action that occurs over a prolonged period of time; there is an imbalance of power; and the verbal, psychological, and/or physical negative actions of bullying are unprovoked (Bentley & Li, 1995).

Farrell (1999) defined bullying following a range of authors (Hyndman & Thorsborne,1994; Michael, 1995; Rigby & Slee,1994) as it is repeated, intentional, gendered oppression of a physical or psychological nature of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group of persons and exclusion from the social group.

Operational Definition:

Bullying:

Therefore, for the purpose of this study bullying was defined based on above mentioned definitions. It is noted that, the word "Bullying" was not used directly in data collection tool or during data collection as it is a very sensitive issue and the word is negatively taken in educational setting due to lack of awareness.

Bullying Behavior:

From several research evidences such as James (2010), Vlachou, Andreou, Botsoglou, & Didasakalou, (2011) Alsaker & Helfenfinger (2010); bullying behaviors can be defined as physical (hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing), verbal (taunting, malicious teasing, name calling, threatening), or psychological (spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, or promoting social exclusion, extortion). For investigation purpose, these behaviors were considered as bullying behaviors in this study.

Early Years: Early years is referred as 0-8 years of one's life.

1.6 Research Questions

This study tried to seek answers the following research questions which are divided into key and sub-questions:

- What is the nature of bullying in early childhood?

Sub questions:

- What are the different types of bullying behaviors exist in early childhood years?

- What are the possible reasons of bullying incidents?

- How children experience bullying in early childhood as victim?

Sub questions:

- How children perceive bullying as a victim?

- How children respond to bullying behaviors?

Chapter-II: Literature Review

Bullying behavior is prevalent throughout the world and it cuts across socio-economic, racial/ethnic, and cultural lines. Bullying can begin as early as preschool and intensify during transitional stages, such as: starting school in first grade or entering into middle school or even in to higher education institutes. Hence, to understand the bullying phenomena and how it is associated with child development, systematic literatures have been reviewed.

The first systematic study in bullying was done by Dan Olweus and published in 1973 in a Swedish book. This book was published in English in 1978 tilted as, *Aggression in the Schools: Bullying and Whipping boys.* Till to date, numerous studies that covered wide ranges to understand the nature of bullying, characteristics of bully and who bullied, extent of the problem have done. The consequences of this in different stages of life from early years to adult hood were also come under light.

2.1 Bullying in global context:

Many countries conducted different studies to understand bullying which can be referred as global context. A study reveals prevalence and school factors of bullying in England and Germany on primary school children. Major differences were found in victimization rates with 24% of English pupils becoming victims every week compared with only 8% in Germany (Wolke, Woods, Stanford & Schulz, 2001). The prevalence of victimization in elementary schools (grade 1- 5) varies from a low of 11.3% in a sample of 5813 students in Finland and to a high of 49.8% in a nationwide sample of 7290 students in Ireland. Even in US 19% elementary grade students were found victimized (Dake, Price & Telljohan, 2003).

The prevalence of direct and relational bullying and their differential relationship to behavior problems in young primary school children were also investigated quantitatively. All children involved in direct bullying had significantly increased total scores in behavior problems, hyperactivity, conduct problems, and peer problem. Lower pro-social behavior scores none (neutrals) compared to those not involved in bullying (Wolke, Woods, Bloomfield & Karstadt, 2000).

Bullying behavior may result in physical effects and negative emotional effects for learning and over all development. In the first comprehensive survey in Chinese primary school (Wong, et. al., 2008); it was found that, 24% respondents reported that they sometimes physically bullied another child. When children observed bullying at school 56% said they immediately reported it to their teachers. The temperament of young children may also affect by peer victimization. By using the Peer Victimization Scale in one study it was exposed that there are significant relations between gender, temperamental characteristics and peer victimization among 5-6 year old children (Yoleri & Gursimsek, 2012).

Research conducted between 2003 and 2005 in a wide range of developing countries for the Global School-based Health Survey (GSHS) found that between one-fifth (China) and two-thirds (Zambia) of children reported being verbally or physically bullied in the previous 30 days (Plan, 2008, p-36). But According to Jones, Moore, Marquez & Broadbent (2008:45) prevalence data on bullying in Asia region is very limited. According to Baquilod (2004) Global School based Health Survey (GSHS) undertaken in the Philippines revealed that, nationwide over one-third (35.7%) of students were bullied one or more days during the 30 days preceding the survey. 28% of these bullied students reported that they were most often hit, kicked, pushed,

shoved or locked indoors. Boys (35.8%) were more likely than girls (22.2%) to report such physical bullying.

2.2 Situation in Bangladesh compared to the world:

In Bangladesh, there is huge number of media coverage on awareness of bullying and very often many bullying incidents covered in newspapers in form of eve-teasing, sexual harassments, black-mailing etc. Al Jazeera, a Doha based broadcaster by the Al Jazeera Media Network broadcasted a story on sexual bullying as "eve-teasing" in Bangladesh and mentioned that it causes high dropout rates for school girls on. (Al Jazeera, 2010). On the basis of Bangladesh Police statistics, 36 deaths caused in bullying related incidents across the country reported in the Daily Sun (2010). However, according to Bangladesh police crime reporting system any form of bullying is usually reported under child abuse, sexual violence or harassments. That makes clear that, bullying is not considered as direct crime in Bangladesh. Even there are no such policies to handle bullying behavior in educational settings.

Very few studies on bullying are found in Bangladeshi context on adolescent students only. In study of pastoral care to regulate school bullying: Shame management among by-standers (Ahmed, 2005) it was stated that, although bullying has become a serious problem in Bangladeshi schools, it remains an understudied subject. Only basic prevalence data on bullying among Bangladeshi school children were available (Ahmed & Braithwaite, 2006). It revealed the direct links between forgiveness, reconciliation to reduce bullying and shame management is helpful to prevent bullying. About one third (30%) of the students admitted bullying someone in the past year once, twice or more often (Ahmed, 2001). But school intervention programs to deal with the problem are non-existent.

2.3 Bullying as early childhood phenomenon:

Identify bullying in preschools may not be very easy as children may not have understanding about bullying or disturbing intentionally. Children from early age may not have idea about excluding a peer; also teachers may not be aware about children's behavior. For that reason, several researches have been conducted on bullying in early years or in elementary levels (Vlachou, Andreou, Botsoglou, & Didasakalou, 2011; Synder, Brooker, Patrick & Synder, 2003; Kirves & Sajaniemi, 2012).

Bullying, as a social phenomenon, has recently become the focus of research investigation and most of the research activity is concentrated in the formal schooling setting. It is noteworthy that the international anti-bullying movement in schools have brought together research-driven policies on peer relation in different countries around the world (Farrell, 1999).

A few recent researches have also done to understand that how bullying occurs in preschools or elementary schools and how it is associated with child development (Arndt & Luo, 2008; James, 2010; Vlachou, 2011). Several research evidences have been proven the presence of bullying in preschool and kindergarten and its effect on children's developmental process (Synder, Brooker, Patrick & Synder, 2003; Alasker, & Helfenfinger, 2009; Alasker, 1993).

According to Vlachou, Andreou, Botsoglou, & Didasakalou (2011) preschool may be the first context beyond the home environment where children's difficulties in social interactions with peers can be primarily detected and assessed by adults and professionals. This research reviewed recent empirical evidence over the nature and different aspects of bullying among preschool children. Recent findings concerning the development of preschool bullying and its prevalence, family and genetic factors,

gender and age differences, participant and peripheral roles, school context, methodological issues, and prevention policies were reviewed while directions for future research were addressed.

