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# Play-Oriented Pre-Primary Curriculum in Bangladesh: A Socio-Cultural Analysis of the Changing Pattern of Learning Practices

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# Abstract

Growing global concern to provide young children with the best start for life-long learning foregrounds play as central to an effective holistic curriculum (McLachlan, Fleer, & Edwards, 2010, 2013; Mueller, 2011; Perry, 1998; Trawick-Smith, 2012; Wisneski & Reifel, 2011). Concepts, theories, approaches and practices to teaching and learning developed for Western and 'developed' countries underpin most of these play-based curriculum initiatives, thus making teaching and learning goals specific to the socio-cultural contexts in which they were developed. However, when such a curriculum is imported or imposed on developing countries, the values and aims of learning and teaching represented in those documents may be at odds with socio-cultural understandings, needs and goals of development of the communities they aim to serve. This is because the value of children's play activities as learning is determined by cultural values (Fleer, 2010b; Goncu, Mistry, & Mosier, 2000; Parmar, Harkness, & Super, 2004; B. Rogoff, 2003; Tobin, Hsueh, & Karasawa, 2009; Tudge, 2008). For example, in the culture of Bangladesh learning at school is considered a formal process, taken very seriously and not compared with trivial activities like play (Chowdhury, 2011). Thus, when an imported play-oriented pre-primary curriculum (PPC) was introduced in this context (NCTB, 2011), it created challenges for different stakeholders involved in early learning practices in divergent settings.

To explore adults' and young children's play-oriented early learning perceptions, approaches and practices in the context of Bangladesh, this socio-cultural study adopts a qualitative approach. It is conducted in three different settings in rural Bangladesh: pre-primary classrooms, with families and at teacher training centres. It investigates the impacts of recently introduced play-oriented PPC on the cultural nature of participation (of young children, parents, teachers and government officials who develop/implement policies) and the organisation of learning traditions in the early childhood education (ECE) context of Bangladesh. The work of Rogoff and her colleagues that posits culture as determining the organisation of learning traditions and the nature of participation within ECE practices(Paradise & Rogoff, 2009; Rogoff, 2014; Rogoff et al., 2007; Rogoff, Paradise, Arauz, Correa-Chávez, & Angelillo, 2003)provides the theoretical and analytical frameworks of this study. While examining how the studied adults' and young children's cultural practices evolve as they come across an imported play-oriented PPC, three multifaceted prisms—assembly-line instruction (ALI), guided repetition (GR) and learning by observation and pitching in (LOPI)—representing

distinct learning traditions in divergent cultural settings, guide data analysis and interpretation(Paradise & Rogoff, 2009; Rogoff, 2014; Rogoff, et al., 2007).

Major findings of this study suggest that no single prism (ALI/GR/LOPI) is adequate to represent the prevailing learning tradition in the given context. To explain the intricate patterns of play-oriented early learning practices in the studied context, this study introduces a new complex, flexible and transitional framework, termed *guided learning encouraging participation, initiatives and contribution* (GLEPIC). It is *complex*, because it merges *overlapping, contrasting* and *parallel* patterns of the features of three existing prisms. It is *flexible*, as it tries to fit divergent patterns of practices (within the classroom, family and teacher training centre) into one framework. It is *transitional*, as it addresses cultural practices that are undergoing a phase of transition (from rote-based learning to a play-oriented participatory learning approach) that may take a 'pure' shape (Rogoff, et al., 2007, p. 495) over generations. Findings further indicate new patterns of play-oriented teaching–learning practices that offer a qualitative change in Bangladesh's existing educational culture, particularly in terms of perceptions about play, teaching–learning and the relationship between teachers and learners. These patterns entail reconceptualisation of dominant discourses of play-oriented learning approaches and contribute to new theorising of non-Western understandings of play-oriented early childhood curriculum approaches. These findings can inform the thinking of EC professionals and government policymakers (in Bangladesh or societies with similar contexts) in framing culturally viable educational policies and curriculum approaches and their implementation through modifying teacher training strategies, considering teachers' and classrooms' realities, engaging families and, last but not least, recognising children's voices.

# Declaration of Originality

This thesis contains no material that has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any educational institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

(NURUN NAHAR CHOWDHURY)

21 March, 2017

# Ethics Approval

The research for this thesis has obtained the approval (no. CF12/3216 – 2012001599) from Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC) on 4 March 2013.

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# List of Abbreviations

ADB          Asian Development Bank

ALI           Assembly-Line Instruction

AusAID       Australian Agency for International Development

BE-CHT      Basic Education-Chittagong Hill Tracts

CIDA         Canadian International Cooperation Agency

DAP          Developmentally Appropriate Practices

DFID         Department for International Development (of the United Kingdom)

DPE          Directorate of Primary Education

EC            Early Childhood

ECE          Early Childhood Education

ECED        Early Childhood Education and Development

EU           European Union

GLEPIC      Guided Learning Encouraging Participation, Initiatives and Contribution

GO           Government Order

GPS          Government Primary School

GR           Guided Repetition

ICP           Intent Community Participation

INGO         International Non-Government Organisation

IP            Intent Participation

JICA          Japan International Cooperation Agency

LOPI         Learning by Observation and Pitching In

MUHREC     Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee

NAEYC      National Association for the Education of Young Children (of the United States of America)

| | |
|---|---|
| NCTB | National Curriculum and Textbook Board |
| NGO | Non-Government Organisations |
| NRPS | Non-Registered Primary School |
| OECD | Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development |
| PPC | Pre-Primary Curriculum |
| PPE | Pre-Primary Education |
| PPT | Pre-Primary Training |
| PTI | Primary Teacher Training Institute |
| RNGPS | Registered Non-Government Primary Schools |
| SIDA | Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency |
| TT | Teacher Trainer |
| TTC | Teacher Training Centre |
| TV | Television |
| UCSC | University of California Santa Cruz |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children's Emergency Fund |
| URC | Upazila Resource Centre |
| ZPD | Zone of Proximal Development |

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# Chapter 1: Introduction

As play has become embedded in policy frameworks, the early childhood community has been challenged to provide clear specification of how children learn through play, how play can be integrated into the curriculum through child- and adult-initiated activities, and how play-based pedagogy can be defined.(Wood, 2010, p. 12)

## 1.1 Introducing the Research

Growing global concern to provide young children with the best start for life-long learning foregrounds play as central to effective holistic curricula(McLachlan, et al., 2010, 2013; Mueller, 2011; Perry, 1998; Trawick-Smith, 2012; Wisneski & Reifel, 2011). Concepts, theories, approaches and practices to teaching and learning developed for Western and developed countries underpin most of these play-based curriculum initiatives, making teaching–learning goals specific to the socio-cultural contexts in which they were developed. However, when such curricula are imported to or imposed upon developing countries, the values and aims of learning and teaching represented in those documents may be at odds with socio-cultural understandings and needs and goals of development of the communities they aim to serve. This is because the value of children's play activities as learning is determined by cultural values(Fleer, 2010b; Goncu, et al., 2000; Parmar, et al., 2004; B. Rogoff, 2003; Tobin, et al., 2009; Tudge, 2008). For example, in the culture of Bangladesh, learning at school is considered a formal process and is taken very seriously; it is not compared with trivial activities such as play(Chowdhury, 2011). Thus, when an imported play-oriented pre-primary curriculum (PPC)was introduced in this context (NCTB, 2011), it created challenges for different stakeholders involved in early learning practices in divergent settings (such as the school, the home and the teacher training centre [TTC]). The present study investigates how Bangladesh's latest national play-oriented preschool curriculum influences teaching–learning practices and how these practices define the cultural nature of learning traditions in the early childhood years.

In the prevalent educational culture of Bangladesh, knowledge is imparted unilaterally from learned teachers to passive learners (Chowdhury & Rivalland, 2011). The learning process is rote-oriented and teaching practices are textbook-based. In overcrowded classrooms, teachers use verbal (lectures) or written (using chalks and black boards) methods as the medium of instruction. Assessment processes are pen–paper based. Hence, scores in the written examinations determine the level of learning achievements and quality of education (Banu,

2012; Directorate of Primary Education, 2008). Overall, the curricula are rigid and highly academic. At the primary level of education, students are often required to repeat a grade and there is an alarming rate of children dropping out (about 30%) of the education system (Directorate of Primary Education, 2012; MOPME, 2008). Limitations of the existing teaching–learning system, experiences of playful early learning projects of some voluntary non-government organisations (NGOs) and examples of developed and Western societies inspired the government to pursue an alternate curriculum model for its pre-primary education (PPE; note that PPE is itself a new addition to Bangladesh's public educational setup). This has resulted in the development of a play-oriented curriculum that is expected to lead towards a qualitative change in the dominant rote-based teaching–learning tradition of Bangladesh.

Bangladesh's latest PPC (developed in 2011 to provide one year of formal education to children aged 5 before entering Grade One) aims to provide the opportunity of joyful and interactive learning experiences that will foster young children's learning and development at the early stage of education(NCTB, 2011). To attain this goal, it incorporates play as a fundamental pedagogical approach to make teaching–learning more pleasurable and interactive. The curriculum is based on the principle that joyful learning experiences can attract young children to institutional learning environments and lay the foundation for their future learning(NCTB, 2011). As per the curriculum document, its aim is to:

[In Bengali language]

আনন্দময় ও শিশুবান্ধব পরিবেশে প্রাক-প্রাথমিক শিক্ষার বয়সী শিশুদের (৫+ বছর) বয়স ও সামর্থ্য অনুযায়ী শারীরিক, মানসিক, আবেগিক, সামাজিক, নান্দনিক, বুদ্ধিবৃত্তীয় ও ভাষাবৃত্তীয় তথা সার্বিক বিকাশে সহায়তা দিয়ে আজীবন শিখনের ভিত্তি রচনা করা এবং প্রাথমিক শিক্ষার অঙ্গনে তাদের সানন্দ ও স্বতঃস্ফূর্ত অভিষেক ঘটানো।

[Translated into English]

offer the pre-primary-aged (5+ years) children a pleasurable and spontaneous introduction to the sphere of primary education and provide them the base for lifelong learning by supporting their physical, psychological, emotional, social, aesthetic, cognitive and linguistic development and thus their holistic development, as per their age and ability, in a joyful and child-friendly environment. (NCTB, 2011, p. 7)

Play, underpinning the new preschool curriculum, offers new schooling experiences for young learners as well as for experienced teachers, parents(Chowdhury, 2011) and public officials

(who execute public educational policies into practice and have the responsibility to overview the implementation of the PPE). In the cultural context of Bangladesh, play refers to children's trivial activities that are more attuned with what is understood as 'games'. Parents strictly separate play from learning, as they believe that play distracts from learning (Chowdhury & Rivalland, 2012). Teachers rely on the two-week PPE training for their professional development (elaborated in Section 1.3), which enables them to realise and implement the new curriculum (Directorate of Primary Education, n.d.). Therefore, while offering great opportunities, the implementation of the play-oriented teaching–learning approach of the new PPE curriculum may also encounter many challenges in the context of Bangladesh.

The literature on various non-government educational projects (operated by non-profit organisations) in Bangladesh suggests that play-oriented teaching–learning has the potential to accelerate young children's learning and development in the given context (Kibria & Jain, 2009; RIB, 2012; Young & Morgan, 2010). However, certain issues remain unresolved. For example:

- How is play addressed as a pedagogical tool in the newly developed curriculum?
- What strategies do government officials use during teachers' professional development to convey play-oriented curriculum within a two-week span?
- How do teachers conceptualise and implement play-oriented curriculum in their classrooms after the short-term professional development?
- What challenges do teachers face while incorporating this new way of teaching and learning?
- How do young children experience play-oriented teaching–learning practices?
- How does the community value learning through play?
- What do the parents expect from the early childhood education (ECE) and what do they consider is the role of this new play-oriented curriculum in the education of their children?

Answers to these questions are essential if to realise the interpretation, implementation and impacts of the play-oriented curriculum and development of ECE policies in the context of Bangladesh.

Study of public PPC, particularly focusing on play, is rare in the context of Bangladesh. My pilot study sheds some light on this field (Chowdhury, 2011). In the year 2010, I conducted a minor study (as part of my Master's Degree) based on the experiences of the Operational

Framework for Pre-Primary Education(MOPME, 2008). This small study was conducted before the development and implementation of the new PPC. In that study (see Section 2.2 for details) I interviewed four teachers and four parents to explore their understandings of play-based teaching and learning as espoused in the interim pre-primary framework of Bangladesh. My analysis revealed that play has specific contextual meanings in the given society. For example, interviewed parents considered that play should be strictly controlled, as it interferes in their children's learning. In contrast, teachers appreciated the transition from rote learning towards a more 'didactic' play approach, which they considered favourable for teaching and learning (Chowdhury, 2011).

While it cannot be generalised to the whole of Bangladesh, my pilot study indicated that implementation of a play-oriented approach led to changes in classroom practices in this sector, moving from conventional and strict teaching–learning practices towards a more relaxed and playful approach. It was evident that this pedagogical approach has the potential to support children's early learning skills, especially for children from low socio-economic backgrounds. Findings of the pilot study suggested that the playful approach to teaching–learning reduces young children's fear about schooling and encourages their attendance. This assists in overcoming the dropout problem in Bangladesh, where an alarming number of children quit school before completing primary education (Chowdhury & Rivalland 2011).

Drawing on the findings of the pilot study, the present study adopts a socio-cultural approach to investigate how Bangladesh's latest play-oriented national preschool curriculum, developed in 2011, is being approached, considered, valued and experienced by different stakeholders; that is, by public officials, teachers, parents and young children. Analyses of this complex web of interrelationships between the understandings, values, beliefs, motives and practices of different stakeholders leads towards better understanding of what a play-oriented curriculum model may look like in the milieu of this developing society.

The first chapter of my study focuses on the context of this study. It begins by clarifying my personal motives and purpose for carrying out this study. This is followed by the background of the research context. It further describes the objectives, research questions and significance of the study. It ends with an outline of this thesis.

## 1.2 Inspirations for the Study

In Bangladesh, as a part of my civil service career, I worked for four years (2002–2006) in a primary education incentive project under the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education. The project provided cash incentives to poor and meritorious rural children to improve their quality of education and ensure their attendance at school. At that time, PPE was not a compulsory part of the public education setup. Rather, it was run in some public primary schools as an unorganised 'Baby class' without any learning material, prescribed curriculum or trained teachers. Classrooms remained overcrowded and congested, and teaching–learning methods were traditionally rote-based. The scenario was similar in the primary classes where the product (test scores) of learning was more valued than the processes of learning. Moreover, rigid academic curricula and teaching learning practices entwined with unfavourable learning environments(such as overcrowded classrooms, lack of space and learning materials, and inadequate infrastructure),resulting in severe setbacks, such as 30% dropout rates and 10% grade repetition(Directorate of Primary Education, 2012). These issues created doubts about the desired contributions of children's learning achievements to support future developments of this society.

My professional experiences informed me that in the cycle of teaching–learning and in the context of social expectations about achievements, young children were studying at school and working hard to obtain good scores, but they did not enjoy learning. Children appeared to be trapped in a rigid educational system that allowed little space for creativity and exploration. The existing traditional educational practices were not only hampering the quality of education, but also resulting in low attendance rates, grade repetition and students dropping out. These issues provoked me to think critically about certain questions, such as how to reduce dropout rates, how to reduce children's fears about school and make learning enjoyable for them, and how to improve the quality of an education system to overcome not only the problem of illiteracy but also issues like poverty, population increase and economic backwardness.

My role as a government official made me aware of the drawbacks of our prevailing education system and encouraged me to acquire new knowledge about alternate early years learning practices. This led me to Australia to study a Master of Education (early childhood) and subsequently this PhD. My academic journey introduced me to a new domain of knowledge and thinking in the field of early childhood education (ECE) and development. I became aware

of many cultural differences between Western understandings, learning processes, pedagogies, curricula and practices in the field of ECE.

My upbringing in Bangladesh and experiences as a government official in the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education made me particularly attuned to those cultural differences and views in relation to issues addressing the teaching, learning and developmental challenges in underprivileged, developing and non-Western developed societies. In addition, during my studies and as a mother of two young children schooled in Australia, I have gained a better understanding of play-based curriculum and its role in stimulating young children's learning and development. While I have experienced the value of this curriculum in my own children's learning and development, I am aware that practices and values regarding play as learning and development vary across cultures, time and places. Besides, to be successful curriculum require capturing the needs of the society in which it is being implemented.

In 2010, the government of Bangladesh launched formal and organised PPE in the public sector, introducing play as a part of curriculum to support and accelerate young children's learning and development. This development in policy and practice led me to conduct a pilot study in 2010. In the following year, the full-fledged preschool curriculum (the PPC) was developed. This inspired me to pursue my PhD research, which aims to explore and evaluate the implementation of this new play-oriented curriculum. I am particularly interested in the lived experiences and perceptions of the children, teachers, families and government officials in relation to the implementation of this new preschool curriculum and play-oriented teaching–learning practices.

My professional, academic and personal experiences added to recent policy initiatives in Bangladesh, providing me with intrinsic and extrinsic inspiration to conduct my present research. I am driven to explore how this play-oriented curriculum is perceived, understood, valued and interpreted as learning and development, and how this newly adopted pedagogical approach defines the cultural pattern of learning practices in the socio-cultural contexts of Bangladesh. This study provides important data on the PPC's implementation and its learning offers for the very young citizens of my country. It sheds light both on challenges and positive changes at policy and practice levels in the sphere of early childhood education (ECE) and development in Bangladesh.