In the study on bullying in early educational settings Kirves & Sajaniemi (2012) stated that systematic bullying does occur among under-school-age children. 12.6% of children (age three to six years) in day care were involved in bullying in one way or another. The most common form of bullying was exclusion from peer relationships.

Underwood & Rosen, (2011) discussed how gender influences every aspect of bullying relationships. This document comprised of research evidence on gender issues in bullying. It was revealed that children's concept of bullying in terms of gender are physical or power imbalance among boys and social aggression among girls. Association of gender and bullying was also discussed in another report as boys do physical forms of bullying whereas girls use methods that affect social life of the victim (California Department of Education, 2003). Even, in another study it was found that, boys are more likely to be involved in physical bullying and girls in verbal and relational bullying (James, 2010). Therefore, a notion about association between gender and bullying was found as boys and girls both can be involved in bullying as bully or as victim.

Socio-economic inequality in exposure to bullying was found associated with higher levels of victimization among adolescences (Due et al., 2009). It was revealed from research that low income status was a risk factor for aggression in male and female students (Harachi et al., 2005). Also, Jansen et al., (2012) found the prevalence and socio-economic disparities in bullying behavior among young elementary school children. Results showed that particularly children from socio-economic

disadvantaged families have higher risk of involvement in bullying. Therefore, it can be stated that the relationship between socio-economic status and being bullied is contextually-driven and nature may varies across communities.

It can be noted from Dake, Price & Telljohann (2003) that the highest level of victimization occurred in elementary schools with a steady in prevalence rates through secondary schools. . In a longitudinal study by Jansen, Veenstra, Ormel, Verhulst & Reijneveld (2011) it was found that pre-school behavioral, emotional and motor problems, socio-economic status, and family breakup are related to involvement in bullying at a later age and the prevention of bullying and its consequences can be enhanced by focusing on risk groups in early life.

Chapter-III: Methodology

3.1 Research Participants

According to Creswell (1998), qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explores a social or human problem. The research builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducted the study in natural setting. Therefore, it is very important to select research participants to discover the natural flow of the event in interactive ways as many qualitative researches deal with individual's personal and collective thoughts, beliefs or actions.

This study has dealt with 5-8 years children from grade preschool to grade-2 of one school. Research participants of this study were students, teachers and parents of that school. 03 real story based case studies were developed on 03 students aged 5-8 years who have experienced bullying in their class. Moreover, 06 class teachers from grade 01 and pre-class were selected for focus group discussion. Family's background information had been collected from 03 mothers of respective students to develop the cases based on true stories. Thus, a total of (03+06+03=) 12 participants were selected for the research.

3.2 Research site

Before, deciding the research site, a general criterion was set in the context of Bangladeshi culture. In Bangladesh, there are different types of schools including English medium Schools, Religious based educational institutions or schools only for Boys or Girls. For this study purpose, these were excluded from the study as they do not represent the whole education setting of Bangladesh.

Therefore, one Bengali Medium School with co-education at Dhaka City was selected as research site. The criteria for selecting the school were following:

- Bengali Medium Schools where there are preschool and primary classes with high school.

- The number of students of that school was more than 1000-1500 as most of schools in Bangladesh have large number of students.

- Students from all socio-economic background usually enroll.

- Co-education system at least in preschool and primary level.

Based on above mentioned criteria the school was selected for conducting the study. The school was observed and informal discussions were held with teachers to identify cases. For the research purpose KG and grade-1 of that school were selected.

3.3 Research approach

This study was qualitative in nature and one of the common approaches –"Case Study" was used to conduct this study. Bryman (2008) describes that the term 'case' associates with the case study with a location, community or organization. It mainly gives emphasize on extensive and in-depth investigation of any situation or event. Through case study method, a researcher tries to provide a complete understanding.

A collective case study entitled Survivors of School Bullying (Ramirez, 2013) explored the coping strategies of students who have history of peer victimization and how those strategies help them manage the effects of bullying. In that research, cases were developed by observations, interviews, and a review of school records. The methods followed in that study is quite fitting with the objectives of this particular

study. Therefore, in this study, case study approach was used but development process was determined by focusing individual perspective of each student. Each case was a specific story about student's experience. Therefore, cases were prepared through in-depth interviews with students who have experienced bullying. Through case study, it was tried to gain in-depth information about student's perspective in bullying. An individual student located within the cultural setting of school as well as located within the background of his family. Therefore, student's experience was illustrated within the background of his school and family.

The interviews with students were quite informal and were done in relax manner so that students could open up themselves. Before conducting interviews with students, a psychosocial counselor from Institute of Educational and Development-BRACU was consulted and as per suggestion a good rapport was built with students before talking about the incident. Suggestions were also given regarding talking quite informal in manner; giving space to students to talk to express their emotion and ventilate. Therefore, it was maintained through data collection procedure by communicating with the child several times and talked in informal manner mainly at their home and without using any instruments like tape recorder.

3.4 Data Collection Method:

In qualitative research it is very important to select appropriate method for data collection as thick description is needed to proper analysis. There are several methods of collecting data in qualitative research. Among those observation, interview, focus group discussion are quite well-known and widely used. Determining method is also depends on the type of research as well as research problem. Hence, reviewed literatures also gave some food for thought for selecting the method.

Therefore, considering reviewed literatures, a focus group discussion with teachers was selected in order to find individual cases, also, in order to develop case study in holistic manner in-depth interview with students and parents was selected as main data collection method. Moreover, to construct those stories as cases, observation of the cultural setting of the school was also selected. In order to describe the observation and to make it narrative, rich and to have all possible data anecdotal recording was used.

3.5 Role of a Researcher

From February 2010, I have been working in child development and education field especially in primary education in schools. Therefore, during observation and in-depth interviewing process, I tried to be mindful that I am a researcher in this particular context. I should not be interfering in the teaching-learning process or class management issues.

On the other hand, it was a real challenge for me to work with an issue which is not widely recognized as an educational problem in Bangladeshi context. As this will be an exploratory study therefore, while developing concept note I randomly collected public views mostly from some parents, teachers and students about their understanding and school situation about bullying. Moreover, I felt that dealing with unpleasant memories are quite difficult as students may get traumatized whereas parents may get emotional. Hence, I was concerned about taking interview in a possible informal manner by not hampering children's emotional state.

3.6 Sampling Technique

Bullying at elementary level is not quite well-known phenomena in schools in Bangladesh. Therefore, to select the sample school initial discussion was held regarding the prevalence of the incident. Initially an application was given to the principal. After his permission, a meeting was arranged with head of junior section of the school. She was convinced with the purpose of the study and gave permission to discuss with teachers. It was expected that samples for case study can be selected based on the information collected from FGD with respective teachers.

It is not possible to collect information randomly as it is not a well-known phenomenon. Therefore, Critical case sampling technique under purposive sampling was used to make the cases more information rich. Critical case sampling is a type of purposive sampling technique that is particularly useful in exploratory qualitative research, research with limited resources, as well as research where a single case (or small number of cases) can be decisive in explaining the phenomenon of interest (Lund, 2012).

3.7 Data Collection Tool:

Following data collection tools were used in the study:

Purpose	Technique	Targeted participant	Sample size	Tool
To collect data about cultural setting of the school, teacher's perception as well as identify 'cases'	Focus Group Discussion	Teachers	06 teachers from KG and grade I	Themes for FGD (01)

To capture student's individual experience	In-depth interview	Student	03 student	Themes for in-depth interview (IDI) (01)
To collect data about background information of student's family	Interview	Parent	03 Mother	Socio-economic background information form and interview guideline
To collect data about cultural setting of the school	Naturalistic observation	School setting	04 observation done on tiffin time and classroom situation	Anecdotal recording

Table 01

Each data collection tools were piloted in order to check the reliability and to understand their potential effectiveness as data gathering instruments.

3.8 Data collection Procedures

At first, few schools in different locations of Dhaka city were communicated as per set criteria of study population. After that, the school was communicated and an application was submitted to the principal of that school. After the approval teachers were met by providing consent papers to the school authority. Before focus group discussion with teachers a general informal observation was done during tiffin time.

Then a focus group discussion was organized with teachers from grade one and pre-primary about the study. The focus group discussion was postponed once due to political situation at that time which delayed case sampling process. As per teacher's emphasize on play pattern during focus group discussion, an observation was done during tiffin time to understand student's play pattern. From focus group discussion, it was expected that sample could be selected based on teacher's advice and reference. In reality it was difficult to find single cases. Teachers were discussing whole class issues and all children behavior; rather they discuss about some children who consistently disturb others. From those children two was identified as bully later. Therefore, to find exact cases one section of class one was selected purposively based on teacher's reference to do more observation. Three informal non-participant observations were done. These naturalistic observations helped to understand the cultural setting of the school as well as to find cases. Through these observations some cases were found and analyzed critically to select three cases. It was a real challenge not only to identify cases but also to reach them. For example, in one case the victim student's parents lived separately and it was not possible to reach parents. Teachers usually do not self explained cases whereas parents were more willing to discuss about it. Therefore, after selecting one case, a parent's help was taken to find rest of two cases.

After selecting participants, data from each student was gathered by in-depth interview. A discussion about family background information was also held with 03 (three) parents of respective victim students to know more about the child, his lifestyle and family background. These helped to develop cases as reality based stories. Tape recorder was used to collect data from teachers and during observation some pictures were taken of school to document data. As the interview modes were

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informal and conversations were casual therefore field notes and journals were used to record data from students as well as from parents.

Emphasis was given to collect detailed descriptive data. Thick description of data was provided descriptive validity of gathered information. Three different tools were used to record and process data. Those are a) Field note and interview transcript, b) Journal to document the data as well as to capture ongoing reflection, c) analytical memo on selected issues to record ongoing analysis.

3.9 Data Analysis

There is a general view that when data are collected through qualitative mode, it may seem quite difficult to analyze data as they are not typically organized for an example some data come from observation, some from field note again some from interviews. Therefore, focus of the data analysis was data collected from the student sources only. Information was triangulated from data collection process as three different methods were used for three different sources. The descriptive data were divided based on themes and patterns and findings were derived based on what the data suggests or hints.

The data analysis was started informally from the initial interaction with the research participants during selection process. Content analysis technique was followed to analyze the data. Therefore, by following data collection procedure, at first, the accumulated data was transcribed and clean methodically. Next it was organized and categorized based on emergent themes and patterns. Research questions were reviewed before recoding. Only representative data and the data that reflect critical incidents and carries relevant information was selected then. Memos from field notes were also used. Next, those were categorized under themes and issues. Under the

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themes, thoughts and insights were identified. Thus, the analysis plan was as following:

Summarized and analyzed data
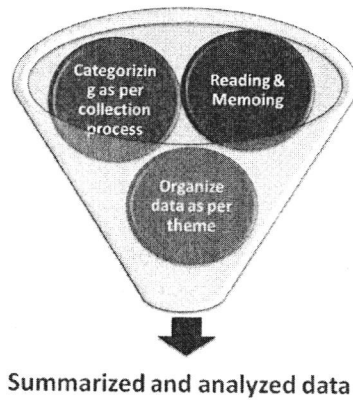
There were also some important data which was found apart from research questions. Those data were also strong evidence and helpful to gain deeper understanding about bullying context in early childhood. Hence, they were also analyzed in themes. These themes are discussed within the light of some specific literatures.

3.10 Reliability and Validity

Generally the purpose of reliability and validity in a research points to the credibility of the findings that it derived without any prejudice or fault. Reliability and validity in quantitative research and qualitative research is not same. Golafshani (2003) stated that triangulation can be used to maximize reliability and validity in qualitative research. In this study triangulation was also used. Information was collected from students and also from their parents to imply data validity and reliability. School culture observation was also a support to validate derived data. This process determined the triangulation in this research. It was also a challenge to validate the result at the beginning but as data collected from different source consequently showed the credibility.

Therefore, it can be said that, triangulation of the data source determine the reliability and validity in this research.

3.11 Ethical Issues

According to guidelines from British Educational Research Association (2011), researchers must recognize the participants' entitlement to privacy and must accord them their rights to confidentiality and anonymity, unless they or their guardians or responsible others, specifically and willingly waive that right. Rosie (2005:10) stated that researchers have a responsibility towards participants of all ages not only to establish a robust and negotiated ethical framework for their research, but also to ensure that these ethical principles are applied throughout all stages of the research process. In research with children under the age of 16, researchers should ensure that parents or guardians are informed about the nature of the study and given the option to withdraw their child from the study if they wish (Code of Human Research Ethics, 2010).

For that reason, written consent letters from schools and parents were obtained for observation and interviewing teachers and parents. Pseudo name was used to represent information for school, students, teachers and parents. It was clearly stated that the information will only be used for this academic research. In addition, as this is an academic research therefore, BRAC University Research Policy was also considered.

As the topic of this research is very sensitive and has direct linked with emotional state of an individual, therefore, considering research participants who are very young children, before conducting interviews and interactions about their experiences, researcher communicated with counselor team of IED-BRACU so that they can be contacted when needed.

3.12 Limitations of the study

Being an academic research there were some significant limitations in this study. There were some limitations of the researcher as well as challenge in identifying cases. The first limitation was that cases could not be identified from teacher's discussion and then it depended on parent's information. Therefore, there was a dependency on parent's timing during data collection which delayed the data collection process. Data collection was also delayed due to political unrest situation and a long vacation. This was severely hampered the frequency of data collection. Moreover, one parent refused and withdrawn to gave interview and therefore one case was dropped in the middle of data collection. As per teacher's reference and observation the case was selected where the boy act as bully as well as bullied by peers. This case could add more to this research as the case was of a student who though acted as bully through aggressive behavior but also he was abandoned and name called by his peers which made him being bullied. The boy was observed and informally rapport was done but due to his parent's disagreement the case had to drop. Hence, it took extra time to find another case.

Besides, as cases were selected based on parents information therefore it was not possible to explore gender perspective in this study. All three cases studied were on boys, it was not possible to study any case on girls as victim.

As bullying concept in early childhood is quite new issue and exploratory study, therefore it could be more intensive. But this study was done only for academic purpose. Hence time was constrained and resources were not available in practical manner. Nevertheless, efforts were given to overcome limitations as much as possible.

Chapter –IV: Findings

According to methodology, this study has in-depth investigation about individual perspective of bullying. There were cases on specific story on student's experiences. These cases have been developed based on in-depth interview of individual students and their parent's interview. In contrast, an individual student located within the cultural setting of the school; therefore, some aspects have also come up from school observation and teacher's focus group discussion. To get a complete understanding about the findings it started with the presentation of three cases. The cases were presented in pseudo names to maintain research ethics. Next data is organized based on emerging themes and patterns. The themes related to the research questions were elaborated here. Some important themes which support the findings were also be elaborated.

Demographic information of victim students: To get a clear picture about victim student's background some demographic information was collected. All of the victims were boys and belonged to middle class. Three of them lived in apartment where play space were not enough. They had toys but not enough space for outdoor play. Two of them were only son of their parent and one had a sister. Mother and father were graduated from universities and three of the mothers were housewives. The demographic information supplemented the picture that teacher's portrait about family and child's situation of home.