## 1.3 Background of the Study

The introduction of PPE in the public sector is a very recent policy initiative in Bangladesh. PPE policy documents provide a milestone in addressing the learning and developmental targets for young children in this society. Integration of playful learning as a pedagogical approach in the latest PPE curriculum contrasts with the traditional educational system, which is dominated by rigid academic curricula. A brief description of the existing socio-cultural, demographic, historical, economic, educational and political backgrounds of Bangladesh may contribute to a deeper understanding of this issue.
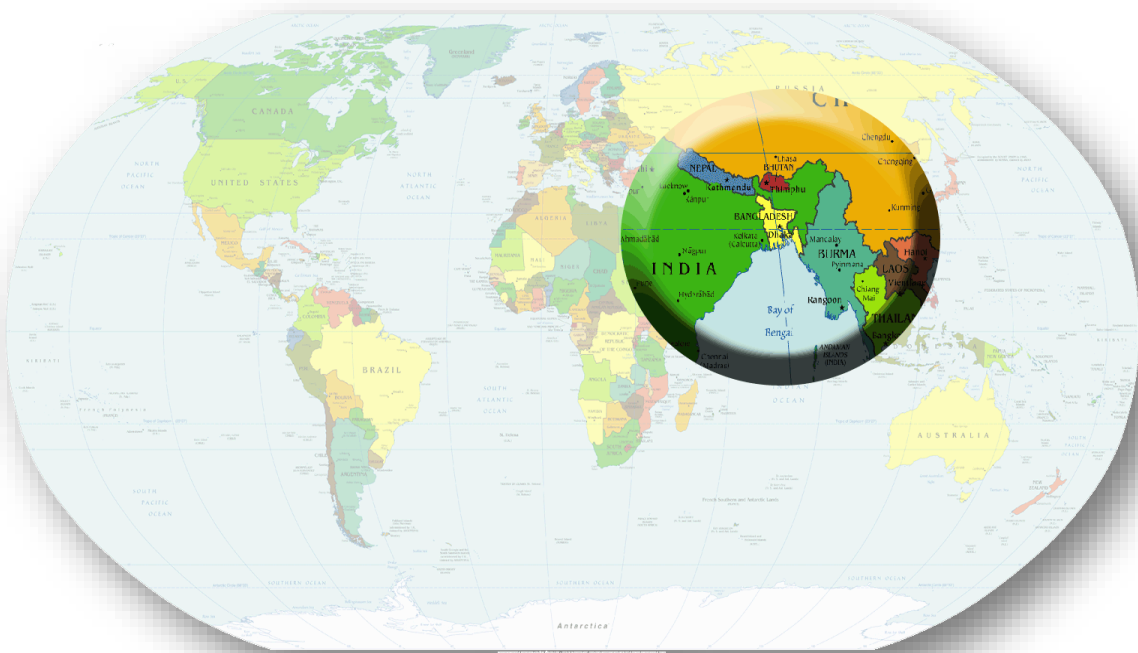


**Figure 1.1: Bangladesh on the world map.**
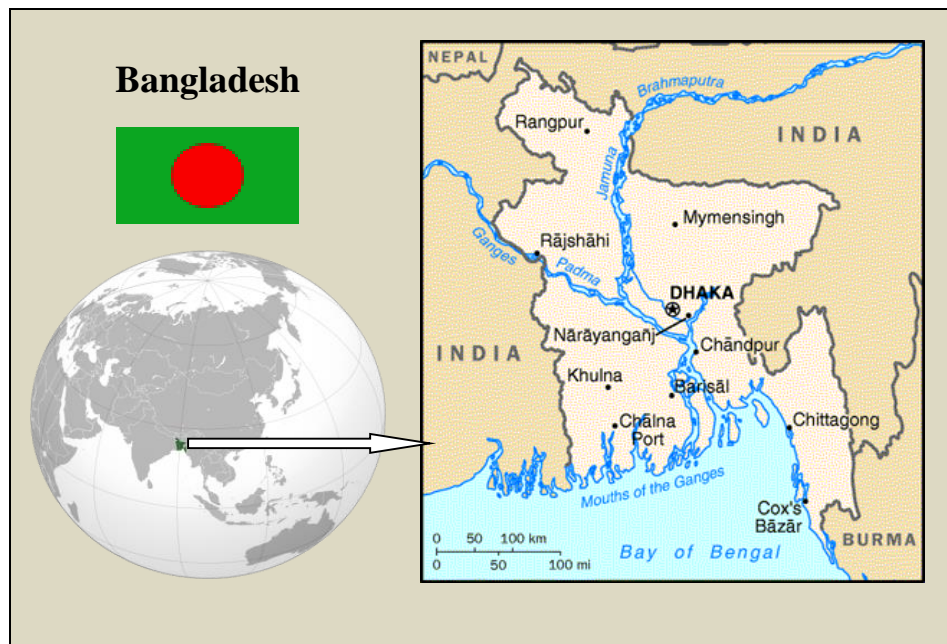
**Figure 1.2: Regional map of Bangladesh.**

Bangladesh is a post-colonial developing country in South Asia. In this densely populated and agro-based society, a majority of the people live in rural areas (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2009). A significant proportion of its population struggles with poverty, food insecurity, malnutrition and illiteracy (F. E. Aboud, 2006). Due to poverty and lack of parental education, young children are deprived of a learning environment at home. To support family needs, children of these poor families are engaged in income-generating activities instead of going to school (MOPME, 2003).

In the extended family culture of Bangladesh, older siblings, grandparents or other family members share responsibility for childrearing. Children are expected not to confront or challenge elders, particularly parents and teachers. Teachers are highly respected and are often regarded as second parents. In the daily rural context, mothers are more concerned with young children's health and speech development rather than supporting their play activities or interacting with them in terms of conversation(Aboud, 2007). Aboud (2006) asserted that the nature of play and adults' approach to play as an element of learning in Bangladesh is different from that of developed countries. Brooker's (2005) study on a British kindergarten (employing a curriculum that recognises play as a means of early learning) found that, unlike Anglo-Saxon parents, Bangladeshi families do not value play as a means of learning and development for their young children.

Historically, the education system and teaching–learning practices of this developing country have been greatly influenced by two centuries of former British colonial rule. As part of the Indian subcontinent, Bangladesh came under the rule of the British East India Company and the British monarch from 1757 to 1947. Prior to the introduction of a 'modern educational system' by the colonial rulers, the education in the subcontinent was 'predominantly theological and philosophical' in nature(Directorate of Primary Education (DPE), 2003)(Directorate of Primary Edcuation, 2003, p. 6). During British rule (from 1757–1947), English, as the means of linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 1992) and the language of the Church, created a negative image of dominant English education among the Muslims of this region. Consequently, they generally refrained from participating in the new education systems introduced by the colonial rulers (Non-formal Education, 1999 as cited in Rabbi, 2008b). Later, on the basis of religion, the amalgamation of this region (in 1947) as the eastern wing of Pakistan followed the emphasis in its education policy on Islamic identity (Durrani & Dunne, 2010).

Under the Pakistan Government, what was then East Pakistan (and is presently Bangladesh) faced serious inequality in all spheres of statecraft, including education (Schendel, 2009). This disparity stemmed from autocratic centralised rule, economic injustice, the failure to ensure equal participation, the imposition of *Urdu* as the state language (undermining *Bangla*, the mother tongue of 98% people of East Pakistan) and the introduction of policies against the secular aspirations of the Bengali people(Durrani & Dunne, 2010; Rabbi, 2008a). These measures ultimately led to the independence of Bangladesh and new aspirations for education (Schendel, 2009).

Since its independence in 1971, designing and providing primary education has become a priority agenda in Bangladeshi politics(Directorate of Primary Education, 2003)and policies (Article 17, Constitution of Bangladesh, GOB, 1972). The political targets geared towards providing access to basic education for the masses has driven Bangladesh to both national and international commitments to uphold young children's rights to education and development (see Appendix E). The government has taken several initiatives, such as the Primary Education Stipend Project and the Female-Student Stipend Project, to financially support poor families and to encourage their children's education at school. However, a lack of resources has limited the government's efforts to adopt desired educational policies to improve the situation. Resource scarcity compels Bangladesh to rely greatly on foreign donors to carry out its ECE

programs. It depends on its foreign development partners to support its annual costs to implement ECE programs (MOPME, 2003).

These development partners provide financial, intellectual and technical supports to run various government and non-government early childhood educational and development activities. Besides government initiatives, different local and international NGOs play a pivotal role in providing early learning and developmental opportunities in rural Bangladesh (Aboud, 2006; Nath, 2012). In the public sector, early learning and developmental programs are implemented through different government bodies (e.g., Ministry of Primary and Mass Education [MOPME], Ministry of Social Welfare, Ministry of Women and Child Affairs, Ministry of Religious Affairs and Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs). Formal education in the pre-primary and primary sectors is run by MOPME.

**Table 1.1:Educational structure in Bangladesh(Ardt et al., 2005; Rabbi, 2008b).**

| Levels of education & expected time of completion | Grades & targeted age groups | Regulatory bodies |
|---|---|---|
| Pre-primary (1 year) | Pre-primary class (5+ years) | Ministry of Primary & Mass Education Directorate of Primary Education |
| Primary (5 years) | Grade I–V (6–10 years) | Ministry of Primary & Mass Education Directorate of Primary Education |
| Secondary (7 years) | Junior Secondary Grade VI-VIII (11–13 years) | Ministry of Education Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education |
| | Secondary Grade IX–X (14–15 year) | |
| | Higher Secondary Grade XI–XII (16–18 years) | |
| Tertiary (5 years and more) | Bachelor (3/4 years) | Ministry of Education |
| | Masters (1 year) | |

| | |
|---|---|
| M Phil (2 years) | University Grants Commission |
| PhD (4 years) | |

Bangladesh's formal educational structure can be divided into four tiers: pre-primary, primary, secondary (comprising junior secondary, secondary and higher secondary) and tertiary. PPE is offered to children aged 5, while primary education covers a cycle of five years (grades I–V; see Table 1.1). Madrasah, formal Islamic religious education, follows the same structure (Ardt, et al., 2005). Different types of educational institutions offer primary education, and some of these offer PPE (as mentioned in Table 1.2).

**Table 1.2:Different types of primary educational institutions providing PPE in Bangladesh(MOPME, 2008, p. 48)**

| Type of schools/institutions |
|---|
| Government primary school (GPS; conducts pre-primary class, which used to be known as Baby class) |
| Registered non-government primary schools (RNGPS) |
| Non-registered primary schools (NRPS) |
| Maktabs/ Ebtedaee Madrasahs (religious centres) |
| Kindergartens |
| NGO schools |
| Community schools |
| Centres attached to high madrasahs |
| Centres attached to high schools |

At the national level, various policies (see Appendix E)have been enacted that emphasise the significance of PPE (MOPME, 2008). Consequently, formal PPE, officially approved in 2008, was introduced throughout the country in 2010. In public primary schools, before 2008 the number of pre-primary children was 157,938(MOPME, 2008); this increased to 634,933 in 2010 and by the end of the year 2011 it reached 1,209,288 (Directorate of Primary Education, 2012). However, unlike primary education, PPE is not compulsory. Further, the quality of preschool education has been questioned.

Banu's (2012) recent study on quality of educational practices in Bangladesh's preschools (prior to the development of the national PPC) revealed that rigid and teacher-centred preschool curricula lead to rote-based passive learning practices. Banu's (2012)findings suggest that

teaching–learning practices in overcrowded classrooms that lack adequate logistical support encourage the securing of good scores in the pen and paper examinations. Written examinations, as the only means of assessing children's achievements, determine the quality of subsequent education (Ardt, et al., 2005)

Similar teaching–learning practices have failed to ensure quality in primary education (UNICEF, 2009). The existing educational system, along with other socio-economic and educational challenges, lead to severe problems, such as high dropout rates and grade repetition at the primary level (see Figure 1.3). At present, about one third of the enrolled children are unable to complete their primary education (Directorate of Primary Education, 2012). A huge number of children repeat their study in the same grade. It has been reported that, on average, a child takes 8.6 years to complete the five-year primary school cycle(UNICEF, 2009).
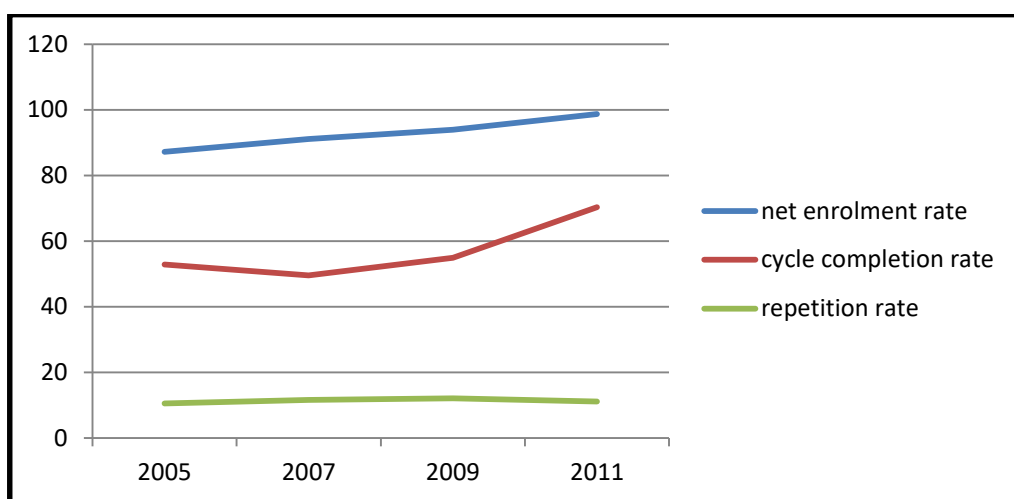


**Figure 1.3: Enrolment, repetition and cycle completion rates in the primary education sector in Bangladesh (adapted from Directorate of Primary Education, 2012).**

To overcome these challenges and ensure quality of education, the government of Bangladesh introduced formal and organised PPE in the public sector and developed an operational framework for PPE in 2008 (MOPME, 2008). The operational framework provides the guideline of a matrix of age-appropriate developmental domains, a curricular framework and operational strategies. Based on this policy document, PPE was launched in selected areas of the country in 2010. It seeks to provide 1 year of free preschool education to all children aged 5 years. To achieve this goal, one teacher from each public primary school was initially provided with a 6-day (later extended to 15-day) professional development called pre-primary training (PPT) and was assigned to conduct the pre-primary class (Directorate of Primary Education, 2012; MOPME, 2008).PPE was fully implemented in 2011 and was followed by the

development of the PPC. It utilises the primary educational setup (organisation and infrastructure) and work force (teachers and staff; NCTB, 2011).

The PPC recognises the role of play in the physical, cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional development of young children and emphasises the families' and teachers' roles in stimulating such development (NCTB, 2011). It advocates inclusive education, child-focused pedagogy and a child-friendly atmosphere, with a desired teacher–children ratio of 1:30 and 2.5 teaching hours 6 days a week. The ultimate objective of PPE is to assist development of basic learning skills among the young children before they enter Grade One. To support the achievement of these goals, interactive and play-oriented teaching–learning practices have been integrated in the newly developed PPE curriculum.

Evolving PPE in the context of Bangladesh demands an in-depth investigation of the national PPC and cultural practices in relation to play-oriented teaching, learning and development. Questions arise as to how a play-oriented curriculum approach is being incorporated and implemented in the educational context of Bangladesh and how it influences early years' teaching–learning practices.

## 1.4 Research Objectives, Questions and Significance

The discourse of play-based curriculum is a concept that has evolved in developed countries to address the needs of their specific contexts. Most research in this field focuses on the Western and developed societies where this concept has been nourished and continues to flourish(Dockett, 2011; Fleer, Tonyan, Mantilla, & Rivalland, 2009; Goncu, et al., 2000; McLachlan, et al., 2010, 2013; Reifel & Yeatman, 1991; Smilansky, 1968; Sutton-Smith, 1997; Trawick-Smith, 2010). In such societies, play is understood as a 'fundamental medium for young children's learning' (Perry, 1998, p. 1) and is regarded as a core component of a competent preschool curriculum (McLachlan et al., 2013; Wisneski & Reifel, 2011). However, the universality of Western learning and developmental concepts is disputed by many researchers who posit that knowledge and understandings are culturally and politically biased, since these have been developed in relation to particular socio-cultural values and needs (Cannella, 2005; P.-Y. Chang, 2003; Fleer, 2009; Gupta, 2011; B. Rogoff, 2003). Hence, as David and Powell (2005) argued, an imported curriculum should be tailored to address the cultural needs, political values and expectations of the society into which it is being implanted. These arguments provide the basis for this study to explore, understand and evaluate the

adaptation and implementation of an imported play-oriented preschool curriculum (which promotes a move away from the traditional rote-teaching to play-based teaching-learning) and its influences on cultural patterns of learning trends from the perspective of a developing society, namely Bangladesh.

Integration of a play-oriented curriculum approach needs to be tailored to the cultural context of Bangladesh; at the same time, this implementation may lead to changes in the existing teaching-learning culture to accommodate the new pedagogical approach. In Bangladesh's culture, learning at school is considered a formal process taken very seriously, not to be compared to childish activities like play. While parents highly value teachers' roles in their children's learning and development, they remain unintegrated in this overall process of teaching and learning. Related research indicates that Bangladeshi parents do not value play as a learning approach (Brooker, 2005; Chowdhury, 2011). This formal learning practice is being challenged when a play-oriented curriculum is introduced.

In addition, in this society teachers do not exercise authority to adapt a curriculum according to their own classroom needs; they are expected to use textbooks and prescribed syllabus. In the overcrowded classrooms—with a teacher–children ratio of 1:52 (MOPME, 2008)—teachers can only implement a linear teaching approach. Questions then arise as to how, after one or two weeks of professional development, teachers can implement a play-oriented curriculum within the educational constraints of this developing country. Incorporation of a foreign curriculum approach like play not only challenges the existing teaching–learning practices, but also confronts the existing cultural values and norms of the given society.

In Bangladesh, the introduction of the latest EC curriculum, which plays a significant role in young children's learning and development, has obvious influences on the existing culture. The relationships established in the community that guide young children's learning and development may change with the introduction of an imported play-oriented curriculum. We may take the relationships between teacher and children as an example. In Bangladesh, teachers possess the image of a second parent (to be specific, a father figure) in the life of a child. It is never a 'friendly' relationship; rather, it is a relationship of dominance, respect and obedience; children respect teachers and never confront them. In contrast, a play-based teaching-learning demands a friendly relationship between teacher and children in which teachers often become playmates. Thus, the integration of a play-oriented curriculum may lead to certain changes in the culture of relationships in the community.

Further, political and economic issues influence PPE policy formulation and curriculum development in the given context, such as the government's dependency on foreign funding to implement educational programs that creates scope for the imposition of donors' and NGOs' preferences for adopting a Western play approach. The above-mentioned issues led me to explore a range of questions:

- How does the community (people), culture (values and practices) and context (historical, educational, economic and political), as the determinants of the curriculum, shape the conceptualisation of play as learning in the context of Bangladesh?
- How does the implementation of the play-oriented teaching-learning alter existing socio-cultural values, norms and practices in the given society?
- How is the play-oriented teaching–learning approach contextualised?
- How have the relationships between school, home and community been influenced with the introduction of this new teaching–learning approach?
- What modifications are required to lead towards a more culturally viable curriculum model to address the learning and developmental needs and challenges of young children in Bangladesh?

Based on the above-mentioned objectives and drawing on the pilot study, the present study is guided by the following research questions. Main question:

How does the introduction of the play-oriented PPC inform the cultural nature of learning practices in the ECE context of Bangladesh?

Subsidiary questions:

a) How adults' and young children's participation in play-oriented learning activities is socially organised in different settings (including home, classroom and TTC)?
b) What are parents' expectations from such learning endeavours, and how do they assess their children's achievement of those learning goals?
c) What motivates young children in play-oriented learning and how do they experience these learning activities?
d) How do government officials (who develop/implement policies) interpret this play-oriented curriculum and communicate it to the teachers?
e) How do teachers perceive and implement this curriculum approach as a teaching–learning strategy and integrate themselves and young learners in such practices?