4.1 Description of the Cases:

Case Study 01

Reza and Priya were siblings who study in this school but in different classes. Reza was younger than Priya. Reza was a 6 years old boy who now a student in Grade one.

He loved to play video games and drawing. On weekends they went for drawing classes. He seemed to be quite attached with his sister. While observed, Reza found healthy, very calm and gentle in nature and also well disciplined.

The incident happened when he was in KG class. Abir was a boy who was a student in same class with Priya-elder sister of Reza. That boy Abir was also their neighbor. Often Abir used to come to play with Reza and Priya at their home. They even went to school together by Abir's Parent's car. As per Reza's description, one day, Abir accused Reza that he broke their car's door and after this their parent's mutually decided not to go to school together. Reza shared, "After this incident, he used to beat me, hit me or pushed whenever he saw me, even at playground or toilet" (Interview, child-01, 29.11.13). That seems since then whenever Abir meet Reza; he tried to hit him physically. This case came to serious attention on the day when Reza was playing with his friends at the classroom. Abir came and suddenly started hitting him on belly, chest, back and head. Reza fell off for his continuous hitting. His friends then tried to move Abir and called the teacher. At that time teacher was not around as that was a free time between classes. Teacher informed the mother as she usually stayed at parent's corner. Mother informed the father and took the child to canteen as he was crying a lot. That day, Reza did not stayed in class for full school time and mother took him home.

While sharing his feelings Reza said that he felt a huge pain as Abir hit him badly. He said, "He hit me a lot. I got severely hurt. I feel very bad. He hit me previously as well. Whenever I think about it I feel bad" (Interview, child-01, 29.11.13). He also shared that now he does not talk with Abir, he stay away from him so that he cannot

hit him. When he was asked that what he do when this kind of incident happened with other he said he usually did nothing but complained to teacher.

From mother's interview it was learnt that for two/three days Reza was not responded properly and shocked. Reza at that time did not talk to anyone, often said that feeling pain.

> I felt that he was getting fatigue gradually. So I took him to doctor's chamber. Doctor did X-ray and gave pain killer. For 7/8 days I didn't send him to school. He remain silent for some days, didn't play. Sometimes he also complained about headache or stomach ache. (Interview parent -01, 29.11.13)

The mother tried to take good care of him by listening to his wish. Cooked his favorite foods or let him watch cartoons. Reza's mother shared her perception about school environment. She shared that when she admitted Priya in this school she was pleased about the school. That's why she admitted Reza. But from last year she found the school environment is getting worst. She also added, "I feel like this year (2013) became so noisy. Classmates tended to fight with each other" (Interview parent -01, 29.11.13). She also shared that, she cannot give good things to her children as other students broke or clutter. When she heard about the incident she also got nervous. She found that Reza was having asthma attack due to this hits. She along with Reza's father took him to home as soon as possible. She felt very sorry seeing her son's condition. She said, "I feel very sorry when I saw my son at that situation. I was also started crying" (Interview, parent -01, 29.11.13).

After this incident, she shared that a warning notice had been circulated amongst all students in the school by school authority about victimizing other. A copy of this notice was found from Reza's school diary during conversation with his mother.

The notice was following:
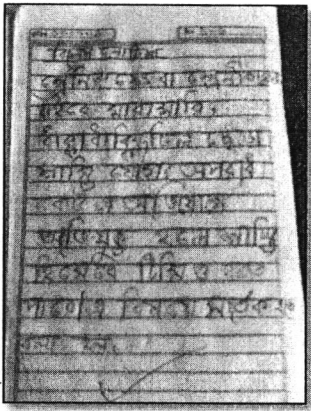
Special Notice

"Fighting, pushing, throwing or poking inside or outside classroom is punishable crime. If anyone accused might get TC. Warning is providing for caution."

Source: Reza's School diary, dated 08.09.13 received from Parent's interview, 29.11.13

While interview Reza's mother shared that after the warning notice many guardians became aware about their child's behavior. As a result these kinds of behavior were reduced in number. Even Abir's parents apologized to Reza's mother about their son's behavior.

Case Study 02:

This was a case of a boy named "Marzuk" who now a student in Grade two. He had been bullied for long time by one of his peer a student of his section who had transferred to another section. Marzuk was a playful boy who loved to play inside home and at playground. He often missed his tiffin to play for longer time. One of his favorite games was "Chor-dakat-Police"- A group game to catch thief. He also loved to run around the playground, play video games in computer and watch cartoons. Marzuk's mother also shared that he has many kind of play materials like: scooter, cycle but there is no specific play corner for him at home. Even parent cannot take him for vacation as the father remains very busy with works. According to his mother, Marzuk seems quite restless but he usually plays alone. Never hit anyone. He is quite social and love to socialize with others.

This case reflects Marzuk's experience of bullying when he was Grade one. It took time to recall the incident as few months have been passed. As per student's description, Marzuk was copying some write-up from blackboard in his copy book. It was just before tiffin time. He shared the incident as this, "I was copying from blackboard. Zaman was playing with another boy. Suddenly he pushed and I fell off on the chalk-duster holder corner beside the blackboard" (Interview, child-27.01.14). That means, Zaman was playing with another student not with him but suddenly he embraced and pushed Marzuk. His head cut off and he cried a lot. As it happened inside the class and in front of the teacher, therefore, teacher called Marzuk's mother. Mother took the child at first to the medical center. After providing first aid, they recommend to took him to hospital as medical centre's facilities were only limited to first aid. There doctor gave stitch to his head. Marzuk got afraid and cried a lot. His fear was visible through his expression while he was describing this incident. While talking, he also shared "All times Zaman used to hit me. There is another boy named Abir who also hit me. Poked me in eyes or in belly, mucked my bench" (Interview, child-02, 27.01.14). When Marzuk asked about his feelings, it was observed that he stopped for a while during talking about the incident. He shared that he cried a lot as he was seriously injured.

Marzuk's mother considered this incident as an accident. She shared during interview:

> At that time students were getting hurt almost every day. Bullying incidents were happening in many cases within any class. There was also a road accident took place in front of the school on that day. So I got scared when I heard about my son's incident. (Interview, parent-02, 05.02.14)

She became very concerned when she saw that Marzuk got hurt on head. She shared her feelings as following, "when I saw that he got hurt on head, I got scared. I felt very bad and cried" (Interview, parent-02, 05.02.14). She also shared that bully's mother was apologized to her for this incident. That boy was very naughty and disturbs almost everyone. She also said that after this incident she forbid Marzuk to socialize with that boy-Zaman but Marzuk still sometimes play with that boy. She consoled her son by saying that it was an accident. She explained that teachers are quite cordial but it is difficult to control many children at a time. Consequently children may get involved in such mischief. Hence teachers need to remain careful.

Nevertheless, Zaman did not apology to Marzuk. Marzuk shared that he does not talk with Zaman anymore. Even this boy does not read in his class. He also shared that if anyone disturb or bullying another, he complained to teacher. He does not hit or beat anyone.

Case Study 03:

The case concerns about Ayan a 6 years old boy who was bullied by a student inside the classroom and beyond. Ayan is a healthy, gentle and humble boy. He loves to play guitar. During interview he played three songs in guitar. According to his mother he is very calm and social in nature. Love to meet with new people and can easily cope with new persons. He usually does not hurt anyone and quite shy about demanding anything. Even if he likes any food, he comes to his mother and asks whether it is possible to get more. His humble nature was also noticed during interview.