These research queries led me to profound understandings regarding the conceptualisation and contextualisation of play-oriented teaching–learning policies and practices, specific to the context of Bangladesh. The findings of this study contribute to further theorisation of play and curricula, particularly from a non-Western perspective.

This research contributes to the existing body of literature on play-based curriculum in the sphere of ECE. This will yield important information to enrich our understanding of play-oriented curricular policies and practices in PPE in developing cultures, not only in Bangladesh but also in countries with similar contexts. The study identifies the challenges that early childhood educators, practitioners, parents and children encounter in an imported play-oriented teaching–learning situation. Accordingly, this study informs policymakers, educators and professionals involved in formulating PPE policies, developing/restructuring curriculum documents and working out teacher training and teaching strategies. The findings of this study will further assist professional development of pre-primary teachers (both in-service and pre-service). Finally, the knowledge obtained from this study enables us to shape a better learning environment for the young children in the underprivileged parts of Bangladesh and accelerate their educational and developmental achievements.

## 1.5 Thesis Outline

Chapter One introduces my research, elaborating its background, objectives, rationale and the research questions. Subsequently, the thesis is structured as follows:

The second and third Chapters explore literature and theory. Chapter Two conceptualises play and curriculum, and explores how a play-oriented teaching–learning approach is espoused, valued, encountered and experienced across divergent cultures and in the context of Bangladesh. Chapter Three narrates the socio-cultural approach and Rogoff's learning theory as the theoretical base of the study. This theoretical lens assists my data collection, analysis and theme development.

Chapter Four outlines the study—my research approach and design. In this Chapter I explain my methodology, research design, settings, selection of participants, instruments of data collection and issues in my study. Across next three chapters, I present my data analysis, findings and discussion. Chapter Five presents multi-sourced data, while Chapter Six discusses the main themes derived from my data analysis. Based on these findings, Chapter Seven

manifests the evolving pattern of play-oriented learning tradition in the socio-cultural context of Bangladesh.

Chapter Eight summarises the study and highlights its major findings. This concluding Chapter sheds light on the implications of this study, its limitations and directions for future research.

# Chapter 2: Literature Review

Literature review helps to determine whether the topic is worth studying, and it provides insight into ways in which the researcher can limit the scope to a needed area of inquiry. (Creswell, 2014, p. 25)

## 2.1 Overview

This chapter explores the existing literature that facilitates understandings of play-oriented learning and curriculum. It is organised into two sections. Section One provides a conceptual framework identifying different aspects, views, approaches and factors in relation to curriculum and play-based teaching-learning. The following section reviews literature on cultural variations in play and learning approaches. It further explores play-oriented curriculum and teaching–learning practices in the context of Bangladesh.

## 2.2 Section One: Conceptual Framework

### 2.2.1 Curriculum as a concept in early childhood education

A curriculum may refer to a system, as in a national curriculum; an institution, as in a school; or even to an individual school, as in the school geography curriculum.(Scott, 2008, pp. 19-20)

Curriculum is a complex and contested concept (McLachlan et al. 2010; 2013; Mueller, 2011).It has been defined and interpreted from different perspectives and dimensions. The framing of a curriculum document relies on who is developing, interpreting, implementing and receiving it; for example, curriculum writers/decision-makers, users/educators and recipients/students(Schwartz, 2007). Dillon (2009) focuses on certain questions related to curriculum development (see Table 2.1) that allow for the understanding of the nature, components and practice of curriculum. However, these issues are determined by the socio-cultural, historical, economic and political considerations of a community. Thus, based on philosophies, ideologies, cultural practices and demands of communities, the dynamic concept of curriculum evolved through the course of time.

**Table 2.1: The questions of curriculum(Dillon, 2009, p. 344)**

| | |
|---|---|
| (1) Nature of curriculum | What is it? |
|     (1a) Essence or substance | What, at bottom, is it? |
|     (1b) Properties or character | What is it like? |
| (2) Elements of curriculum | What are the things that compose it? |
|     (2a) Teacher | Who? |
|     (2b) Student | Who? |
|     (2c) Subject | What? |
|     (2d) Milieu | Where and when? |
|     (2e) Aim | Why? To what end? |
|     (2f) Activity | How? |
|     (2g) Result | What comes of it? Who learns what? |
| (3) Practice of curriculum | How to think and act it? |
|     (3a) Action | What to do? |
|     (3b) Thought | How to think? |

The traditional view, with a narrow dimension, describes curriculum as a syllabus—a list of topics, content or subject matter—developed for a certain group of pupils of a course of study (Begg, 2008; Carr, 1993). Robison and Schwartz (1982) suggested that a syllabus is a 'comprehensive set of written plans' that serves as 'a long-range guide for curriculum' (pp. 14–15). Curriculum has been described as the 'formal products and documents that guide what is to occur in classrooms' (Mueller, 2011, p. 54). However, Mueller (2011) and Robison and Schwartz (1982) emphasised curriculum as being process-oriented, instead of product-oriented. Curriculum is also expressed as a means of meaning-making (Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2010). Pacini-Ketchabaw (2010) argued:

> Curriculum cannot become a road map that educators follow, a one direction that will take them to one destination, or a description of what early childhood education services need to overcome or to manage or to conquer (Looney, 2001). Instead, curriculum can become an opportunity to resist, to make meaning, and to search out other (invisible, out-of-sight) meanings. (p. XI)

To some, curriculum is the sum of planned activities designed for the classroom that guides the teaching–learning practices (Begg, 2008). To others, it is an 'organised learning experience'(Brock, 2009, p. 77). Te-Whariki (the EC curriculum of New Zealand) describes it as 'the sum total of the experiences, activities, and events, whether direct or indirect, which

occur within an environment designed to foster children's learning and development'(Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 10). Saracho and Spodek (2002, p. viii) asserted that curriculum is 'an anthology of learning experiences, conceived and arranged based on a program's educational goals and the community's social forces'. Thus, a broader dimension of curriculum encompasses organisation of overall teaching and learning goals, outcomes and practices:

> In this broader definition, curriculum is not a description of subject matter but a set of proposals indicating how this subject matter is to be organised, the educational purposes it serves, the learning outcomes it is intended to achieve and the methods by which such outcomes are to be evaluated. (Carr, 1993, p. 5)

To understand the concept of curriculum, we may consider its elements. In general, curriculum is comprised of four basic components: objectives, content (subject matters), methods (approaches) and assessment (McLachlan et al., 2013; see Figure 2.1). A curriculum includes the objectives, goals or targets that it aims to achieve for a particular group of students. These objectives focus on the expectations (of the curriculum developers) as the 'outcomes as a result of participating in the implementation of this curriculum' (McLachlan et al., 2013, p. 10). It further specifies the subject matter that it intends to 'include or exclude' (McLachlan et al., 2013, p. 10). The teaching–learning methods, as the instruments of achieving curriculum goals, are elaborated in the curriculum document. In addition, it includes how to evaluate or assess students' achievements as set by the curriculum.
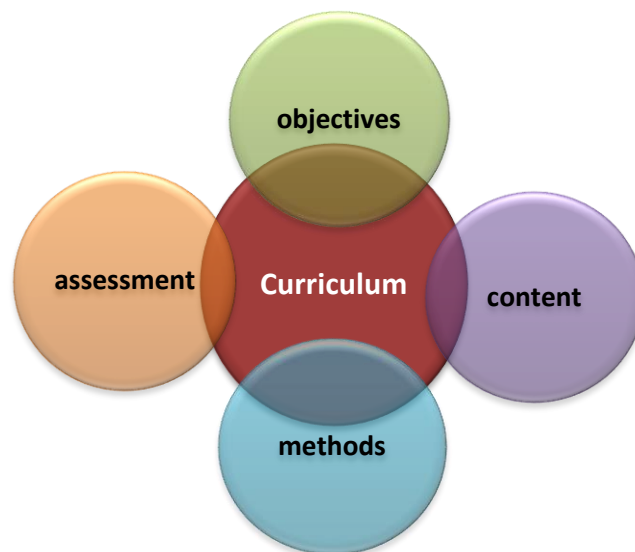


**Figure 2.1: Major components of a curriculum.**

A curriculum can be comprised of different types or forms: hidden, received, formal or informal (Brock, Dodds, Jarvis, & Olusoga, 2009). It can be classified into two models: competence-based and performance-based (McLachlan et al., 2013; Scott, 2008). The performance model emphasises strict learning domains and pedagogical practices, while the competence model provides space for learners' agency 'over the selection, pacing and sequencing of their curriculum' (Scott, 2008, p. 4). The latter model is more common in ECE, particularly in the EC curriculum that embraces play as the core pedagogical strategy (McLachlan et al., 2013).

The nature of curriculum also depends on for and by whom it is designed. From this perspective, curriculum is defined in terms of a system (as a national document), an institution (for a school) or a set of practices (for a particular classroom; McLachlan et al., 2013; Scott, 2008). In the present research, I have focused on curriculum as a national document, constructed by the government. To explore this aspect, I have concentrated on the factors that influence development of curriculum and it's framing into a document.

### 2.2.2 Framing of curriculum document

Development of curriculum is embedded in the theoretical perspectives. Different theories (such as biological theory, behavioural theory, developmental theory, socio-cultural theory, post-developmental approach and critical theory) with their distinct approaches to learning and development underpin the development of curriculum documents (see Table 2.2).

**Table 2.2: Major theories underpinning EC curriculum(DEEWR, 2009)**

| Theory | Details |
|---|---|
| Developmental theories | Focus on describing and understanding the processes of change in children's learning and development over time. |
| Socio-cultural theories | Emphasise the central role that families and cultural groups play in children's learning and the importance of respectful relationships, and provide insight into social and cultural contexts of learning and development. |
| Socio-behaviourist theories | Focus on the role of experiences in shaping children's behaviour. |
| Critical theories | Invite early childhood educators to challenge assumptions about curriculum and consider how their decisions may affect children differently. |
| Post-structuralist theories | Offer insights into issues of power, equity and social justice in early childhood settings. |

With these theoretical underpinnings, the historical evolution of curriculum is explained through a series of episodes (Scott, 2008). Scott (2008) labelled the development of curriculum according to seven predominant overlapping episodes: scientific curriculum-making, intrinsic worthwhile knowledge, innovative pedagogical experimentation, socio-cultural learning, critical pedagogy, instrumentalism and school effectiveness/school improvement. Schiro (2008)introduced four ideologies informing curriculum: scholar academic ideology, social efficiency ideology, learner-centred ideology and social reconstruction ideology. However, some curriculum documents have been developed as a bricolage of diverse theories, ideologies or episodes (McLachlan et al., 2010; 2013).

Theoretical underpinnings that inform curriculum development are embedded in epistemology, ontology, philosophy and ideology (which determine its educational system and targets) of a particular community(Carr, 1993; Popkewitz, 1997). How is learning valued? What are the objectives of education? How can those goals be achieved? These issues guide the understandings, development and interpretations of curriculum of a particular culture. Existing ideologies and philosophies of a particular community shape individuals' understandings about the role of education. Carr (1993) argued that epistemological principles, foregrounding educational aims and values, determine how the content is organised in the curriculum.

Popkewitz (1997) considered curriculum as a 'constitution of social regulation' (p. 139), which as a 'disciplining technology directs how the individual is to act, feel, talk and "see" the world and "self" ' (p. 132). It has also been suggested by Ores and Duijkers (2012)as enabling the future generation to participate and contribute in the society. McLachlan et al. (2013) maintained that curriculum seeks to 'promote learning and developmental outcomes that are valued by the community' (p. 68). It is valued as fostering 'the process of social reproduction— the process whereby a society reproduces itself over time and so maintains its identity across generations' (Carr, 1993, p. 5). Cultural values are transmitted through curriculum. Thus, interpretation of curriculum evolves as per changing social circumstances and cultural transformation (Carr, 1993). Besides, beliefs and values of professionals (who contribute to curriculum decisions and implement those decisions) are influenced by political, economic and historical contexts.

### 2.2.3 Contexts influencing curriculum development

Existing socio-cultural, economic and political contexts influence the development of curriculum (McLachlan et al., 2013; Saracho & Spodek, 2002). It depends on cultural trends relating to child rearing; image of the child; relationships among children, teachers and parents; and teaching–learning practices. Saracho and Spodek (2002) maintained that curriculum documents manifest an image of the child that the respective society wants him/her to be and become. Therefore, development of curriculum documents is informed by the understandings of concepts like child, childhood and child development (McLachlan et al., 2013):

> How child development is theorised is significant because it acts as the backbone on which the curriculum content is placed. It frames what we pay attention to in terms of curriculum knowledge, how we conceptualise progression, and how we implement the curriculum. (McLachlan et al., 2013, p. 43)

Contemporary EC curriculum trends recognise two assumptions in child development— developmentally appropriate practice (DAP) and the socio-cultural approach. McLachlan et al. (2013) elaborated, as per the dominant discourse of DAP, that 'practices must meet the developmental expectations that have been identified as occurring in relation to children's ages and stages of development' (p. 35). This perspective is common in many Western and developed communities (of European heritage) like the United States, Australia and the United Kingdom (McLachlan et al., 2013). Conversely, the socio-cultural perspective considers development as per different and various contexts in which children participate in and gather experiences (Fleer, 2009; Follari, 2011;B. Rogoff, 2003). We may consider the Italian Reggio Emilia curriculum as an example of this approach. This perspective emphasises the interrelationship between and across contexts in which development occurs, rather than considering biological ages and psychological stages alone.

From the socio-cultural perspective, curriculum is termed as a 'cultural broker' reflecting on the beliefs and values of a community regarding learning and development (McLachlan et al., 2013, p. 53). It sets forward the learning and developmental goals and outcomes that are valued by a particular community at a given time. Factors such as beliefs, values, social expectations, cultural practices, educational history, economic goals and political objectives drive the EC professionals towards the development of a curriculum document(Koutselini, 1997). These factors shape the curriculum design to set the targets and outcomes for children (Carr, 1993;

McLachlan et al., 2013). Thus, in different communities, curriculum development exhibits different cultural interpretations, expectations and practices.

Framing of a curriculum document may be considered to be both cultural and political (Carr, 1993; Schwab, 1983; B. Spodek & Saracho, 2002; Yates, 2009). According to Schwab (1983), curriculum decisions represent political and communal considerations about children's learning and development. Societies determine how they view their children and what they want their children to achieve (McLachlan et al., 2013). For their part, governments consider education as a 'prominent part of their economic and social policy' (Yates, 2009). Political ideologies and mandates are legitimised through processes such as curriculum development. Pacini-Ketchabaw (2010) posits that curriculum is 'historically, socially, and politically situated within, not outside of, relations of power as social constructions' (p. XIII). Power relations in the society (such as relationships between teacher and children, children and family, and family and teachers) are reflected in the framing of curriculum documents. Thus, based on cultural values, social demands, economic realities and political manifestations, policymakers furnish curriculum documents with a formal shape by setting forward goals for children's learning and development and ways to achieve those goals.

Koutselini (1997) added a new dimension to the development of curriculum by suggesting that the validity of curriculum is subject to the 'unifying power' underpinning the dominant ideologies of a particular time. In the pre-modern period, religious ideologies (for example, ideologies guided by the church as an institution in Europe) exercised a unifying social role and determined the acceptance of the existing curriculum that institutionalised the knowledge of the Holy Books. In modern Europe (since the Enlightenment), the emergence of national ideologies attuned with rationalism and based on the development of knowledge have attained universal acceptance. The meta-modern curriculum paradigm challenges previous 'epistemological, ontological and metaphysical assumptions' and 'advocates new relationships between teachers and students, students and the world' (Koutselini, 1997, p. 90–91). Koutselini (1997) further posited that in the present era, 'communication and participation' is the 'socially unifying force of solidarity' and demands validity in the 'development of educational system' (p. 92). These issues of communication and participation have been signified by Rogoff (see Chapter Three for details) as being basic features that determine the patterns of existing learning traditions in distinct cultural settings (Paradise & Rogoff, 2009).

Cultural trends of learning denote complex practices(stemming from the interactions of different factors and imperatives), particularly when it adopts play as the core of its curriculum(Rogers, 2011a, 2011b). Roger (2011a) further asserted:

> A 'pedagogy of play' might be characterised by complexity and diversity of practice, the locus of interactions between the needs and desires of the children and those of adults, between ideological and pragmatic imperatives, between spontaneous and intrinsically motivated actions of the child and the demands of a standardised and politicised curriculum. (p. 1)

Thus, development of a curriculum, including a play-oriented EC curriculum, is subject to existing socio-cultural, economic and political contexts. The following discussion focuses on play as a part of EC curriculum.

### 2.2.4 Play in EC curriculum

In the sphere of ECE, play is regarded as the centre of EC curriculum (Brooker, 2010; DEECD, 2009; Oers & Duijkers, 2012;Wisneski & Reifel, 2011).Since ECE deals with nascent human minds, it is expected that learning should be tailored in an appealing way to young learners(Johnson, Christie, & Yawkey, 1999). Play, as a source of natural attraction to the young children, is valued as an easy and meaningful means of learning and development(Wilson, 2008).Thus, it possesses a crucial position in EC curriculum:

> Play provides the most natural and meaningful means by which children can construct knowledge and understandings, practise skills, immerse themselves naturally in a broad range of literacy and numeracy and engage in productive and intrinsically motivated learning environments. (Walker, 2011, p. 22)

EC curriculum has a specific focus on play as the vehicle of early learning and development (McLachlan et al., 2010; 2013; Perry, 1998; Trawick-Smith, 2012). Play is considered more than a mere source of enjoyment and challenge; it is inextricably associated to a child's holistic development through uniting her/his mind, body, heart and spirit (Heidemann & Hewitt, 2010; Whitebread & Coltman, 2008). It provides young children with opportunities for developing cognitive, social, emotional and motor skills (Gronlund, 2001; Heidemann & Hewitt, 2010; Moon & Reifel, 2008;Elizabeth Wood, 2009). Play activities enable young children to construct knowledge, understand the world around them and communicate with others (Kieff & Casbergue, 2000; Walker, 2011). Active engagement in play situations helps them in problem solving and developing self-confidence and self-regulation (Heidemann & Hewitt, 2010).