From this year, Ayan started to go to English version in grade two. Before that he studied KG Class and Grade one in Bengali version in the same school. It came to attention within the first week of his new class that one of his classmates, Tahseen

used to bully him physically and verbally. He shared one incident accordingly, "One day in tiffin time, Tahseen pushed me to the ground. I fell and cut my hand" (Interview, child-03, 15.03.14). This boy also used to snatch his tiffin, threat him if not gave his tiffin. Another day, this boy broke Ayan's spectacle by punching. This incident happened during class time in front of teacher. He complained to teacher and the teacher wrote a warning notice to that boy's diary. 2/3 days later, the boy again pushed him to the ground and Ayan fell down and broke his spectacle once again. From parents interview it revealed that all these incidents happened just within two weeks of his new class. Moreover, as he wear spectacles, some of his classmates called him "Chasmish" (Meaning-Nerd who wear spectacles) and some called him "Mota" (Meaning fatty). When Ayan was asked about his feelings regarding incidents, he said:

> I cried because I got hurt as my spectacles had broken. I did not want to talk to Tahseen (bully, pseudo name). I complained to teacher. But sometimes if teacher was not around I also hit him. I do this because he hit me intentionally. (Interview, child-02, 27.01.14)

When he was asked about his feelings when other student's name called, he shared that he did not mind if anyone call him "Chasmish" as they made fun by this. But he feels very angry when they called him "Mota".

When parent's was asked about her child's feelings, she shared that Ayan was very upset and asking- "Why you have changed my class? I do not want to go to school". She shared her feelings as following:

> It took almost 01 month to make him understand and console. I also got upset during that time that whether my decisions went wrong? Did I do anything

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wrong by transferring him from Bengali medium to English medium? (Interview, parent-03, 15.03.14).

She also shared that, when she went to talk to teacher for the first incident of breaking spectacle, teacher said that she could not punish the bully because Ayan opposed to do so. Hence, teacher reported the incident to Tahseen's parents and told her to apologize to Ayan's mother.

While interview, Ayan replied that he does nothing if any bullying incident happens with any other student in his class. If any incident happens with his close friends then only he informs teacher. He shared that he does not even know names of all peers in his class. He also shared that he along with his friends sometimes hit Tahseen or socially abandoned him by taking "Aari". "Aari" is a Bengali term by which symbolically one cuts off relation and stops communicating with other. It is very popular way among young children to abandon any child socially in Bangladeshi culture.

While discussing mother's perception, Ayan's mother shared that Tahseen's mother said sorry once but when repeatedly it happened, the mother refused to accept that her son did anything. Hence Ayan's mother suggested that, it might difficult for bully's parent to accept but school authority should have some rules to acknowledge them and make them understand to control their child.

4.2 Analysis based on themes:

Patterns of data and themes were identified by reviewing the descriptions of cases, transcripts of interviews, focus group discussion as well as observations, field notes and journals. Specific data were analyzed and then interpretations were written in the form of memos. Then data were organized into different themes and subthemes. The

priority was given to the data which was relevant to the research questions. The following were the key themes as per research questions and findings derived from the data:

4.2.A. Nature of Bullying in early childhood

      i.   Types of bullying

     ii.   Reason behind bullying

4.2.B. Effect on students as individual

    iii.   How children perceived bullying as victim

    iv.   How children respond to bullying behavior

Descriptions based on the themes are given below:

4.2.A. Nature of Bullying in early childhood:

Nature of bullying was found from cases, focus group discussion of teachers and school observation. This theme described according to following subthemes. Sub themes provide more in-depth information about the nature of bullying in early childhood.

i.   **Types of bullying:** From three cases pushing, hitting, mucking on bench, slapping etc. were found as bullying. One of the victim students described:

> I was playing with my friends inside classroom. Abir came to class and started hitting me. He punched me on belly, chest and head. Teacher was not in the class. I fell off after these hitting. My friends pushed him away and called the teacher. He beat me a lot and I got hurt badly. (Interview, Child-01, 29.11.13)

Another student's description was:

> I was copying from blackboard just before tiffin time. Zaman was playing with another student and suddenly he embraced me and pushed. I fell off to duster keeping area near the board. I got hurt and had cut on my head. I cried a lot. Zaman used to beat me all the time. (Interview, child 02, 27.01.14)

From above discussion, these behaviors can be classified as physical aggression. On the other hand, some other behaviors were also found during observations and teacher's discussion. When children were observed in classroom situation, some behavior seemed quite common as classroom culture. When the class was observed during class time and in parent's day girls also do some kind of aggression. A girl slapped another girl in the classroom which was overlooked by teacher. One boy scratched in another's copy. No one complained. It seems that, they do not feel bad being annoyed by peers.

From teacher's discussion, it was also clearly found that majority student's complain came on physical or verbal aggression by peers. When teachers were asked about disruptive behaviors of students they respond accordingly. One teacher described:

> Children fight and complain against each other. Also, they poked with pen, scratched in books or copies, erase writings, name called. Most of the cases, they pushed each other while playing, threw piece of small bricks or bottle while playing football. (FGD, 12.11.13)

Name calling was also found as quite common verbal aggression. In one case, name calling was found accordingly when asked:

> My friend called me "Chasmish". I did not feel bad. I did not mind if anyone called me as they made fun by this. But I felt very angry when one called me "Mota" (Interview, child-03, 15.03.14)

During observations in tiffin time and class time, name calling found as following:

> One boy was playing with friends and some boys and girls called him "TC". It seemed that the boy got quite annoyed by this and tried to chase who ever called it. It happened four times. Wherever he was moving, he was teased like this. (Observation-02, 16.11.13)

While exploring types of bullying it was found that most of the form of bullying was physical and verbal. The place and time of bullying was classroom and playground.

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ii. **Reason behind bulling:** Victim students mentioned some specific reasons in three cases. A specific reason behind bullying was mentioned in Case one by the victim. He described it as following:

> He lived near our home and he used to come to our place to play. We often went to school by their car. One day, Abir said, *you broke our door of the car. So do not ever ride our car.* And after this, whenever Abir saw he beat me and threatened me. (Interview, child-01, 29.11.13)

Reza thus described the relation with the bully and starting of bullying behaviors and also stated that it's Abir's nature to annoy everyone.

Bully's nature and characteristics was identified as a "naught boy" and suggests this as one of the reason for bullying. In three cases bullies were identified as "naughty boy" by parents and by victim students. Following are excerpts from a victim student:

> There was a boy named Tahseen in my class who is very naughty. He snatched my tiffin and hit me. Once he hit me from back and I got hurt. If I do not give him tiffin, he threatens me that he will complain to teacher or he will beat me. He was really a naughty boy. (Interview, child-03, 15.03.14)

A parent stated as following, "After the incident, Abir's parents came to me. They were very ashamed about their son's behavior and apologize. They said, *it's his nature*" (Interview, parent-01, 29.11.13). This quote also explained about parent's understanding and perception about bullying incident. Likewise case one, parents perceive bully boy's as naughty in nature in other two cases as well. Case one mother explained the following, "They were friends and even I forbid him not mix with Zaman but my son did not listen. As my son was friend of that naughty boy that's why this happened" (Interview, parent-02, 02.02.14).

In case three, mother also realized that her son was victimized by classmates and she also mentioned that the bullied boy was naughty.

Along with children and parents, teachers also explained some reason's of bullying and peer victimization. From FGD it was noted that over all teachers seemed aware about student's annoying behavior and they found it challenging to deal with. During discussion teacher's mentioned that children's attitude is not to share and to complain against one another. When teachers were asked some of their responses were following:

> When children do not get enough space for playing and showing naughtiness at home, they burn it at classroom and in school. This hampers my classroom management. I feel that children's characteristics are changing day by day than it used to be in our times. Now I cannot stop student's even punishing them by hands back or standing up. They complained against each other a lot that I am now tired of it (Teacher's FGD, 12.11.13).

Data revealed that teacher considered children's nature and attitude as barrier to peer socialization process. Teachers were also asked that whether victimizations were intentional or repeated or not. One of the teacher's responses are following and other's also supported her:

> No they do not. At this age it not happened. May be they do something today and will not repeat tomorrow. Even they sat beside the same person against whom they complained a minute ago. Yet there were exceptions in 2/1 children. They were different. Everyone complain against them. They were hyperactive. (Teacher's FGD, 12.11.13)

Other teachers also supported that there are some children almost in every class where everyone complain against their behavior towards other. But they repeat again, that intentional and repeated victimization do not happen in KG, Grade one and Grade two.

Hence, after analyzing all the comments from different sources it can be said that reason of this bullying varied. But one common thing was found that both adults and children think that bullying is nature of the bully and that's why they victimize others.

4.2.B. Effect on students as individual:

This theme was derived from in-depth interview of parents and students. Based on this, cases were also developed. Therefore, this theme will be discussed only based on the cases. This theme is divided into following sub-themes:

i. **How children perceived bullying as victim:** Being bullied was never good for children. Children as victim suffered not only physically but also emotionally. Here some effects were described based on findings:

Physical Effect: One common consequence found in almost three cases that being bullied student's felt physical pain such as stomach ache, head ache etc. In three cases physical bullying was quite prominent. Among three cases one example is given herewith where Reza, a victim student shared his feeling as following:

> I fell off to the ground by his continuous hitting. I get so hurt that I can't tell teacher anything. I feel very bad as I seriously got hurt. He hurt me previously also, pushed me, and kicked me. I am not afraid of him but do not feel good when I saw him. (Interview, child-01, 29.11.13)

Emotional Effect: Being bullied also brings adherers emotional effect on children. The victim of case one was severely bullied and therefore he had adverse effect. It was trauma for him when he was severely beaten. The description was provided in the case already. Moreover, case three was different than other two cases as this child went to a new class. Though he was also victimized physically some impact was found on his behavior. When the child, Ayan, was asked about how he is doing in his

new class he replied following, "I do not like my new class. I feel bad" (Interview, child-03, 15.03.14).

From interviews it was found that children's feelings were better understood by their mother's description. Mother's can recall what happened and how it affected their son. Ayan's mother's description about his son's feelings also indicated same emotional effect. She said, "He was so upset that he questioned me, why you change my class? I do not want to go to school" (Interview, parent-03, 15.03.14). She expressed her feelings in such way that she was also got upset that whether her decision was wrong or not as she changed his class. She said, "I feel confused, did my decision was wrong? Should I not change his class?"

Therefore, it was clear that children not only physically affected but also feel depressed and suppressed to go to school or face the bully.

ii. **How children respond to bullying behavior:** A common respond was found in three cases that victims abandoned the bully. All of three victims showed tendency not to face the bully. They refused to talk and interact with them. The excerpt from a victimized students are as follows:

> I do not talk to him anymore. Stay away from him. I do this so that he cannot hit me anymore. I am not afraid of him. I just do not like him. I stay away so that he cannot be able to hit me anymore. (Interview, child-01, 29.11.13)

Hence, another aspect also revealed that victim child used to complain teachers about bullying. Specially, if it happened with their friends they definitely respond and complained. During interview, Marzuk the boy in case two shared as following, "If such thing happened in my class, I complained to teacher. I do not protest or hit anyone"(Interview, child-02, 27.01.14).

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However, they do not stand for their classmates who are not intimate to them. Reza the victim in case one shared that, "If such thing happened with others I asked them, why you are beating? But if anyone beat my best friend, I complained to teacher and warn that student that, you will get T.C."(Interview, child-01, 29.11.13).

In case three, victim told that he also beaten the bully when teachers were away. This has been already quoted in the case description.

It was found that children usually express their feelings and complained teacher about bullying incident. But they talk about their experiences with their parents. They cry or share their suppression about being bullied. An example from case 03 is already mentioned in earlier of this section in this regards.

4.3. Other Themes:

In addition to these cases, some relevant information was found from observations, teacher's discussion and parent's interviews. These themes will also help to get a deeper understanding on bullying in early years in Bangladeshi culture. Themes are discussed below:

Play pattern of children: From teacher's discussion some important findings were found about children's play pattern. It was a serious concern raised by teachers during discussion. Teachers shared that student's play pattern is changing day by day. They are now interested in rough and tumble plays like jumping from heights, throwing empty bottle to other as ball, pushing while running. According to a teacher:

> When children go for play, it does not limit with playing. They pushed each other or throw small piece of brick as well. The playful environment has not remained anymore. A destructive tendency is prevalent among them now days. (Teacher's FGD, 12.11.13)

A mother also shared her concern about children's play as following:

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I am seriously concerned about the large field where older students use to play. I feel it is risky. Younger students may get injured as it is not separated. Many children got hurt as they play roughly (Interview, parent-01, 29.11.13).

Playing pattern was observed rigorously while observation. Throwing during play was found during school observation in tiffine time. The tiffine time play was observed twice. One of the observations is given below:

> At the playground near primary level main buildings, some boys and girls were running and playing. It was observed that 4-5 boys were playing with an empty plastic bottle. They were throwing this as ball and act as playing football. (Observation-01, 07.11.13)

From other observations it seemed that this become a kind of play among children. Play pattern of children at home was asked during interview with parents. Response showed that children used to play with mobile and video games at home for recreation.

Another interesting perspective of play was found during observation and interview with children. During observation of tiffin time it was found that boys and girls do not socialize with each other even during play. Two examples from observation are given following:

01)   Most children were playing and running in the field. But boys were running and playing with boys and girls were playing with girls. (Observation, 07.11.13, 16.11.13)

02)   During interview with Ayan, while asked about classmates and friends he shared: I have 42 peers in my class. Everyone is not my friend and I do not know everyone's name. He also shared that *"I do not have any female friends. We do not play or mix with girls."* As reason he also replied, *"Girls are bad. I do not like them."*

While observing classroom, it was also found that boys and girls do not sit together. Above all findings it can be said that gender segregation was prominent in school culture even in early age.

Parent's perception and suggestion regarding bullying: During interview, parents shared their perceptions about incidents and some suggestion for addressing bullying at school. For example Marzuk's mother perception was following:

> At that time lot of accidents were happening almost every day at school. That day also an accident happened in front of the school. So, when I heard about Marzuk's incident, I got afraid. I feel bad and cried. She also shared that children may get involved in such mischievous (behavior). Class teachers should be careful. They can keep eye on naughty boys in this regards. (Interview, parent-02, 20.02.14)

It was found that mothers understanding regarding bullying is similar. In case one and case three mother's understanding was similar. Therefore, a suggestion regarding addressing bullying was shared here:

> School authority should have provision to inform parent if bullying happened not teachers. Usually, teachers shared these incidents with parents and tell parents to resolve among themselves. It sometimes created misunderstandings among parents. Many parents do not believe that their child could do anything wrong. They might say that my child do not do anything wrong at home. Therefore, if school authority takes care of the issues and inform then parents have to understand. (Interview, Parent-03, 15.03.14)

Teachers were also asked about parents perceptions and understandings. At one point all teachers agreed that parents do not give quality time to children and their patience level is decreasing. One teacher shared:

> Parents do not let children play at home with other children around their house. They involve children in different activities without knowing their

interest. They do not let their child share with others. And this non-sharing attitude creates conflict among peers. (Teacher's FGD, 12.11.13)