Play is considered a medium of meaning-making for young children. According to Perry (1998),'a play based curriculum gives emphasis to encouraging children to express their own ideas in play—to re-present their world in order to understand it better' (p. 18). Through play they relate their everyday experiences to the process of learning that makes learning meaningful to them. This social process of constructing meaning is framed in routines, planned activities and spontaneous interactions within the framework of curriculum (Kieff & Casbergue, 2000; Walker, 2011). Recognising its significance in early learning and development play has been incorporated as central (as a pedagogical strategy) to EC curriculum since the beginning of its history (Wisneski & Reifel, 2011):

> Play has been at the center of early childhood curriculum from the beginning of our history in early childhood education to present-day models—from Pestalozzi and Froebel's kindergartens to Montessori's method, and Roudolf Steiner's Waldorf schools to Reggio Emilia curriculum. (Wisneski & Reifel, 2011, p. 175)

Play has been incorporated in ECE curriculum since the foundation of *kindergarten* by German philosopher Friedrich Froebel (Saracho & Spodek, 1998). Froebel, the father of the *kindergarten* movement, based his child-directed curriculum on the principles of play, children's natural development and active participation (Bredekamp, 2011; Widerstrom, 2005). Along with this perspective, both Froebel and Pestalozzi introduced the idea of active and open-ended learning for young children. However, Froebelian's *kindergarten* was 'highly teacher directed' (Saracho & Spodek, 1998, p. 4). Grounded in the two mentioned philosophies of Froebel and Pestalozzi, the *Steiner Waldorf approach* that argued for child-led play as the most effective learning tool in ECE was introduced in the early twentieth century in Germany and subsequently spread all over the world (Knight, 2009). A free play approach was adopted in the Macmillian sister's *Nursery School* (Saracho & Spodek, 1998, p. 4).

Later, based on the essence of children's natural play activities, Maria Montessori developed the child-centred *Montessori approach* in Rome (Kieff & Casbergue, 2000; Saracho & Spodek, 1998). This approach values play as enhancing children's learning through sensory experiences by manipulating objects (Bernard Spodek, Saracho, & Pellegrini, 1998; Widerstrom, 2005). The Italian *Reggio Emilia,* as a listening and observing approach, recognises children's individuality and personal development, and encourages creativity through play (Knight, 2009). Apart from these, the *forest school approach*, originating in northern Europe, includes both

natural environment and open-ended outdoor forms of play in the curriculum to promote children's development in ECE (Knight, 2009).

Influenced by these approaches and models, play has become an indispensable part of EC curriculum in developed societies. Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries, including the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Sweden and Denmark, have incorporated play in their respective EC curricula. In the United States, play is acknowledged as the best method for children's learning and development, while it is considered a central concept in the Swedish curriculum(Izumi-Taylor, Samuelsson, & Rogers, 2010). The EC curriculum of New Zealand values young children's play as 'meaningful learning' (MOE, 1996, p. 16). The principle of offering play-based learning experiences for all children provides the foundation of the Australian Early Learning Framework (DEEWR, 2009).

Inspired by the success of these mentioned models, approaches, policies and practices, other non-Western and developing societies with rigid academic curricula (for example, India, Taiwan and Thailand) have started to integrate this pedagogical approach into their respective educational settings(Hegde & Cassidy, 2009). International bodies (INGOs) such as UNICEF and foreign-funded local NGOs are promoting this approach in developing countries. Bangladesh is no exception to this. Within its urban parts, private ECE institutions have incorporated play as a teaching–learning tool. To offer the rest of the young population its learning and developmental benefits, the recently developed national PPC encompasses play as a pedagogical instrument (NCTB, 2011). However, successful incorporation of an imported pedagogical approach depends on how it is conceptualised and tailored to learning in the contexts of the given society. Therefore, to understand how play is embedded in EC curriculum and how it is implemented in the Bangladeshi context, it is important to understand the conception of play and its incorporation and interpretation in the realm of ECE.

### 2.2.5 Play as a pedagogical concept

> The problem of defining play and its role is one of the greatest challenges facing neuroscience, behavioral biology, psychology, education and the social sciences generally… only when we understand the nature of play will we be able to understand how to better shape the destinies of human societies in a mutually dependent world, the future of our species, and perhaps even the fate of the biosphere itself. (Burghardt, 2005, p. xii)

Though play is widely recognised as a significant element in ECE, it is contested as a concept (Brooker, 2010; Fleer, 2011). As a pedagogical notion, it lacks any universal inclusive definition (Fleer, 2011; Sutton-Smith, 2003). Different perspectives in defining play have resulted in the absence of consensus regarding the activities that could be identified as play. Rather, research indicates that, in a broader sense, most of a child's activities and behaviour can be regarded as play (Fleer, 2011).

A huge effort has been made to define play in ECE. It is termed children's work, way of learning (Hoorn, Nourot, Scales, & Alward, 2011), way of life, way of interacting with themselves and the world (Kieff & Casbergue, 2000) and leading activity (Fleer, 2011). For Vygotsky, play was a cultural tool through which children create imaginary events originating from real life experiences (Saracho & Spodek, 1998a). Debate arises regarding the distinctions between play activities and work (Hughes, 2010), or playfulness as a moderated form (Kieff & Casbergue, 2000). Goncu et al. (2000) highlighted playfulness and fun as the evidence of play. Moyles (2005)supported play as a process that combines 'a range of behaviours, motivations, opportunities, practices, skills and understandings' (p. 4). Considering its contexts and impacts, play is explained as 'actions of the learners that integrate cognitive, socio-emotional and motor aspects of learning within rich, culturally sensitive, child-centred and supportive contexts' (Kieff and Casbergue, 2000, (pp. 12-13). It is further referred to as 'an extremely beneficial activity where children are learning all the time, learning through their interactions as well as adopting and working through the rules and values of their own cultural group'(Anning, 2005, p. 84). Emphasis on distinctive aspects of play has made it difficult to reach a conclusive definition of the term.

Due to definitional divergence, the literature concentrates on different aspects of play to explain children's play behaviours. These include symbolic, meaningful, active, pleasurable, voluntary, rule-based and episodic thinking and activity of young children (Fleer, 2009). Five basic characteristics of play are (Hughes, 2010; Kieff & Casbergue, 2000; Rubin, Fein, & Vandenburg, 1983; Saracho & Spodek, 1998b;Walker, 2011):

- *Intrinsically motivated*: play is intrinsically motivated. Play occurs only for the satisfaction of doing it.
- *Freely chosen*: play must be freely chosen by the players. This element is also termed child-initiated play. Imposed activities or compelled activities may not be termed as play. This characteristic distinguishes play from work.

- *Pleasurable*: play must be pleasurable. Activities that place stress on the participants lack this element. It is joyful.
- *Nonliteral*: play is nonliteral. To adjust with participants' interests it involves distortion from reality. To some extent, it creates make-believe situations, as observed in role playing. Play is also described as *imaginative*.
- *Actively engaged*: participants are actively engaged in play. It comprises both physical and psychological involvement, instead of passive or unresponsive observation, such as watching television.

**Figure 2.2: Basic characteristics of play.**

Further, Kieff and Casbergue (2000) described the *process orientation* as a characteristic of play, as during play the child's attention and interest is focused on the process of play rather than on the product. They explained that when a child is painting, the child 'concentrates on how the paint flows on the paper, how the colours mix together', rather than the product—the picture he/she has drawn (Kieff and Casbergue, 2000, p. 19). Walker (2011) posited play as active and creative activities that avoid worksheets and cloned expectations. She added that play is *purposeful* when it is linked to learning. Besides, it is owned by the child, not the adult. Players apply their own meanings to play activities and control the activity themselves, which may be regarded as *flexibility* in play (Saracho & Spodek, 1998) or *experimentation with rules* (Kieff and Casbergue, 2000). Nevertheless, in educational settings, some of the play characteristics are contested; for example, whether it should be free play or structured/guided play, flexible with positive effects or non-flexible without such effects (Trawick-Smith, 2012).

In ECE, play usually embeds pleasurable, intrinsically motivated and actively participated free play activities of young children. Such activities may involve imagination and creativity, and emphasise more the process of play rather than the end product. Divergent views and understandings regarding play and its benefits have provided the framework for better understandings of play in ECE, as reflected in different play theories.

**2.2.6 Theorising play**

The trend to view play from divergent perspectives is reflected in divergent play theories that have been developed over time. Considering the time, contexts and philosophical perspectives, these theories are summarised in different categories and presented in Table 2.3.

**Table 2.3: Play theories at a glance (Bruce, 2004; Fleer, 2009;Hughes, 2010)**

| Theory | Proponents | Play reasons | Effects on child |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Classical theories** | | | |
| Surplus energy | Spencer (1873) | To discharge the natural (surplus) energy of the body | Physical |
| Renewal of energy | Patrick (1916) | To avoid boredom while the natural motor functions of the body are restored | Physical |
| Recapitulation | Hall (1883) | To relive periods in the evolutionary history of the human species | Physical |
| Practice for adulthood/instinct-practice | Groos (1901) | To develop skills and knowledge necessary for functioning as an adult | Physical intellectual |
| **Contemporary theories** | | | |
| Psychoanalytical | S. Freud (1856–1939), A. Freud (1895–1982), Erikson (1902–1994) | To reduce anxiety by giving a child a sense of control over the world and an acceptable way to express forbidden impulses | Emotional social |
| Cognitive-developmental | Bruner (1972), Piaget (1962,1983), Sutton-Smith | To facilitate general cognitive development. To consolidate learning that has already taken place while allowing for the possibility of new learning in a relaxed atmosphere | Intellectual social |
| Arousal modulation | Berlyne (1969), Fein (1981), Ellis (1973) | To keep the body at an optimal state of arousal. To relieve boredom. To reduce uncertainty | Emotional physical |
| Contextual: (cultural-historical) | Vygotsky (1896–1934) | To reconstruct reality, knowledge through everyday concepts, leading towards a zone of proximal development, without situational influences or restraints | Intellectual |

The classical theories emphasised the biological and genetic elements of play (Hughes, 2010). Surplus theory views play as releasing the excess body energy; in contrast, the renewal of energy theory claims that through play the body's natural motor functions are restored. Instinct-practice theory posits play as preparing a child for future adult living (Hughes, 2010).

Recapitulation theory maintains that play enables children to go through the stages of human evolution (Fleer, 2009). Conversely, contemporary theories, for example, the psychoanalytical perspective, consider play an 'emotional release for children' as they grow (Kieff & Casbergue, 2000, p. 5). Arousal modulation theory maintains play generates optimal stimulation that reduces uncertainty and relieves boredom (Hughes, 2010). Further, contemporary play theories may be considered from two perspectives: developmental and contextual.

The proponents of developmental theory—for example, Bruner and Piaget—highlight cognitive development through play. Piaget's stage-theory posits development of knowledge as the child's own individual creation and play as the vehicle to both construct knowledge and reflect his/her level of development (1952 as cited in Kieff & Casbergue, 2000). Developmental theory considers play as children's emerging abilities to create their own knowledge through interactions with people, objects and materials (Follari, 2011; Kieff & Casbergue, 2000).This theory has become one of the dominant discourses in ECE.

Deviating from the philosophy of developmental theory, the contextual perspective emphasises the socio-cultural and historical contexts of play. This perspective is inspired by the Vygotskian philosophy of child development (Brock et al., 2009; Fleer, 2009; Hughes, 2010; Kieff & Casbergue, 2000). The Vygotskian approach considers that 'through play children use their ingenuity to create imaginary events that originate from real life circumstances'(Saracho & Spodek, 1998a, p. 7). This perspective maintains that play helps children to 'stretch beyond their understanding with assistance of adults or more learned peers and develop new skills and abilities that support further development and learning'(Kieff & Casbergue, 2000, p. 4). This theory proposes that young children's understandings, as developed through play, are influenced and shaped according to the cultural values and beliefs of the societies in which they reside (Fleer, 2009; Follari, 2011; Rogoff, 2003). Hence, socio-cultural approaches provide the opportunity to move beyond the static view of play and take account of interpretations from divergent cultural contexts.

## 2.3 Section Two: Cross-Cultural Studies on Play as Learning and Development

Cross-cultural studies reveal that the nature of play and its interpretations differ across societies, cultures and time. This section explores how play is valued and experienced as learning and

development in divergent cultural contexts. It also includes empirical research on play-oriented curriculum and teaching–learning practices in the context of Bangladesh.

### 2.3.1 Play across cultures

The literature reviewed to date has indicated that the nature of child rearing, adults' involvement with the children and their expectations from and responsibilities to the children are influenced by their own cultural beliefs, values, norms and practices (McLachlan et al., 2013; Rogoff, 2003; Tudge, 2008). These issues are inextricably related to the economic, social, educational, political and historical contexts of a particular society.

According to Tobin et al. (2009), both context and time are very important, because the socio-cultural, economic and political factors that determine ECE policies and practices of a particular country change over time, as the authors observed in China, Japan and the United States. Meanwhile, Kieff and Casbergue (2000)argued that knowledge, experiences and cultural values determine the meaning and value of play to individuals and these dynamic meanings evolve according to contexts and circumstances.

Across cultures, divergent views exist regarding activities that communities value as being developmental for their children (Goncu et al., 2000). In some underprivileged societies, young children's play is viewed as trivial and thus ignored. Some communities emphasise activities that would support adulthood and future living (earning) of their children (Rogoff, 2003). Children are more engaged in activities that may help the households or livelihoods of the families (Tudge, 2008). Some may label such activities as work; however, this does not necessarily mean that in those cultural contexts play does not exist. Work is not the opposite of play; rather, it is no-play, which is more devastating for children (Fronczek, 2009). In fact, in some societies play and work are 'intertwined into a virtually seamless fabric of daily life'(Parmar, et al., 2004). It appears that in underprivileged societies play, as an extended form of work, is deemed valuable for the development of children. The example of a child using a machete at home in Congo was presented by Rogoff (2003) as evidence that, due to cultural differences, what is considered as play or development in one society may not be appreciated as appropriate in another one.

Empirical research demonstrates that in Western societies the child's image is embedded in play. Children in the societies of the United States and England spend most of their time in play with toys (Tudge, 2008). In British society, play and conversation between mother and child is

a common practice that is not common among families of a Bangladeshi cultural background (Brooker, 2005) or is not considered appropriate in the Giriama community in Kenya (Tudge, 2008). In the latter community, the image of the child is entrenched with work (to support the family's household economy) rather than play, as demonstrated in naming 2–3-year-old children as 'a youngster who can be sent to fetch a cup of water' (Tudge, 2008, p. 45). Thus cross cultural studies suggest that diversity exists in terms of image of the child, nature of play and adults' perceptions of play as learning and development. Fleer (2010)acknowledged this diversity and argued that it is essential to pay attention to 'cultural differences in play' and 'country-specific needs'(Fleer, 2010a, p. 131).

An increasing body of evidence indicates that the developmental value of children's play activities is determined by cultural values (Fleer, 2010b; Goncu, et al., 2000; B. Rogoff, 2003; Tobin, et al., 2009; Tudge, 2008). In a cross-cultural study, Goncu et al. (2000) examined the differences in the social play of young children from four different cultural communities in Guatemala (San Pedro, a Mayan Indian community), Turkey (Kecioren, a district in Ankara), India (Dhol-Ki-Patti, a rural tribal community) and the United States (Salt Lake City). The study revealed that different communities held different understandings about the meaning and value of play. Their findings further indicated that in non-Western or low-income societies, children's play opportunities were limited (Goncu et al., 2000). In such societies (such as Mexican or Mayan societies), children learn through participating in adult-directed community activities. Due to workload, these adults may consider involvement in child play as inessential, and it is the older children who guide a young one's play (Goncu et al., 2000).

Cultural variation in play is not merely determined by access to resources; rather, it is determined by the beliefs that adults bear in mind about play, education and development. Research indicates that even in developed societies adults from divergent cultural backgrounds value play differently. Despite similar access to play resources and opportunities, some parents emphasise the value of play in terms of learning and development, whereas others do not(Brooker, 2005; Farver, Kim, & Lee, 1995;Parmar, et al., 2004). Parmar et al. (2004) conducted a study on Asian (Chinese, Korean, Pakistani, Nepalese and Indian) and Euro-American parents to explore cultural variations in play perceptions of parents with similar access to resources and play opportunities. The study revealed that Euro-American parents valued play as an important vehicle for early learning and physical, social, emotional and cognitive development. In contrast, Asian parents emphasised an early start in academic

training for their children, helping them to get ready for school. Study findings also indicate that divergences in parents' cultural beliefs and expectations are reflected in children's play patterns and social interactions at home and school. Based on socio-cultural theory and inspired by Rogoff's (2003) three planes of analysis, Fleer, Tonyan, Mantilla and Rivalland (2009) conducted a study in a day care centre in Victoria, Australia. The study revealed that young children's cultural experiences were reflected in their play activities at the centre.

Research demonstrates that socio-cultural contexts influence teaching–learning practices and adults' approaches towards children's development through play. Chang's (2003) research on young children's play in two Taiwanese kindergartens focused on teachers' perspectives. Chang found that the valuing of play as learning differed in different contexts. In addition, traditional cultural values influence teachers' beliefs and involvement in children's play. Hegde and Cassidy (2009) conducted research on teacher's beliefs regarding DAP in Mumbai, India. Their study revealed that teachers' approaches towards play-based teaching–learning were shaped by classroom contexts. Factors such as large group size of students, limited play materials, lack of resources and parental non-recognition of play in education hindered implementation of play-based teaching-learning. This qualitative study concluded that culture and social conditions are the foundation for classroom practices. In investigating the influence of cultural differences on play-based ECE in the context of China, David and Powell (2005) asserted that because of differences in the cultural nature of play, the success of imported pedagogies, ideas and curriculum models, like Reggio Emilia, Montessori or DAP, depends on how these are tailored to accommodate the values and expectations of a given society.

Similar claims surface in Trawick-Smith's (2010) study, which investigated classroom play and play interactions in the context of Puerto Rico. The study found that teachers' interpretations of children's play were not solely shaped by their own cultural values; rather, Western curriculum and practices (particularly those of NAEYC) influenced understandings about desired play practices in the classroom. It is evident that a tension exists between cultural values of children's play and expectations that consider Western educational models as superior. Thus, it appears that Western play perceptions not only dominate EC educational research, but they also undermine non-Western play traditions through colonising adults' minds in terms of 'desired' play practices. Based on these findings, Trawick-Smith's (2010) study argued for extending developmental play theory to consider the impacts of such cultural variations.

These cross-cultural experiences grounded the demand for ECE research to broaden the play understandings with new dimensions. These new dimensions would have depth and breadth, and would be inclusive of distinct cultural contexts, conceptions, values and practices in relation to play as learning and development. In accordance with this, re-conceptualists challenge the overwhelming assumptions of universality of child development based on Western perceptions and practices—assumptions that not only dominate educational research but also politicise the sphere of ECE and development throughout the world(Cannella, 2005; Gupta, 2011; Viruru, 2001; Yelland & Kilderry, 2005). Therefore, the present study focuses on the conceptualisation and contextualisation of a play-oriented preschool curriculum in a developing country (namely, Bangladesh), thereby adding to the above-mentioned new dimension of ECE research.