Teacher's understanding & role of addressing bullying:

Teachers understanding of bulling was understood from the focus group discussion and initiatives they took during incidents. Teacher discussed many important issues of bullying and their hands on experience about addressing bullying issues. Teacher's understanding on bullying concept was expressed when they talked about different behaviors of children. They identify fighting, poking, pushing, throwing, erasing others write up from copy as form of bullying. Even continuous complaining about others was also identified as a kind of victimization. Teacher also identified playing patterns as bullying. One teacher said:

> They saw action movies, cartoon, play video games where they see only fighting, poking, jumping from heights. So, when they come at school, they apply these with their friends. It reflected in their characters as well as in their natures. (Teacher's FGD, 12.11.13)

In respond to how teacher handle peer conflicts, they said following:

> We bring two children in front of each other, explain them, console the victim and tell the bully to apologize. Sometimes tell to change their seat. If continues, then punish. (Teacher's FGD, 12.11.13)

Along with that, when asked about types of punishment, the teacher replied:

> Standing up, putting hands at back, handwritings are some forms of punishment. We also discourage students who continuously complained against someone. (Teacher's FGD 12.11.13)

In regards to how teacher address and communicate parents about peer conflicts. A teacher said that:

> Parents usually do not admit that their child could do anything mischievous. Few parents shared and requested teachers help. Some also said that their child might be provoked by other students. (Teacher's FGD 12.11.13).

52

The study intended to gain an in-depth understanding of bulling incident in one school context. Therefore, this study dealt with only three cases of bullying in early childhood and its context. It has been found that bullying is prevalent in schools even from early grade. Nature of bullying was found mostly as physical and verbal aggression. Among physical bullying most common were kicking, pushing, hitting and throwing. Name calling and threatening was found as verbal bullying. Reason behind bullying was evidently described from teachers view rather from student's perception. Aggressive nature of children and play pattern were described as reason for bullying mostly. In the issue of student's experience, it has been found that they were both physically and emotionally affected.

Teachers and parents perceptions were also came as findings. Parent's concern for managing their child's experience was found regarding handling bullying incident. Whereas teachers understanding and perception on bullying was also came into light.

Thus the overall findings helped to bring a comprehensive picture of bullying incident, student's experience as bullying and adults perception in context of one school.

Chapter-V: Discussion

5.1 Discussion

This study was an exploratory study in nature as research intention was to gain in-depth understanding about nature of bullying as well as its effect through victim student's perspective and their experience. The primary focus of this study was to understand the nature of bullying; types and reason behind bullying were explored. Along with this, to understand student's perspectives, experiences and how they respond were also explored.

From collected data findings were driven as per research focus. Three cases have been developed based on real story. Moreover, there were also other themes apart from research questions which were quite strong evidence to support findings. Themes have been found to gain deeper understanding on bullying incident in the context of Bangladesh. It was quite similar with the understanding that drew while exploring opportunity of this study and schools understanding on bullying.

Over all findings could be discussed in following themes:

Nature of Bullying: While exploring nature of bullying in early childhood, most of the bullying was found in the form of physical bullying and verbal bullying. Pushing, kicking, hitting, throwing empty bottle were found as most prominent bullying behaviors. While name calling, snatching tiffin, threatening were also found. Place of bulling incident were identified in classroom, playground and toilet. The aggressive behavior of bully was found mostly as reason behind bullying or being bullied. Here, this aggressive behavior was mentioned as "mischief or naughtiness" and bullies were identified as "naughty" boys. Hence, regarding age and gender differences in bullying it was also found that boys are more likely to be involved in bullying. These findings

are similar to the study done by Vlachou, Andreou, Botsogluo & Didaskalou (2011) which revealed that pre-schoolers are capable of displaying different form of bullying such as verbal, physical, social exclusion and rumor spreading.

Therefore, it can be concluded that bullying in early childhood is also exist in Bangladesh and forms of aggression are mostly physical and verbal.

Children Attitude: As bulling is a social phenomenon, this study also revealed that children tended to avoid or socially withdraw and detach from the bully. From Yoleri & Gursimsek (2012) statistically significant difference were also found between approach/withdrawal, persistence, reactivity among preschool children by collecting data through a Peer Victimization Scale by Ladd and Kochenderfer-Ladd (2002) and The Short Temperament Scale by Prior, Sanson & Oberklaid (1989). Data revealed that approach/withdrawal and reactivity scores of boys were higher than girls. During gender socialization boys were more physically active, dominant and aggressive than girls. This study supports the evidence found in this research as well. It was found that after being victimized, children generally do not socialize with bully, they complained against the bully and do not want to be their friend. On the other hand, as three of the cases were on boys that indicated boys are more prone to physically being bullied than girls. However, it does not means that girls do not do bullying or not get bullied. Some evidence from classroom and playground observation indicated that girls may also do bullying.

Effects of Bullying: The effects of being bullied and of bullying others in elementary school on longer run education, health and risky behaviors were investigated. It has been found that being bullied and bullying reduces GPA by around 20% of standard deviation from average (Eriksen, Nielsen & Simonsen, 2012). While in this study, the

effects of being bullied has been studied based on student's individual experience. Effects of bullying on students as individual were studied rigorously on three student's experience. It has been found that, bullying effected children not only physically but also they got depressed and in some case suppressed. This was found in one case, where the child had suffered from occasional headache and stomach ache. This study supports the findings of Dake, Price & Telljohan (2003) where they mentioned that victimized children are more likely to have problems in sleeping, bed wetting, occasional headaches or stomach aches.

Teachers and parents understanding on bullying: As it was assumed during prepare the proposal that teachers and adults do not have clear understanding on bullying, it also reflected in the findings. Moreover, different findings came that, teachers have strong perception that children from early age couldn't do intentional bullying. They fight, bully and then again mixed with each other. Some findings from observation also complement this data. It seemed that children are accustomed with these kinds of behaviors. During observation and teacher's discussion it was found that they do not have much knowledge about bullying and they often merged it with peer conflict as well as they identify bully as naughty kids.

Parents' understanding on bullying incident was also not quite clear as per findings. Parents' often mixed up the feelings of being bullied of the child with his social adjustment capacity and often took it as accidents. Though they way they take care of their child was sensitive for children. In this regard it can be said that they are responding quite appropriately with children not having the appropriate perception.

Teacher initiatives: They often give feedback to bully by punishing them or wrote warning notice in their diaries. They communicate with parents when only incidents

take place and asked bully's parents to apologies to victim's parents. Therefore, it could be said that their management of bully incidents was not sensitive.

Byers, Caltabiano & Caltabiano (2011) showed that a greater percentage of the teachers handled bullying incidents by focusing on the bully and ensuring that the bully was suitably punished. This study also revealed that teachers tend to punish bully by verbal warning or complaining to their parents.

Overall, it can be said that this study reveals a deeper understanding of bullying incidents, nature of bullying, children's experience as well as adult's perception regarding bullying. Both adults (teachers and parents) and children perception are highlighted as there is not sufficient orientation on bullying in early years in Bangladesh as well as in Dhaka. Even they consider the incidents as peer conflict and children and adults perceived these quite normal. It seems that teachers, parents as well as children seem accustomed with these kinds of behaviors.

5.2 Recommendation:

Based on the findings of the study, the following is the recommendations:

- *In schools there should be clear orientation on bulling for teachers*

Bullying incident reduced in this study when school authority announced the special warning notice. Therefore, school should have clear understanding of bullying behaviors and know how to respond. Hence schools may have code of conduct for appropriate behaviors. According to National Education Policy 2010, there should be code of conduct for student behaviors for their welfare. Therefore, implication of a code of conduct may reduce bullying behaviors by teachers.