**2.3.2 Play-oriented curriculum and teaching–learning in the context of Bangladesh**

Literature on national play-oriented PPC is rare in the context of Bangladesh. In Bangladesh, PPE is a recent initiative, which is founded on the experiences of unorganised pre-primary classes (previously known as the Baby class) in public sector and some NGO initiatives. Several studies that report on NGO-initiated early childhood education and development (ECED) programs that advocate for play as learning and development are reviewed in this section. Findings of the reviewed research indicate that playful teaching–learning approaches can be imported or adapted to accelerate learning and development goals of young children in broader domains of literacy, numeracy, socio-emotional, linguistic, physical and cognitive domains.

Kibria and Jain (2009) conducted a qualitative study to investigate the understandings, views and ideas of rural caregivers (families and educators) in Bangladesh about the cultural impacts of the television (TV) programme, Sisimpur. This programme is an imported and foreign-funded ECED-centred mass media project (a local version of Sesame Street, co-produced by Sesame Workshop and funded by USAID) in Bangladesh. It aims to facilitate construction of knowledge and development of early learning skills (such as literacy and numeracy) as well as skills in relation to a social, emotional and healthy lifestyle through stimulating methods (such as play, music and art) while embedding the local culture. The study revealed that incorporation of playful methods and embedding local culture stimulates young children's learning and makes teaching easier. The programme has introduced an image of the child as a playfully learning child who is developing in natural ways, through fun and play. This study has unpacked the educational, developmental and cultural value of play and playfulness in ECED. It judged value of playful learning through the lens of popular culture. However, it did not include how play is

valued in the formal educational framework, in which academic skill achievements prevail among both family expectations and teaching approaches (backed by rote-based and punishment-motivated learning) (Kibria & Jain, 2009).

The report on the Kajoli ECE research project (RIB, 2012) has demonstrated the role of playful learning and community participation in young children's learning and development within an institutional framework. This project was initiated in 2003 by Research Initiative Bangladesh, a local NGO funded by the Royal Dutch Government, in the village of Kajoli in south-western Bangladesh. The objective of this action-research-based project was to develop a model for community-run ECE centres in rural Bangladesh to provide the 'missing' young children of hard to reach rural areas with pre-academic learning skills and pave their way to mainstream primary education. This project adopted a curriculum that followed an interactive teaching and cooperative learning system through fun and games to support cognitive, socio-emotional and physical development of the children. Findings of the report reveal that playful teaching and learning in an informal environment, with community participation, accelerated the young children's development of early academic skills, including reading, writing and counting, as well as their social, physical and communication skills.

However, this NGO-initiated project (inspired by imported pedagogical values) concentrated only on a limited target area and population. It is oriented more by informal education than traditional schooling. Therefore, the complexities and challenges that teachers and children face in the classroom contexts of public schools (for example, lack of space and learning materials, overcrowded classrooms or unfavourable children–teacher ratios) were not reflected in this study. Moreover, this report did not provide any clear guidelines about how to adopt the studied model in the mainstream public sector education system or how young children (of the model school) would cope in their transition from playful interactive learning to the traditional rote-based non-interactive learning system in the public primary schools.

In another initiative, Young and Morgan (2010) reported on the Basic Education—Chittagong Hill Tracts (BE-CHT) project. This was a foreign-funded (mostly by the European Union) United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) project, implemented with technical support from the local setup of an international NGO (SIL International) in Bangladesh. The study explored the experiences of the BE-CHT project that aimed to develop a mother-tongue-based preschool curriculum in eight ethnic languages of the targeted area—a culturally and ethnically diverse hilly region in the south-east of Bangladesh. The project focused on appropriate

curriculum design, material development and classroom management strategies, while paying attention to mother-language-based ECE. Activities involved the use of Big Books and theme-based brightly coloured pictures, listening to traditional cultural stories and rhyming (as collected by local communities) with rhythm and action. In the classroom, five areas were designed as 'learning centres' to support early learning in different domains. The report uncovered that these activities, embedded with local culture and language, accelerated children's early learning and development and supported their transition to mainstream schools. However, this study was based on the data gathered a few years before the formal introduction of PPE (implemented since 2010) and its curriculum (developed in 2011) in the public sector in Bangladesh. Moreover, this study explored only the experiences of a foreign-funded non-government informal ECED project that was focused on a limited area and population.

The above-mentioned studies reviewed externally funded international and local NGO initiatives. These specific target-oriented projects (such as popular culture, disadvantaged children or mother-language-oriented curriculum for ethno-linguistic groups) were influenced by Western pedagogical approaches, cultural practices and developmental values. We may take the examples of adopting technology-based popular culture like TV shows (such as Sisimpur), use of blocs (as in the Kajoli project) as play material (which is unfamiliar to rural Bangladeshi children) or classroom arrangements with multiple 'learning centres' focusing on different learning themes (as in the BE-CHT project). In the rural educational contexts of Bangladesh, these are not feasible in overcrowded and resource- or space-scarce classrooms. Further, in villages, young children, particularly from low socio-economic family backgrounds, have less access to popular culture, such as TV shows.

The studies conducted by researchers related to the concerned NGOs are not free from organisational bias. These limited focus NGO projects address neither the contextual realities (such as teachers', parents' and children's personal contexts, family contexts and classroom contexts) of teaching–learning processes in the formal educational environment in the public sector, nor the transition of young children from playful PPE (as espoused and offered by the NGO projects) to traditional (non-interactive and rote-based) mainstream educational environments. The reviewed studies argue that a play-oriented curriculum and a playful interactive teaching–learning approach are appreciated by parents and society as enhancing learning and development of young children. However, parental or social expectations from formal (mainstream) education could be different from those of informal ones.

In addition, the studied projects focus on community approach, teacher ability and interactive playful learning practices, and so certain issues remain unanswered. For example, how is play addressed and approached in the new national preschool curriculum? How do teachers and parents conceptualise play as a teaching–learning strategy? How do they consider play as a medium of communication/interaction with young children? Is there any relation between home practices and classroom practices in relation to young children's play? What are the factors that facilitate/hinder young children's learning and development through play? What challenges do the teachers face while incorporating a play-oriented curriculum in their classrooms? And how do the young children situate themselves in such play-based teaching–learning practices? Since answers to these questions are very significant in implementing play as a pedagogical approach, the present study focuses on these issues. To this end, my pilot project sheds some light on the subject through some interesting findings.

My pilot study investigated the relevance of play as a teaching–learning tool in the public ECE context of Bangladesh (Chowdhury, 2011). The scope of my socio-cultural study was limited in terms of duration of data collection period and number of participants. At the time of the study (in the year 2010), PPE had been introduced in selected public primary schools. In those schools, one teacher was selected from each school as a pre-primary teacher, provided with 6 days of PPE training and assigned to conduct the pre-primary class. I interviewed four pre-primary teachers (from four selected schools) and four parents (whose children were attending the respective pre-primary classrooms). My interpretivist study adopted Rogoff's(1995) three lenses (namely, personal, interpersonal and institutional) for data analysis.

The study revealed that play as a pedagogical approach challenged the existing traditional teaching, learning and development approaches. Play was understood as interactive activities (such as singing, rhyming, drawing, doing physical exercises and playing games) that are different from traditional teaching–learning activities (e.g., reading, writing and memorising). Teachers welcomed it as an easy means of teaching young children. However, play practices in classrooms were rigorously teacher-instructed. Young children tried to follow teacher instructions in correct ways (like drawing circles with a bangle or constructing houses with sticks). These teacher-directed play activities were considered to be developing basic pre-academic skills (like literacy and numeracy) among young children, particularly from low socio-economic status family backgrounds. Conversely, parents emphasised achieving academic targets rather than trivial activities like play. Play as a frivolous activity was

considered a cultural tool—a means of learning future responsibilities, such as gender roles—and a medium of preserving cultural practices and conveying those from one generation to another. However, access to play activities attracted young children to school and reduced their feelings of fear and anxiety about attending formal education.

Due to ethical limitations and time constraints, the pilot study did not examine government officials' (policymakers'/policy implementers') stances towards play or children's responses to play, among other things. It was based on teachers' and parents' limited understandings of play, since it was conducted immediately after the formal inauguration of PPE and introduction of play as the part of curriculum in the public sector of Bangladesh. The study was conducted before the development of the curriculum. Hence, the notion of play as addressed in the latest PPC was excluded from the scope of the study. However, the pilot study introduced some baseline data that provided the ground for an extended research.

## 2.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter provides a conceptual framework for considering curriculum and play. It comprehends understandings of these two concepts as manifested in this study. The literature indicates that, based on cultural values, social demands, economic realities and political manifestations, policymakers furnish curriculum documents with a formal shape by setting forward goals for children's learning and development and ways to achieve those. Play, as the centre of an EC curriculum, is considered the vehicle of early learning and development. Through play, young children relate their everyday experiences to the process of learning, which makes learning meaningful to them. This social process of constructing meanings is framed in routines, planned activities and spontaneous interactions within the framework of curriculum. However, cross-cultural studies suggest that knowledge, experiences, social expectations and cultural values determine the meaning and value of play to individuals and these dynamic meanings evolve according to context and circumstance. My exploration in this chapter also focuses on play-oriented learning perceptions and practices in the context of Bangladesh. The reviewed literature and findings of my pilot study provided the basis for the present study to explore how play, as a learning and developmental notion, is perceived, approached and implemented as per the new preschool curriculum in the context of Bangladesh

and how it influences existing cultural practices. To help attain this target, this study utilised a socio-cultural approach and relied on Rogoff's understandings of leaning and development. The following chapter elaborates this theoretical framework.

# Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

Theoretical lens or perspective … provides an overall orienting lens for the study … This lens becomes a transformative perspective that shapes the types of questions asked, informs how data are collected and analysed and provides a call for action or change. (Creswell, 2014, p. 64)

## 3.1 Overview

Researchers test theories to attain and explain answers to the questions they are investigating (Creswell, 2014). My present socio-cultural research applies Barbara Rogoff's learning and development approaches to investigate how Bangladesh's latest (and imported) play-oriented preschool curriculum is perceived, approached and experienced by adults (parents, practitioners and professionals) and young learners, and how it influences participation patterns in early learning practices. Rogoff's core understanding of development relies on the concept of transformation of participation. This perspective was further developed by cross-cultural research conducted by Rogoff and her colleagues. They emphasised that children's learning and development is reliant on the cultural organisation of participation in everyday practices (Rogoff, Moore, Correa-Chávez, & Dexter, 2015; Rogoff, et al., 2007). According to Rogoff et al. (2015):

Investigating distinct ways of organizing children's participation in routine activities offer a way to address the dynamic nature of repertoires of cultural practices—the formats of (inter)action that individuals experience and that they may take up, resist, or transform. (p. 472)

They posited that the way children engage in daily practices in a cultural community determines their learning traditions. Rogoff and her colleagues (Rogoff et al., 2007) argued that 'seeing the cultural organization of everyday practices as well as of whole learning traditions can help researchers understand children's (and our own) development as cultural beings' (p. 511).

This approach of culturally organised traditions of learning practices elucidates how learning occurs in diverse cultural settings. To represent different cultural organisations of learning traditions, Rogoff and her colleagues introduced three distinct multifaceted prisms. These prisms emphasise the patterns of participation (of both adults/experts and learners) along with purposes and processes of learning in different cultural contexts. This study uses these prisms

to explore early learning traditions that occur through play-oriented practices as implemented by Bangladesh's new PPC (NCTB, 2011).

As explained in Chapter One, the PPC moves away from traditional rote-based learning and foregrounds play-oriented strategies as the foremost teaching–learning approach. This new curriculum approach is aimed at making learning interesting to young children, providing the bases for their future learning. It is expected that this shift from a rigid and didactic learning approach towards play-oriented teaching–learning practices will ultimately lead to improvements in quality of education, increase school attendance, prevent dropouts and reduce grade repetitions—the major concerns in the primary education sector in Bangladesh (NCTB, 2011). Consequently, how young children, parents and practitioners/professionals (including teachers and government officials) experience a play-oriented curriculum that challenges culturally rigid unilateral (adult-dominated) pedagogical practices is the central focus of my present investigation. Rogoff's socio-cultural perspectives of learning and development, particularly culturally organised traditions of learning practices, inform this investigation, which explores cultural engagement of different stakeholders experiencing the implementation of this play-oriented PPC in Bangladesh.

Therefore, this chapter discusses Rogoff's socio-cultural approaches to learning and development that provide the theoretical and analytical frameworks for my study. It begins with a description of the socio-cultural approach by which Rogoff advanced her theoretical perspective. In this effort, I acknowledge how the interconnectedness, tensions and contradictions among theories, and how addressing human development across culture and time, contributed to Rogoff's earlier works on socio-cultural understandings. I discuss how ongoing cross-cultural research undertaken by Rogoff and her colleagues expanded on these earlier works, leading to the development of a new approach of culturally organised traditions of learning practices. The chapter explains this approach as represented through three multifaceted prisms elaborating how learning occurs in divergent cultural contexts. I further elaborate how Rogoff's latest learning approach framed the theoretical base of my present research, guiding both data generation and its interpretation. The chapter concludes by highlighting how this theoretical perspective shaped my analytical framework.

## 3.2 Rogoff's Socio-Cultural Perspective

This study relies on Rogoff's socio-cultural standpoint about learning and development. Her research approach embeds socio-cultural perspectives evolving across time and cultures. Rogoff has emphasised this theory as an emerging perspective that is not limited to any particular unified perception; as she stated, 'Sociocultural theory is still emerging and is not a single consolidated view'(Rogoff, 1998, p. 687).

According to Rogoff(1998), evolution of socio-cultural theory itself is subject to socio-cultural and historical contexts. Rogoff's socio-cultural understanding takes into account two trends. The first trend encompasses the classical theories; for example, the theories of Vygotsky, Piaget and Dewey. These theories originated in the early 20th century and developed through socio-cultural, historical, political and ideological contexts over time, ranging from the Marxist Soviet Union to the capitalist United States of America. The interconnectedness, tension and contradiction between and across these theories contributed to Rogoff's understandings of socio-culturalism as the theoretical base to explain human development. The second trend considers recent approaches to socio-culturalism in which Rogoff adds a new dimension in respect of understanding how learning and development occur in divergent cultural contexts. In the present section, I explain how classical theories (and their expansions) and recent approaches have contributed to Rogoff's socio-cultural perspective about learning and development. This discussion begins with a short introduction to Rogoff and her research background.

### 3.2.1 Rogoff and her research background

Barbara Rogoff is a leading psychologist with anthropological, sociological and educational awareness. This developmental psychologist from the United States of America, born in 1950, is at present the University of California Santa Cruz (UCSC) Foundation Distinguished Professor of Psychology (Mantilla, 2011; UCSC, 2014a). She completed her doctoral research at Harvard University in the 1970s. Her doctoral study investigated an 'interdisciplinary program in Psychology and Social Relations … where she focused on developmental psychology, with special interest in cultural aspects of development with anthropologists and psychologists interested in culture'(Rogoff & Angelillo, 2002, p. 211). Rogoff's research interests lie in:

Investigating cultural variation in learning processes and settings, with special interest in communities where schooling has not been prevalent. She is particularly interested in cultural aspects of collaboration, learning through observation, children's interest and keen attention to ongoing events, roles of adults as guides or as instructors, and children's opportunities to participate in cultural activities or in age-specific child-focused settings. (UCSC, 2014a, para 1)

Her published works cover the broader fields of culture, education and psychology. A focus on human, child and social development is represented in her books, *Developing Destinies: A Mayan Midwife and Town* (2011), *The Cultural Nature of Development* (2003), *Learning Together: Children and Adults in a School Community* (2001) and *Apprenticeship in Thinking: Cognitive Development in Social Context*(1991).

Rogoff's present research group investigates the organisation of teaching and learning in family settings and schools (in Central America and North America in Mayan, US-Mexican heritage and middle-class US-European heritage communities) focusing on how 'children are supported in learning through keenly observing ongoing community events and contributing in collaborative group engagement'(UCSC, 2014b, para 1).She has organised a consortium on 'learning through intent community participation'. Beginning in 1974, she has become close to the Mayan community in Guatemala through her study and research. Being involved in cross-cultural research since the 1970s, Rogoff concentrated on two themes: 'the cultural variability of child development and the developmental processes in these culturally diverse paths' (Gauvain & the Gale Group Inc., 2003–2009, as mentioned in Mantilla, 2011, p. 49). Based on her decades of experiences of participating in a different cultural community (the Mayan in Guatemala) and her profound conceptualisation of classical theories and contemporary research approaches, she offers a new socio-cultural approach that explains human development from a cultural perspective subject to the dynamics of participation in socio-cultural activities.

### 3.2.2 Socio-cultural theory underpinning Rogoff's theoretical stance

Rogoff's theoretical perspective focuses on how social context, particularly cultural variations in participation patterns in shared community endeavours, determine learning and development. While focusing on human development and learning, she adopts a socio-cultural methodology that is more like a bricolage, integrating different disciplines into her research. She maintained that 'Sociocultural research involves integration across topics that have traditionally been

segregated in different disciplines, such as psychology, anthropology, sociology, socioling[u]istics, and history' (Rogoff, 1998, p. 680).

A socio-cultural research harmonises the relationship between human mental functioning and cultural, historical and institutional settings (Wertsch, 1995). From this socio-cultural viewpoint, the concepts of learning and development are considered a social construction (Boreham & Morgan, 2008; Lambert & Clyde, 2003) in which individuals and socio-cultural historical contexts jointly construct these concepts (Anning, 2005, p. 67). Based on this understanding, Rogoff posits that an individuals' development cannot be understood in segregation from the societies and cultures they belong to. Thus, she argued for a 'move beyond overgeneralizations that assume that human development everywhere functions in the same ways'(p. 7).

Rogoff conceives human development as a process that occurs through transformation of participation (this concept is explained later in this chapter) in socio-cultural activities of their community. This socio-cultural understanding is rooted in Vygotsky's cultural-historical theory originated in the early 20th century (and later expanded by his colleagues and students) in the former Soviet Union. Vygotsky argued that construction of knowledge is culturally mediated (Bodorova & Leong, 2007) and emphasised the focus on 'social, cultural and historical processes in which individual functioning develops' (Rogoff, 1998, p. 682). He proposed a dialectical notion of culture and history that considers culture not as a 'collection of inert (dead) artifacts but as a living continuous flow of practices that stretch throughout history and are enacted by each generation' (Vianna & Stetsenko, 2006, p. 89).Vygotsky introduced the concept of internalisation and the zone of proximal development (ZPD). As Rogoff explained:

> Central to Vygotsky's theory is the idea that children's participation in cultural activities with the guidance of others allows children to 'internalize' their community's tools for thinking … Vygotsky's concept of zone of proximal development posits that development proceeds through children's participation in activities slightly beyond their competence with the assistance of adults or more skilled children. (Rogoff, 1998, p. 682)

The notion of a ZPD focuses on how children' stretch beyond their understanding with assistance of adults or more learned peers and develop new skills and abilities that support further development and learning'(Kieff & Casbergue, 2000, p. 4).Vygotsky further posited that this development of knowledge occurs through internalisation, particularly at two levels: the individual (intrapersonal) and the social (interpersonal; Fleer, Hedegaard & Tudge, 2009;

Hoorn, Nourot, Scales & Alward, 2011). He emphasised cultural tools like words in human development and unit of activity (maintaining the characteristics of the larger system) in analysing human development and learning (Cole, 1985; Matusov, 2007; Rogoff, 1998; Werstch, 1985). However, Vygotsky had a very short life (1896–1934); hence, his ideas were later expanded and elaborated by his colleagues and students. Bakhtin extended Vygotsky's focus on the *word* to a focus on *dialogue* 'in which people engage with each other (even in monologue), building on cultural genres', while Leont'ev extended 'Vygotsky's search for a unit of analysis by elaborating the concept of *activity*' (Rogoff, 1998, p. 683). Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) elaborated ZPD with the concept of scaffolding to explain how the adults extend children's learning and development. However, Vygotsky's works, developed in the 1920s and 1930s, became available to the West (through English translation) in 1962, and spread widely in 1978 with the publication of *Mind in Society*. Vygotsky's theory was influenced by the contemporary status of psychology, which he referred to as a 'crisis in psychology' (Cole & Scribner, 1978, p. 5), and by the Marxist ideology that prevailed in 'postrevolutionary Russia during the interwar period' (Mantilla, 2011, p. 33).

The concurrent developmental theory of Dewey also influenced Rogoff's socio-cultural approach to research. She considered Dewey's theory as 'quite compatible with cultural/historical theory and is providing further inspiration to current work in sociocultural theory development and research' (Rogoff, 1998, p. 684). His proposition of 'social medium' elaborates how an individuals' development is determined by their social context (Dewey, 1916):

> Every individual has grown up, and always must grow up, in a social medium. His responses grow intelligent, or gain meaning, simply because he lives and acts in a medium of accepted meanings and values. (Dewey, 1916, p. 344)

Similar to cultural-historical theory, Dewey emphasised the social context and 'placed children and other people as active participants in shared endeavors of their communities and insisted that individual cognition depends upon engagement in such activities' (Rogoff, 1998, p. 684). He elaborated:

> The social environment … is truly educative in its effects in the degree in which an individual shares or participates in some conjoint activity. By doing his share in the associated activity, the individual appropriates the purpose which actuates it, becomes familiar with its methods

and subject matters, acquires needed skill, and is saturated with its emotional spirit. (Dewey, 1916, p. 26)

Rogoff further takes into account Bandura's social learning theory as contributing to socio-cultural approaches. Rogoff (1998, p. 684) stated that 'it shares an interest in studying how children learn from the social world', though it separates individuals from their social context. She acknowledges that Bandura's concept of reciprocal determinism treats the individual and the environment as independently defined entities, while Vygotskyan and Deweyan perspectives consider individuals, cultural tools and institutions as mutual contributors to activities/events.

In addition, Piaget's developmental theory, which generally contrasts with the cultural-historical theory of Vygotsky, is also considered by Rogoff as contributing to her socio-cultural view point. Rogoff stated:

In the late 1920s, his [Piaget's] writings examined the relation between the individual and the social. Piaget provided cogent speculation that individual development is facilitated by cooperation between peers in resolving cognitive conflicts provided by their different perspectives … Piaget's statements that reflection is internalized dialogue resemble Vygotsky's principle that higher mental functions are internalized from social interaction. (Rogoff, 1998, p. 684)

However, Piaget's stance differs from the Vygotskyan perspective of social processes in that Piaget's understanding of the social world is limited to the interpersonal context, excludes cultural or historical context and treats individuals as the centre of change. Notwithstanding these differences, Rogoff argued that Piagetian theory, developed in the 1920s, has added to the socio-cultural theoretical efforts, particularly in respect of cognition as a collaborative process:

Piaget's (1926) emphasis on peer interaction has drawn attention to the exploration of cognitive conflict between companions of equal status … Other scholars have extended Piaget's discussion to include the effects of peer interaction on the development of Piagetian concepts. Some of this work considers the sociocultural context in addition to the interpersonal context, developing the seed of Piaget's ideas about the social world beyond his own work. (Rogoff, 1998, p. 686)

Despite tensions and contradictions, the interconnectedness between and across classical theories (like Vygotsky's seminal works on development and Piaget's understandings of

cognition as a collaborative process) contributed to Rogoff's socio-cultural stance on learning and development. In addition, recent socio-cultural research and approaches have added to her theoretical understandings.

Prevalent theories have inspired present socio-cultural approaches to learning and development. Recent endeavours emphasise social contexts, cultural settings and multiple dimensions of participation in socio-cultural activities while perceiving the process of learning. Boreham and Morgan (2008) elaborated:

> From the sociocultural perspective, learning is perceived as being embedded in social and cultural contexts, and best understood as a form of participation in those contexts. This concept of learning implies the simultaneous transformation of social practices and the individuals who participate in them, and thus the social and individual dimensions of learning are mutually constitutive. (p. 72)

Scholars like Lave and Wenger (1991), Litowitz (1993), Heath (1983), Forman and McPhail (1993), Ochs (1988), Cole and Griffin (1980), Nicolopoulou and Cole (1993), White and Siegel (1984), Meachan (1984), and Wertsch and Stone (1979) have emphasised this understanding, which influenced Rogoff's research approach. Classical theorists like Dewey have brought a similar emphasis to this concept of development as participation:

> If the living, experiencing being is an intimate participant in the activities of the world to which it belongs, then knowledge is a mode of participation, valuable in the degree in which it is effective. It cannot be the idle view of an unconcerned spectator. (Dewey, 1916, p. 393)

This proposition of development has become central to Rogoff's socio-cultural approach to human development (Rogoff, 1995; 1998; 2003). She advanced this as the transformation of participation. She postulated that 'development and learning entail individuals' transformation of participation in sociocultural activity' (Rogoff, 1998, p. 687). This socio-cultural perception guides Rogoff's works. She puts emphasis on cultural practices and relies on a collaborative approach to understand how individuals develop through their ongoing participation in shared endeavours within the cultural groups to which they belong. With this insight, Rogoff has introduced her understandings of learning and development (Bodrova & Leong, 2007; Edwards, 2009).

Rogoff described learning as a social process that is based on the cultural platform and determined by the complex relationships among participants of shared endeavours. My present

research aligns with this socio-cultural approach of learning and development. Rogoff suggested that, 'in sociocultural approaches, researchers attempt to study individuals' learning as they participate in ongoing and varied sociocultural activities' (Rogoff, 1998, p. 681). Harmonising this perspective, my study considers the complex nature of cultural participation of different stakeholders (such as children, parents, teachers and government officials), while investigating their perceptions, approaches and practices regarding the play-oriented curriculum approach in Bangladesh's pre-primary context. The theoretical framework and analytical base of my present study rest on Rogoff's understandings of learning and development.

## 3.3 Rogoff's Theoretical Stance About Learning and Development

### 3.3.1 Understandings of learning and development

> To understand human development, it is essential to understand the development of the culture, institutions and practices in which people participate. (Rogoff, 2003, p. 327)

Rogoff's understandings of learning and development are constructed based on two major concepts: cultural repertoires and patterns of participation. Culture is explained as the 'integrated constellations of community practices' (Rogoff & Angelillo, 2002, p. 216), while participation can be either peripheral (by observing from the periphery) or full (by contributing in community activities), and learning may take place through integration in or segregation from community endeavours (Paradise & Rogoff, 2009; Rogoff, 2014; Rogoff et al., 2007). Rogoff (1995) argued that the cultural nature of participation determines the way children construct knowledge or develop their understanding and obtain proficiency in the domain Dewey (1916) called a 'social medium'. She explained this social medium of human development through three interrelated planes of participation in socio-cultural activities: personal, interpersonal and community/institutional (Rogoff, 1995). Considering the nature of participation in these three planes, their corresponding developmental processes are further referred to as participatory appropriation, guided participation and apprenticeship, respectively (Rogoff, 1995). The metaphor of apprenticeship, as used by Rogoff, refers to a community process that benefits learners from 'guided participation provided by community members and within communal activities and events, leading to individual members' processes of participatory appropriation, which allows them to participate fully in shaping and being shaped by their community' (Schneider and Evans, 2008, para 4).

As mentioned earlier, Rogoff's developmental perspective draws on Vygotsky's work of cultural mediation. However, like many socio-culturalists, she contests the Vygotskian conception of internalisation (Matusov, 1998; Rivalland, 2010; Rogoff, 1995). With her three planes of participation, Rogoff has challenged the 'dualism existing between the individual and the social, which Vygotsky situated at the intersection of the interpersonal and the intrapersonal planes' (Rivalland, 2010, p. 42). She maintained:

> The appropriation perspective views development as a dynamic, active, mutual process involved in peoples' participation in cultural activities; the internalization perspective views development in terms of a static, bounded 'acquisition' or 'transmission' of pieces of knowledge (either by internal construction or by the internalization of external pieces of knowledge). (Rogoff, 1995, p. 143)

As Rivalland (2010, p. 43) stated, 'Rogoff builds on Vygotsky's internalisation concept but claims a major theoretical difference between participation and internalisation'. Rogoff elaborated:

> Appropriation occurs in the process of participation, as the individual changes through involvement in the situation at hand, and this participation contributes both to the direction of the evolving event and to the individual's preparation for involvement in other similar events. In my view, appropriation is a process of transformation, not a precondition for transformation. Thus, I use the term 'appropriation' to refer to the change resulting from a person's own participation in an activity, not to his or her internalization of some external event or technique. (Rogoff, 1995, p. 153)

Consequently, the conception that human development occurs through transformation of participation in socio-cultural activities has become the central tenet to Rogoff's socio-cultural approach (Rogoff, 1995; 1998; 2003):

> Human development is a process in which people transform through their ongoing participation in cultural activities, which in turn contribute to changes in their cultural communities across generations through their changing participation in the sociocultural activities of their communities, which also change. (2003)

This perspective considers how children's understandings and involvement change while they participate in community activities. Specifically, it considers children's active changes of understandings and roles that depict their contribution to the socio-cultural activities in which they participate. Moving forward from the developmental goal of inferring what children *can*

think, this socio-cultural perspective tries to interpret what and how they *do* think (Rogoff, 1998).

Extending Wertsch and Stone's (1979, p. 21) understanding that 'the process is the product', Rogoff emphasises the process of participation as development. She contrasts the traditional conception that identifies development as the transmission and acquisition of knowledge. According to Rogoff, transmission of knowledge is the transmission 'of information and ideas to the brain from the outside world' and acquisition of knowledge is the acquisition 'of information and ideas by the brain' (Rogoff, 1997, p. 266). She maintains development as a dynamic and mutual process of transformation through active participation. Based on these concepts, Rogoff moved towards new insights on culturally organised learning traditions to elucidate learning and development of children as cultural beings (Rogoff et al., 2007).

This socio-cultural approach of learning and development provides the theoretical base of my present research investigating the cultural nature of participation in the process of early learning through play-oriented practices. This is further informed by Rogoff's latest theory of cultural organisation of learning traditions, elaborated in the following section.

### 3.3.2 Cultural organisation of learning traditions

Drawing on cross-cultural research of more than half a century, Rogoff and her colleagues have provided the foundations for a new socio-cultural understanding of development that proposes a participatory approach of learning (Paradise & Rogoff, 2009). This perspective is echoed in the words of Wood (2010):

> By emphasizing the socially and culturally situated nature of learning, children can be understood as active participants in cultural communities. Children's repertoires of activity and participation are culturally shaped with adults and peers, and with cultural tools and symbol systems. (p. 12)

Rogoff and her colleagues believe that children's learning and development is subject to cultural organisation of learning practices and the extent of their participation in the whole process of constructing knowledge and making meanings. This is also reflected in Dewey's perception of learning and development:

By doing his share in the associated activity [in the social environment], the individual appropriates it, becomes familiar with its methods and subject matters, acquires needed skill, and is saturated with its emotional spirit. (Dewey, 1916, p. 26)

Rogoff's latest approach to learning and development emphasises culture as determining the organisation of learning settings and configuration of participation (of both learners and adults/experts) in a particular community.

Culture refers to people's ways of thinking, feeling and behaving in a particular society at a given time. These 'ways' are demonstrated through beliefs, customs, values, laws, arts, technology and artefacts used by the people to interpret meanings of their work (Spencer-Oatey, 2008; Southwell, 2009). Rogoff and Angelillo (2002) regard culture as 'a patterned configuration of routine, value-laden ways of doing things that make some sense as they occur together in the somewhat ordered flux of a community's ways of living' (p. 216). Culture significantly influences the framing of different stakeholders' (adults' and children's) roles in shared community endeavours. More specifically, cultural traditions influence adults' approaches to children's learning and development. These traditions are not merely moulded by their existing context; rather, they are inherited by the parents or adults from the values and expectations of previous generations who lived under different circumstances (Rogoff et al., 2007). Thus, culture, history and context play significant roles in structuring the learning trends that take on different patterns among different cultural groups:

Understanding children's development requires attention to how they become familiar with particular ways of organizing their involvement in the routine activities of their lives … The formats organizing children's participation in cultural activities provide standing patterns of engagement—cultural infrastructures of everyday life. Such formats are key among the resources humans draw on to coordinate their behaviour in social encounters. (Rogoff et al., 2007, p. 493)

Rogoff and her colleagues argued that how children learn and develop in their everyday lives is determined by the organisation of their involvement in routine activities (Paradise & Rogoff, 2009; Rogoff et al., 2003; 2007). In other words, children's learning practices vary in differing cultural contexts depending on how their engagement in routine cultural events is arranged in diverse settings. To specify how learning occurs in diverse cultural settings, they presented three multidimensional prisms. These dynamic prisms represent three broad and distinct culturally structured learning traditions (Rogoff et al. 2003; 2007): Learning by Observation

and Pitching In (LOPI)(also referred to as Intent Community Participation), Assembly Line Instruction (ALI) and guided repetition (GR) of text. Rogoff and her colleagues stipulated:

> Intent community participation, in which children have access to observe and begin to contribute to ongoing endeavors of their community; assembly-line instruction, in which teaching is organized by experts around specialized exercises to introduce children to the skills and practices of their community without allowing or necessarily anticipating actual productive involvement; and guided repetition, in which novices learn by observing, imitating, and rehearsing models presented by experts. (Rogoff et al., 2007, p. 495)

Rogoff and her colleagues further explained that '[t]he generic forms portrayed in the prisms vary in specific characteristics when instantiated within a particular community or institution, at the same time as fitting the generic form of the prism' (Rogoff et al., 2007, pp. 495–496).
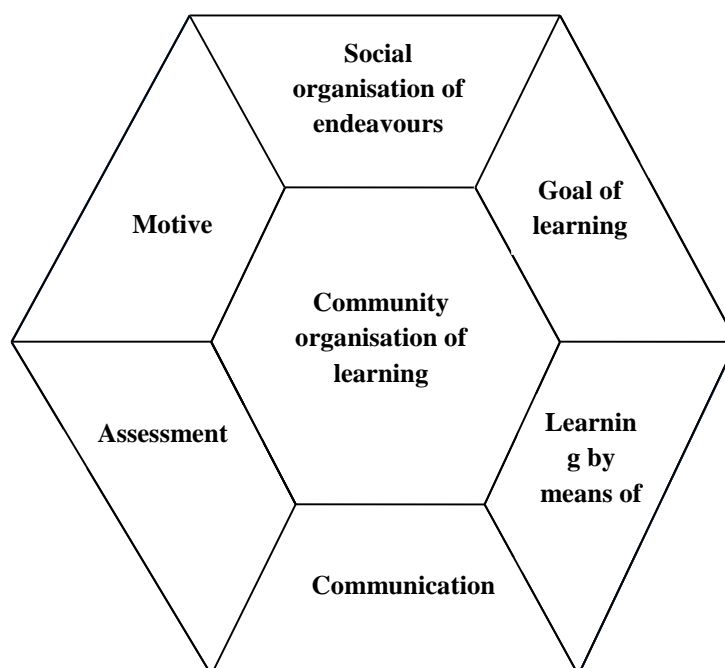


**Figure 3.1: Template representing distinguished features of culturally structured learning traditions (Rogoff, 2014; Rogoff et al., 2015).**The facets of each prism outline the 'holistically interrelated' features of a particular learning tradition (Rogoff, 2014, p. 73). These features include community organisation of learning, motive, social organisation of endeavours, goal of learning, means of learning, communication and assessment (see Figure 3.1 for the standard template of the prisms). The constellations of these elements constitute 'coherent fields of practice' in which these traditions embed an internal 'logic' or 'grammar'

(Rogoff et al., 2007, p. 495). The collation of these idiosyncratic features in each prism symbolises a pure form of a specific learning tradition. This pure form of a particular tradition delineates the constellation of its features as a whole (Rogoff, 2014; Rogoff et al., 2007). Rogoff and her colleagues explained:

> The prisms articulate *integrated* features of whole historically developed cultural learning traditions, the facets form a constellation of features to be considered as a whole. Taken singly, a particular facet/feature does not define a learning tradition; [a particular facet/feature is likely to fit with a number of distinct learning traditions]. (Rogoff et al., 2007, p. 496)

However, Rogoff (2014) acknowledged that 'we can focus on one or another facet for a particular study or conversation. But as aspects of a coherent system, the other facets are necessarily taken into consideration in the background' (p. 75). Thus, presence of all concerned features is argued as essential in understanding the practices of a cultural group through the lens of any particular learning tradition, as elaborated below.

### 3.3.2.1 Assembly-Line Instruction (ALI)

In the learning tradition of ALI, learning occurs through transmission of information from experts to learners in specialised exercises, without any involvement in productive activity (Paradise et al., 2014; Rogoff, 2014; Rogoff & Angelillo, 2002; Rogoff et al., 2007). In this cultural tradition, learning context excludes (active) participation in purposive activity and observation/listeningin is replaced by instructed lessons 'in settings isolated from productive contributions to the community' (Rogoff, 2014, p. 75). Learners are segregated from ongoing community activities. Children learn cultural activities in isolation from their use or actual mature settings. In this tradition, information is transmitted from experts to the learners in a unilateral way. Teachers/experts direct learners and there is no flexibility in learners' roles and no engagement (or participation) in shared productive endeavours. In this approach, adults control children's attention, motivation and behaviour (Paradise et al., 2014; Rogoff, 2014). Rogoff and her colleagues elaborated:

> Experts/teachers direct learners in a unilateral manner without participating in the same activity, and without flexibility in the management/managed roles. Understanding how a particular step fits an overall process or purpose is not regarded as necessary to learning; the mechanical exercise of going through the steps is the focus. (Rogoff et al., 2007, p. 501)

The mechanical metaphor is appropriate to illustrate this learning tradition. Similar to factories, in this model learners (and teachers) are often 'treated as part of a mechanism designed by administrators or consultants for bureaucratic efficiency' (Rogoff et al., 2007, p. 499). Rogoff et al. (2007) explained:

> This tradition is based on a mechanical metaphor, with experts inserting information into children, as raw materials, and sorting them in terms of their quality and the extent to which they have received the information. (p. 499)
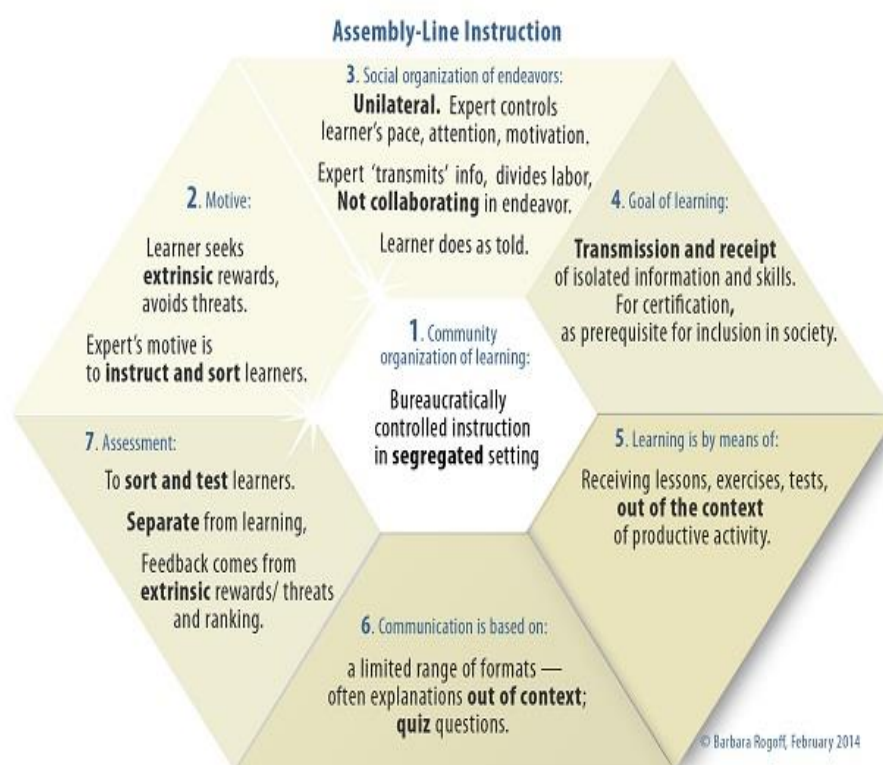


**Figure 3.2: Prism of Assembly-Line Instruction (Rogoff, 2014, p. 76).** However, children's experiences in ALI practice are considered to be supporting them to achieve skills essential for their 'later entry in mature activities from which they are often excluded as children' (Rogoff et al., 2007, p. 500). Formalised school settings usually practice this learning tradition in which:

> Learners' involvement is managed with external inducements (such as praise, grades, and threats), with assessments aiming to determine the overall quality of both the raw materials and the transmission of information (in assessments of IQ as well as the extent of receipt of the curriculum 'delivered'). Communication is heavily reliant on words (often in specialized

formats such as known-answer questions), in the absence of shared productive endeavors. (Rogoff et al., 2007, p. 501)

As per the ALI approach (see Figure 3.2), learning is not a collaborated effort; rather, it is a linear process of transmitting information from experts to learners (Rogoff et al., 2007). Communication is word-based instead of focused on shared endeavours. The assessment process aims to determine the level of knowledge of learners and the extent of transmission of information (delivered curriculum; Rogoff et al., 2007). In this tradition, experts organise teaching and learning 'around specialized exercises to introduce children to the skills and practices of their community without allowing or necessarily anticipating actual productive involvement' (Rogoff et al. 2007, p. 495).Paradise et al. (2014) elaborated:

In such an approach, experienced teachers encourage children to focus attention on them and on specific aspects of the task, manage the direction and pace of the lesson, and control children's motivation [Edwards & Mercer, 1987; Kennedy, 2005; Monzó & Rueda, 2003; Philips, 1983]. These control strategies include extensive step-by-step explanation, calling students' attention aloud and with changes of pitch, controlling the pace of instruction in short time segments, allocating turns, and motivating and evaluating students with praise or criticism. (p. 132)

Along with formalised schools, this tradition also occurs in family practices, evidenced in a different study that considered Caucasian families in Hawaii, middle-class European American families and middle-class United States and Turkey families (Rogoff, 2014; Rogoff et al., 2007). It was found that 'middle-class European American 3-year-olds more often engaged with adults in scholastic play (like the alphabet song) and in free-standing conversations with adults on child-related topics' (Rogoff et al., 2007, p. 500). Thus, in this tradition, lessons or learning activities appear to be more specialised, learner-focused and adult/expert directed, which is similar to the tradition of GR.

*3.3.2.2 Guided repetition (GR) of text*

In this tradition, an activity is modelled by an expert and the novice learns through imitation. To attain the skill, the learner memorises through rehearsal and performance. A wide range of skills are included in this practice, including music, athletics, crafts and, most commonly, learning of religious texts. Along with religious schools, some secular schools apply this learning practice that is guided by rote learning (repetition and memorisation), this is common among Asian students (Rogoff et al., 2007; 2015). Further, Rogoff and her colleagues have

argued that GR may also influence family practices. For example, Moore (2006, as mentioned in Rogoff et al., 2007, p. 504) observed that children in the Fulbe community in northern Cameroon 'once learned folktales only through intent community participation, [but] many now learn through guided repetition'.

In this tradition, the roles of different participants (experts and learners) are generally unilateral and fixed and dominated by adults/experts. Experts model a particular activity and children attain the skill through mimicry. To ensure accurate imitation, they go through rehearsal, memorisation and performance. Assessment of learning is often an ongoing process that seeks to correct learners' errors immediately to support learning directed towards the attainment of expertise (see Figure 3.3). Rogoff and her colleague clarified:

> The expert's responsibilities are to model the text or skill correctly and in suitable increments and to monitor, correct, and evaluate the learner as he or she attempts to imitate, rehearse, and master it. In addition to tests for mastery, assessment is often ongoing, with errors being corrected immediately or soon after they are committed in order to support learning. (Rogoff et al., 2007, p. 503)
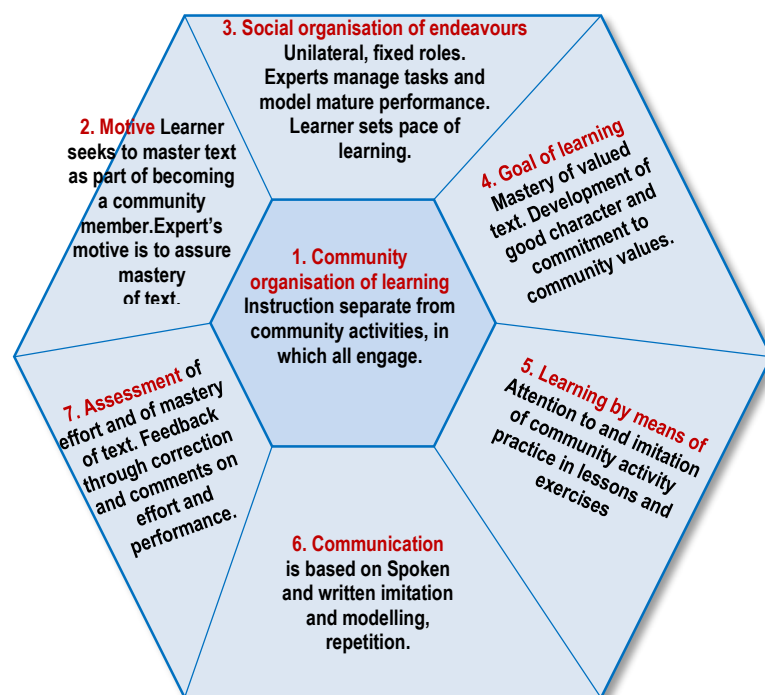
**Figure 3.3: Prism of guided repetition (Rogoff et al., 2015, p. 483).**

In this tradition learning activities (or lessons) are specialised and learner-focused. However, learners are not removed from adult activities, rather integrated to those. They receive more opportunities to realise the purpose and significance of the activity. Rogoff et al. (2007) explained:

> Guided repetition activities are specialized and learner-focused, but unlike assembly-line instruction, they do not necessarily occur in settings that are removed from adult activities … In many communities, religious instruction takes place at the temple or mosque, where learners may observe more competent community members as they recite sacred texts in the context of daily ritual. Moreover, learners may 'apply' lessons in their own emergent ritual practice. (p. 503)

As per this tradition, learning may occur in settings of adult activities (for example, in the mosque, temple or church where learners are not necessarily detached from the adult community activities) where learners can observe experts performing the skill (for example, ritual practices) in their daily context. This may lead them to relate the lessons to their own evolving practice and realise the purpose of the skill they are learning (Rogoff et al. 2007). Some religious schools/institutions practice this tradition to teach the sacred texts in ritual

practices in an everyday context. Learning through integration into everyday cultural practices is more common in the tradition of LOPI.

*3.3.2.3 Learning by Observation and Pitching In (LOPI)*

Rogoff and her colleagues have described this approach with different terms, such as intent participation (IP), intent community participation (ICP) and LOPI (Coppens et al. 2014b; Paradise & Rogoff, 2009; Rogoff, 2014; Rogoff et al. 2003; 2007). In this study, I have used LOPI to refer to this tradition.

However, to better explain its full concept, Rogoff (2014) uses the term 'Learning by Observation and Pitching In to family and community endeavours' (p. 73). According to this tradition (see Figure 3.4), children learn by observing, participating in and contributing to ongoing cultural activities in everyday contexts (Paradise & Rogoff, 2009; Rogoff, 2014; Rogoff et al., 2003; 2007). Paradise and Rogoff (2009) explained that '[c]hildren learn by watching, listening, and attending, often with great concentration, by taking purposeful initiative, and by contributing and collaborating' (p. 201).Central features of this cultural learning practice are 'being there' (or presence during valued activities) and 'having opportunities to contribute' (Rogoff et al., 2007, p. 499). Children's learning is subject to observation by watching and listening in with great concentration (observation is considered an active process), participation with purposeful initiative, and contribution and collaboration (Paradise & Rogoff, 2009).Observation embodies learners' active physical, emotional, cognitive and social engagement (Paradise & Rogoff, 2009). It involves 'keen attentions' and 'intense concentration' of the learner, with the willingness to contribute in shared endeavours (Paradise & Rogoff, 2009, p. 108–110). Along with learning by observing and listening, this tradition also involves the opportunity to be involved with more experienced community members. This involvement comprises a reciprocal manner of relationship with the experts, mutual responsibility and respect for each other's contributions and flexibility in their roles in terms of participation and contribution. Rogoff et al. (2007) specified:

> They [participants] are expected to contribute as they are able and tend not to be
> micromanaged in specific actions. People (including newcomers to an activity) are expected
> to contribute and coordinate around shared family and community endeavors like members
> of an orchestra. (Rogoff et al., 2007, p. 499)

Participation accounts for learners' awareness of their cultural repertoires and purposeful initiatives to contribute or take part in shared community endeavours (Paradise & Rogoff, 2009). Paradise and Rogoff (2009) argued that 'shared community values and the social, cognitive, and emotional realities of participation are crucial to this way of learning' (p. 132).

This learning practice is common in communities where children are routinely integrated in a wide range of social and economic 'mature endeavors of daily community life' (Rogoff et al., 2007, p. 497). They become engaged in ongoing community activities and learn either as legitimate peripheral participants (Rogoff, 2014; Rogoff et al., 2007; 2015), by observing from the periphery or as full participants by contributing to the activities. This approach is often considered family and community based learning, observed in traditional societies in which children are integrated into a wide range of valued everyday community events (Coppens et al., 2014b; Rogoff, 2014; Rogoff, Najafi & Mejía-Arauz, 2014; Rogoff et al.2003; 2007). Jordan (1989) observed:

> In societies where apprenticeship learning is the routine unmarked way of knowledge acquisition, it is also the case that there is little differentiation between work and play. Children, and old people, do partial or somewhat defective jobs which are, however, appreciated for whatever use value they may have. This use value is keenly appreciated both by children and by adults, and children will generally, on their own, prefer activities that have societal value. Thus, children in Yucatan [Mayan] prefer taking care of real babies to playing with dolls. (p. 932)

This is also evident in cross-cultural studies in 'a foraging community in the Democratic Republic of Congo and an agricultural community in Guatemala, where children had more opportunity to observe adult work and frequently emulated these themes in their play' (Rogoff et al., 2007, p. 499). However, it may occur in family and community settings in societies with wide schooling experiences (Paradise & Rogoff, 2009).

**Learning by Observing and Pitching-In**

**1.** Community organization of learning:
Learner is **incorporated** and **contributing** to family/community endeavors

**2.** Motive:
Learner is eager to **contribute** and **belong**.
Others' motive is to **accomplish** endeavor (and maybe to guide).

**3.** Social organization of endeavors:
**Collaborative, flexible ensemble,** fluidly coordinating and blending ideas, agendas, and pace. All engage, anyone may take the initiative.

**4.** Goal of learning:
To **transform** participation, learn **consideration** & **responsibility** along with information & skills, to **contribute** and belong in the community.

**5.** Learning is by means of:
**Wide, keen attention** and **contribution** (current or anticipated) to events. With **guidance** from communitywide expectations and sometimes people.

**6.** Communication is based on:
Coordination through **shared reference** in collective endeavors, using **nonverbal** (and verbal) conversation. Narratives and dramatizations.

**7.** Assessment:
appraises both the learner's mastery and the **supports** that are provided. In order **to aid** learner's contributions, **during** the endeavor. Feedback from adequacy of **contribution** (and its acceptance or correction).

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**Figure 3.4: Prism of Learning by Observation and Pitching In (Rogoff, 2014, p. 73).**

In this approach, personal motivations (to be involved in cultural activities) drive children towards learning (Rogoff et al., 2003). The children develop their own understandings through active observation (by watching and listening in) with intense concentration and by taking part (through purposeful initiatives) in valued everyday community activities. Children's learning is supported by more learned persons (or experts) who guide, rather than dominate, the learning process. Construction of knowledge is supported by both verbal (with judicious use of speech as conversations or narratives) and non-verbal (body language, expressions) means of communication by the experts (Paradise & Rogoff, 2009). Further, children's learning is supplemented by their own contribution and collaboration. Learners and experts often interchange their roles while collaborating in shared community activities. Therefore, in this approach, children's learning is not limited to mimicry or acquisition of knowledge; rather, their learning is extended to involvement in community activities (Alcalá et al. 2014; Coppens et al., 2014a; Paradise & Rogoff, 2009; Rogoff, 2014; Rogoff, Turkanis & Bartlett, 2001). Rogoff put forward the example of learning the first language by young children to illustrate this tradition:

'being allowed to "jam with the pros" is how infants learn language, by immersion, not so much being instructed to speak as learning by using language' (Rogoff, 2014, p. 70).

LOPI is further considered the informal, observational or practical way of learning (Paradise & Rogoff, 2009; Rogoff, 2014) corresponding to 'everyday cultural life in a wide array of family and community settings' (Paradise & Rogoff, 2009, p. 102). It is acclaimed as a panhuman cultural practice in daily contexts (Paradise & Rogoff, 2009):

> It is a panhuman cultural practice, comfortable for and well suited for human learning of all kinds. At the same time, it seems to be a practice that is more prevalent in some societies, such as those in which children are integrated in the range of everyday community events, than in others. (Paradise & Rogoff, 2009, p. 132)

Configuration of the above-mentioned idiosyncratic attributes differs in terms of cultural organisation of learning traditions in distinct cultural settings. However, organisation of these three traditions (ALI, GR and LOPI) is dynamic rather than static. Cultural settings of these learning practices can be revised, blended or resisted. Even community members who belong to a particular tradition may switch to other practices (Rogoff et al., 2007). This dynamism, along with the prominent concerns in learning practices as manifested in the prisms, has made this latest learning theory more worthwhile. In my present research, I investigate how different stakeholders (both adults and young children) perceive, approach and practice play-oriented learning (as espoused by the PPC), which is a cultural event that is anticipated in by a range of participants in different settings (including the classroom, home and TTC) in the context of Bangladesh. The pattern of their cultural participation and understandings about this particular learning and development approach (that is, play-oriented learning) can be more clearly elucidated through the learning traditions (as proposed by Rogoff and her colleagues), particularly through the features of the prisms that represent distinct learning traditions. Therefore, I believe the approach of culturally organised learning traditions provides my research with a comprehensive theoretical lens to proceed with my inquiries, collect and analyse data and frame my findings.

## 3.4 Rogoff's Learning Theory as Framing the Theoretical Base of My Present Research

Rogoff and her colleagues further developed the socio-cultural theory of development to explicate children's learning. They introduced a new learning theory to explain how children

learn through their engagement in everyday routine cultural endeavours. This theoretical stance postulates that trends of learning greatly rely on the cultural organisation of learning practices in a particular setting. Repertoires of cultural practices and patterns of participation of both learners and adults (or experts) are emphasised in determining particular learning traditions. This theory of learning underpins my present investigation, which explores play-oriented early learning practices, as upheld by the PPC, in the socio-cultural context of Bangladesh.

Rogoff's previous theoretical understanding of the three planes (personal, interpersonal and institutional, as discussed earlier in this chapter) provided the analytical framework for my pilot study, which investigated the incorporation of play activities as a teaching–learning approach in the early childhood educational context of Bangladesh. To investigate teachers' and parents' perceptions of play as a pedagogical tool, the pilot study applied the three planes of socio-cultural activities, which posit that human beings develop reciprocally as individuals, groups and institutions (Rogoff, 1995). This perspective is informed by Rogoff's position about socio-cultural research, as articulated by Dewey: 'a sociocultural analysis requires considering how individuals, groups, and communities transform as they together constitute and are constituted by sociocultural activity' (Dewey, 1916, p. 344).

This earlier study explored the teaching–learning experiences based on the Operational Framework for Pre-Primary Education and the interim arrangements to implement it (e.g., textbooks, learning materials and teacher training). It was conducted before the introduction of the latest play-oriented PPC in Bangladesh. The pilot study revealed that the introduction of play-oriented curriculum, as a pedagogical approach, challenges the existing teaching, learning and development approaches of Bangladeshi society. Hence, the enactment of a play-oriented curriculum demands an appropriate research approach able to investigate how its implementation transforms the prevailing cultural nature of teaching and learning practices in the targeted society. As such, it requires the exploration of relationships among children, educators, families and policy personnel experiencing the new play-oriented curriculum approach. Rogoff and her colleagues' latest theory on learning traditions addresses all these issues. Thus, moving from three planes of analysis I have embraced three learning tradition prisms. These prisms represent different learning practices in different cultural settings and provide my present research with a more appropriate theoretical lens.

Besides the changing context of the research (as discussed above), my responses to the field further moulded my theoretical approach. In the socio-cultural sphere, research is considered a

'theoretically driven, systematic and reflexive process' (Bulfin, 2009, p. 204). Investigation is guided by particular theories while, at the same time, being moulded by the researcher's responses to the field (Rivalland, 2010). It must be acknowledged that at the very beginning of my study I was more inclined towards the learning tradition of LOPI. I considered it as a potential theoretical lens to investigate how incorporation of play in the PPC is practiced, approached and experienced by young learners and adults. My prejudice was fuelled by the resemblances between LOPI and play-oriented learning practices, both of which espouse learning in natural settings, involve interactive (not linear) participation, encompass similar assessment protocols and targets, and recognise agency of learners in constructing knowledge.

However, as soon as I entered the field, I realised that those resemblances between LOPI and play-oriented teaching-learning encountered challenges in the given society. Since my present research deals with a society where the play-oriented curriculum approach is being imported and implanted, the goals of children's education, assessment procedures, means of communication and, above all else, the expectations of adults about children's learning are not the same as those of a developed society. I soon realised that LOPI alone would not be sufficient to explain the learning traditions that I was observing. Rather, all three prisms/learning traditions together seemed to offer a more comprehensive analytical lens, which was required to capture the complexity of the research field.

Thus, Rogoff's theory of cultural organisation of learning traditions frames the organisation of this research, relating to both the methodology and the analytical framework. It informed the methods for data collection, framed the questions of interviews and set the checklist for observation of play-oriented activities. In accordance with this theoretical stance, my present study observed how learning occurs through play-oriented practices and how different stakeholders (young children, parents, teachers and teacher trainers) participated in this learning process in their respective settings (including the classroom, TTC and family setups) in the socio-cultural context of Bangladesh. The duration of these observations was informed by this theoretical lens:

> The prisms thus do not serve as coding schemes for examining brief moments of interaction. (However, … a global coding scheme [may involve] examining 20- to 40-minute interactions for their fit with a multidimensional constellation). (Rogoff et al., 2007, pp. 496–497)

This is further elaborated in Chapter Four. The checklists for observations were guided by the features of learning traditions as represented in the prisms (for example, how children and adults

engage in play activities in different settings, how they practice hierarchy in their participation, how they communicate with each other and how children contribute to those cultural activities). My study further included an exploration of the views, perceptions, approaches, experiences and expectations of both adults and young learners about play-oriented learning practices through formal interviews of adults and casual conversations with young children. Questions of these interviews/informal conversations were also framed by Rogoff's understandings of learning traditions (for example, the goals for learning activities, how the adults motivate children's learning through play, how children's voice is being considered in play-oriented activities and how the adults assess what children have attained through a particular play activity). Documents that shed lights on adults' approaches to this new learning practice and artefacts that demonstrated children's responses to it were also taken into account. Further, to explore how government policies corresponded to the features of learning practices, related documents were considered for analysis (see Chapter Four for details of data collection approaches). Analysis and interpretation of the data was further determined by Rogoff's theoretical stance regarding her latest theory of learning traditions, as represented through three distinctive prisms. In the following section, I discuss how the design of my units and tools of data analysis were guided by Rogoff's theoretical approach.

## 3.5 Designing My Analytical Framework

> [A unit] designates a product of analysis that possesses *all the basic characteristics of the whole*. The unit is a vital and irreducible part of the whole. The key to the explanation of the characteristics of water lies not in the investigation of its chemical formula but in the investigation of its molecule and its molecular movements. In precisely the same sense, the living cell is the real unit of biological analysis because it preserves the basic characteristics of life that are inherent in the living organism. (Vygotsky, 1987, p. 46)

Rogoff and Angelillo (2002) maintained that 'analytic tools should serve research questions and efforts to understand phenomena' (p. 213). In this relation a unit represents an analytical standard that possesses '*all the basic characteristics of the whole*' (Vygotsky, 1987, p. 46). To analyse data, researchers focus on the units that represent 'who' or 'what' (Long, 2004, p. 1158). Rogoff posited the socio-cultural activity as the unit of analysis (Matusov, 2007; Rogoff, 1998). Since the aim of my research was to understand play-oriented early learning practices as implemented by the PPC, I considered these practices in distinct settings as my analytical units. These settings involved family practice, classroom practice and teacher training practice (see

Figure 3.5). Rogoff (1998) further maintained that 'analysis goes beyond the individual and the dyad to examine the structured relations among people in groups and in communities, across time' (p. 729). My analysis encompassed a cultural activity that was play-oriented learning practice. It further involved the patterns of participation in the mentioned settings. My analysis focused on how participants were involved and how their individual engagement influenced each other's participation as a group in these shared endeavours.
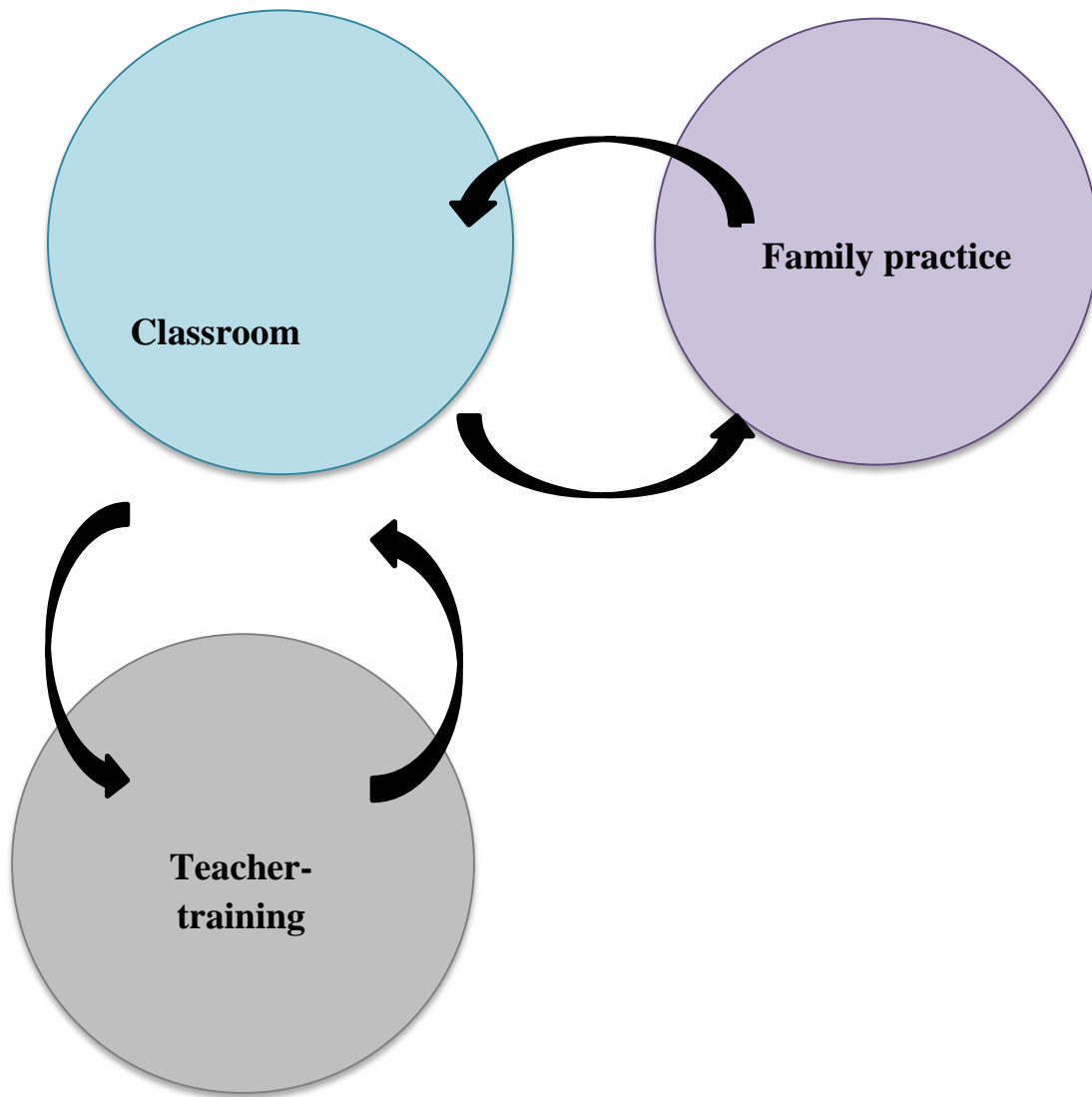
**Figure 3.5: Units of analysis.**

My analysis further comprised how these practices in different settings influenced each other; for example, how teacher training practices moulded classroom practices and vice versa, and how classroom practices influenced family practices and vice versa (see Figure 3.7). Through these distinct and corresponding units of analysis, my research explored the prevailing learning traditions (as represented through the prisms of ALI, GR and LOPI) in Bangladesh's early childhood educational context. However, Rogoff and her colleagues suggested that to understand any particular learning tradition these prisms should be considered in their pure forms, as represented by the constellation of the features as a whole (Rogoff et al., 2007, p. 495). Rogoff clarified:

With sociocultural activities as the units, analysis emphasizes the purposes and dynamically changing nature of events. Analysis examines the changing and meaningful constellations of aspects of events, not variables that attempt to be independent of the purpose of the activity. (Rogoff, 1998, p. 729)

Accordingly, this study took into account the distinctive features representing a particular learning tradition in a particular setting. These features comprised community organisation of learning, motive, social organisation of endeavours, goal of learning, means of learning, communication and assessment. Rogoff et al. (2007) posited that '[a] more global analysis of an event is required to determine whether all the facets of a learning tradition are present' (p. 496). Subsequently, these common features that constituted a whole learning tradition (as per the prisms) became my tools of data analysis (see Figure 3.6; further, Figure 3.8 provides an example of how these tools are used to analyse data).
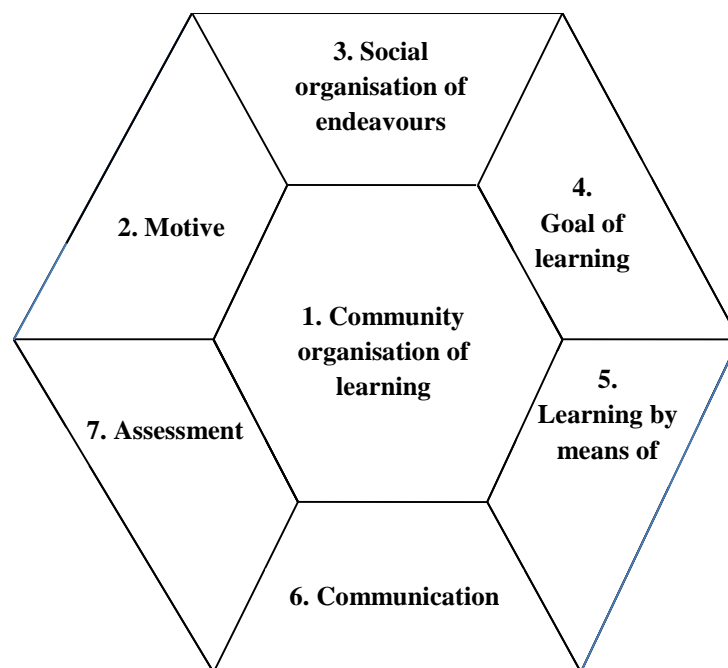


**Distinct features of culturally structured learning traditions as my tools of data analysis**

**Figure 3.6: Tools to analyse data.**

Thus, my analytical framework considers how these idiosyncratic features (tools of my analysis), as represented in the family, teachers' training centre and classroom settings, demonstrated the learning practices in the given context and how the practices in one setting influenced the practices in another (for the comprehensive design of my analytical framework,

see Figure 3.7). My framework is aligned with Rogoff's assertion for a comprehensive analysis of an event.

**Figure 3.7: Comprehensive analytical framework: combining the units and tools to analyse and interpret data.**

| | |
|---|---|
| **1.Community organisation of learning:** | How do the children/learners participate in a play-oriented learning activity? Are they segregated/integrated into the activity? Is the play event adult/expert-dominated or child/learner-centred? What roles do they (adults/experts and children/ learners) have in a play activity in a particular setting? |
| **2. Motive:** | How does a particular play activity motivate early learning? How do the adults/experts motivate children's/learners' play-oriented learning? Do motivations include children's/ learners desire to participate and contribute in play activities or it accounts only for their obligation to follow adults'/experts' instructions? |
| **3. Social organisation of endeavours:** | How is the play-oriented learning activity being socially organised? Is this a collaborative engagement or a linear one? What is the hierarchy of participation? Is there any flexibility in the roles of the participants? How are the children/learners treated as participants in shared community activities—as full/regular participants or peripheral participants (or non-participants) ? |
| **4. Goal of learning:** | What are considered to be the goals of play-oriented learning activities? What are the children/learners expected to achieve/ attain through a particular play activity? |
| **5. Larning by means of:** | What prevails as the means/tools of learning in play-oriented activities? Do these include keen attention, listenting-in and observation? Or, acts as per instructions in specialised exercises? Or, mimicking and reharselling as modelled by adults/experts? |
| **6. Communication:** | When a play-oriented activity is considered a learning tool, how do the children/learners communicate in that particular activity? How do the adults/experts communicate with them? And, how do children/learners communicate with each other or with adults/experts? |
| **7. Assessment:** | What are the means to assess children's learning? How do the adults/experts assess what children/learners have attained through a particular play activity? What is the purpose of assessment: to support learning or to measure what children/learners have achieved as delivered (or modelled) by adults/experts? |

Note: the terms 'learners' and 'experts' (along with 'children' and 'adults') include the trainee teacher and trainer participants, respectively.

**Figure 3.8: An example of how I used the tools to analyse data.**

Though my analysis considers the learning tradition prisms in their pure forms of representation, it takes into account the possibility of overlaps or similarities, as acknowledged by Rogoff and her colleagues:

> Most real-life situations are not pure forms of any of these models. In practice, participants mix approaches and they reflect considerations tied to the current circumstances and to the worlds they anticipate, as well as to their repertoires of practice. (Rogoff, 2014, p. 77)

This ' "seepage" in practice' is considered to provide the scope for adaptation, resistance or transformation in learning practices (Rogoff et al., 2007, p. 495). Besides, as mentioned earlier, cultural settings of these learning practices might be revised, blended or resisted. Even community members who belong to a particular tradition may switch to other practices. Rogoff and her colleagues stated:

> The use of particular cultural traditions for organising learning (such as assembly-line instruction and intent community participation) is dynamic, not fixed and stable. People who have been raised mostly within one tradition of learning may switch their approach to another when they have experience in a tradition new to them (or they may bled or otherwise revise the traditions, or resist them). (Rogoff et al., 2007, p. 501)

They added:

> schooled mothers from communities that are newly adopting Western schooling more often interact with children in some school-like ways—including praise, lessons, and assignment of divided tasks—than mothers with little or no schooling from the same communities. Similarly, middle class parent volunteers in a collaborative school were more like to engage with children in ways that fit with intent community participation than parents with less such experience, even though the prior schooling of almost all the parents was similar to assembly-line instruction. (Rogoff et al., 2007, p. 501)

With this theoretical perspective underpinning my present research, further attempts can be undertaken to unveil the learning traditions (LOPI, ALI or GR) that capture the cultural repertoires of young children, teachers, families and government officials experiencing the latest play-oriented PPC in Bangladesh. It enables the study to postulate whether any of these pure prisms solely represent the play-oriented learning practices in my research context, or if a complex learning approach (combining more than one prism) better explains the cultural

organisation of learning practices in the preschool context of Bangladesh. It provides the grounds for developing a more viable learning approach/model to better address the learning and developmental needs of young children in Bangladesh's and other similar contexts.

## 3.6 Summary of the Chapter

Informed by the socio-cultural approach to learning and development and also by the theory of learning traditions espoused by Rogoff and her colleagues, this chapter presents a comprehensive theoretical framework. This framework provided the theoretical and analytical bases of the present investigation exploring the cultural engagement of different stakeholders experiencing the implementation of the play-oriented PPC in Bangladesh. Cross-cultural research conducted by Rogoff and her colleagues suggests that children's learning and development is subject to the cultural organisation of participation (that varies across cultures) in everyday practices. To represent culturally organised traditions of learning practices, Rogoff and her colleagues introduced three distinct multifaceted prisms. Each of these prisms entails a constellation of seven common features. Configurations of these interrelated features represent distinct patterns of participation (of both adults/experts and learners) and purposes and processes of learning in divergent cultural contexts. This study uses these prisms to explore early childhood learning traditions that occur through play-oriented practices implemented by Bangladesh's latest PPC. Further, this theoretical underpinning guided my research approach and design, methods of data collection and data interpretation.

# Chapter 4: Research Approach and Design

How you study the world determines what you learn about the world. (Patton, 1990, p. 67)

## 4.1 Overview

This chapter outlines the research approach and design of this study. It is organised into three sections. Section One portrays my research approach—my philosophical worldview and methodology. Section Two elaborates how I conducted my research. It details the steps of my data gathering, processing and analysis. Section Three narrates certain issues in my research, such as research ethics, credibility and challenges in conducting research with young children.

## 4.2 Section One: My Research Approach

Research approach rests on the researcher's philosophical worldview that informs the strategies (or methodologies) of inquiry that determine research design and choice of methods (or tools) to collect data (Creswell, 2014; Crotty, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 2013). This section elaborates how my philosophical worldview and methodology guided my study.

## 4.3 Philosophical Worldview

In social inquiry, a research approach embeds philosophical assumptions that the researcher brings into the research (Creswell, 2014; Della Porta & Keating, 2008, Neuman, 2011). These underpinning assumptions 'justify why we do rese arch, relate moral-political values to research, and guide ethical research behaviour' (Neuman, 2011, pp. 90–91). These 'highly abstract principles' (Bateson, 1972, p. 320) encompass the researcher's beliefs about the role of values in research (axiology), the nature of reality (ontology), the relationship between him/her and the known (epistemology) and the way to know the world (methodology; Creswell, 2013; Denzin & Lincoln, 2013; 2014b; Guba, 1990; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Neuman, 2011). Thus, the philosophical framework as a basic set of beliefs shapes worldview and guides the actions of the researcher (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013; 2014a; Guba, 1990; Mertens, 2010). The major paradigms that embed philosophical assumptions of the researcher include positivism and postpositivism, constructivism-interpretivism, criticalism (feminist and race) and postmodernism (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013; Lincoln, Lynham & Guba, 2014). My present research is configured by constructivism-interpretivism, which posits multiple realities and