- *Awareness programme on anti-bullying for students*

There should be a programme on anti-bullying in schools for raising awareness of students also. They should know about the tolerance and socialization with peers. Teachers may help students to develop a positive and friendly environment for learning and sharing through this programme.

- *Counseling service in school*

Every child has rights to be taken care of appropriately for physical and emotional development. Therefore, when a child got victimized, teachers should have provision to support the child emotionally and psychologically. As most of the bullying incident happened in schools therefore, schools should have provision of a child counselor with whom teachers can communicate and support the victim child. Moreover, teachers should have capacity to handle bullying incident. An anti-bullying prevention program can be initiated.

- *Large scale research is needed to get more information of prevalence of school bullying in early years in Bangladesh.*

This study is a small evidence of prevalence of school bullying in early years in the context of Bangladesh. Therefore, to improve learning situation as well as quality of education, it is important to identify and prevent bullying incidents that may hamper learning to be joyful. Hence prior to any programme complete understanding and situation analysis is needed.

Conclusion

A child born as a biological being and through a series of socialization process he/she became a social being. After family, school is the most important social institution where they come across with many adults as well as peers. Therefore, any disruption in this socialization process may affect a child for lifetime. Shepherd, (2011) reported in CNN on White House conference on bullying prevention where President Barack Obama quoted, "if there's one goal of this conference, it's to dispel the myth that bullying is just a harmless rite of passage or an inevitable part of growing up. It's not. Bullying can have destructive consequences for our young people. And it's not something we have to accept".

Since long time many research have been done to find the prevalence of bullying in early years as well as its effect on children. Series of anti-bullying interventions and policies were taken by schools, states as well as countries. Nevertheless, bullying issues in Bangladesh has not been discovered in such wide range. It's only limited to the boundaries of secondary schools mostly for girls. Hence, it is expected that the findings of this research may provide a clear evidence of prevalence of school bullying in elementary level in the context of Bangladesh. The findings on nature of bullying, students experience is similar to data of reviewed literature.

This study may help to zoom in to learning environment in primary level in order to get an understanding, thus improve the existing situation of bullying in Bangladesh as well as will contribute in anti-bullying advocacy and policy development. Though this study was done for academic purpose, it is also an opportunity to explore and learn about an undermined educational problem. Through this research, I was able to learn a detail process of conducting a qualitative research and preparing the report. Not only

that I have also gained deeper understanding on bullying at early age. I realized that being bullied at early age may also have adverse effect on children as they may get affected physically as well as emotionally. As I am working in education sector therefore, this will be very helpful for me to do more research on educational problem in order to improve education system to an extent.

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ANNEX-1

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDELINE FOR STUDENTS

Demographic Information:

Name:

Age:

Sex:

Class:

Theme of the questions:

> **Rapport building question:**
>
> (Like/dislike about school, classmate, teachers, etc.)
>
> **Guiding Themes/Questions:**

- Have he/she ever been victimized/ criticized/ poked by peer? (nature of bullying, relationship with perpetuator)

- Detail description of the incident (the frequency, severity of the behavior and description of the bully)

- Place of the incident. (Where did it happen? Classroom, washroom, playground etc.)

- Feelings of the student as well as the way he/she perceived it?

- What are the coping strategies he/she uses to overcome?

- What are the reporting mechanisms used? (Did he/she report teacher or parent?)

- What he/she do if same incident happen with other student?

ANNEX-2

FGD GUIDELINE FOR TEACHERS

Topic: Teacher's perception on bullying

Date & Time:

Duration:

Member:

Demographic information:

Name:

Sex:

Age Range:

Qualification:

Discussion Guideline:

- What is the understanding on socialization at school and emotional development during early childhood?

- What is the understanding on peer victimization at school during early childhood?

- What are the natures of the behavior found as peer victimization?

- What is the role a teacher play/ existing practices when a child experience bullying/ peer victimization?

- What is the role parent play/ existing practices dealing bullying/ peer victimization with students and with teachers?

- What are the expected roles of action that can be taken as anti-bullying at home or as parenting process?

- What are the expected roles of action that can be taken as anti-bullying at school according to teacher?

ANNEX-3

PARENTS INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Date of interview:

Name of the Child:	DOB:
Respondent Name:	Relation with Child:
Mother's Name:	Age:
Occupation:	
Educational Qualification:	
Father's Name:	Age:
Occupation:	
Educational Qualification:	
Contact & Address:	
Monthly Income of the Family (Approx.):	
Types of the Family: ☐ Nuclear ☐ Extended ☐ Single	
Number of Family Members:	
Position no. of the child among sibling:	

Home environment: (Condition of the house, apartment or house, separate room for child)

How parent interact with the child: (extent of spending time, listening to child etc.)

What is Child's temperament according to parent?

Parent's perception on school environment:

How is the school environment? (Classroom, playground, play types, play time, play materials, teachers mode of interaction, instruction)

Parent's perception on the incident happened with the child:

How parent play role/ handle the incident: (how console the child, specific activities with child, specific interaction with teacher)

ANNEX-4

Consent Form for the Parents

Research title: Bullying in Early Years at School: Case Study

Name of the Researcher: Sheikh Nishat Nazmi

Institution: Institute of Educational Development, BRAC University.

Purpose of the research
As a part of my Masters Degree requirement from the Institute of Educational Development (IED) - BRAC University I have to conduct a research in order to explore bullying incidents in from student's perspective.

Expectation from the respondents
If agreed, respondents will be expected to share basic information regarding family background and his/her child's temperament. The interview may take 45-60 minutes depending upon the participants' response and availability.

Risks and benefits
There is no risk for the respondents for participating in this study and but directly or indirectly parents and children may be benefited in future if any intervention program incorporate your felt needs in socialization process for children.

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

Future use of information
Some of the information collected from this study may be kept for future use. However, in such cases information and data supplied to other researchers, will not conflict with or violate the maintenance of privacy, anonymity and confidentiality of information identifying participants in any way.

Right not to participate and withdraw
Your participation in the study is voluntary, and you are the sole authority to decide for and against your participation in this study. Refusal to take part in the study will involve no penalty.

If you agree to my proposal of participating in my study, please indicate that by putting your signature in the specified space below.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Signature of Researcher	Signature of Participant
Date:	Date:

Consent Form for Teachers

Research title: Bullying in Early Years at School: Case Study
Name of the Researcher: Sheikh Nishat Nazmi
Institution: Institute of Educational Development, BRAC University.

Purpose of the research
As a part of my Masters Degree requirement from the Institute of Educational Development (IED) - BRAC University I have to conduct a research in order to explore bullying incidents in from student's perspective.

Expectation from the respondents
If agreed, respondents will be expected to share information regarding school children's socialization process and children's experience in peer victimization. The focus group discussion may take 45-60 minutes depending upon the participants' response and availability.

Risks and benefits
There is no risk for the respondents for participating in this study and but directly or indirectly school, teachers and students may be benefited in future if any intervention program incorporate your felt needs in socialization process for children.

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

Future use of information
Some of the information collected from this study may be kept for future use. However, in such cases information and data supplied to other researchers, will not conflict with or violate the maintenance of privacy, anonymity and confidentiality of information identifying participants in any way.

Right not to participate and withdraw
Your participation in the study is voluntary, and you are the sole authority to decide for and against your participation in this study. Refusal to take part in the study will involve no penalty.

If you agree to my proposal of participating in my study, please indicate that by putting your signature in the specified space below.

Sl no.	Signature of Participant	Date
01.		
02.		
03.		
04.		
05.		
06.		

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Signature of Researcher
Date: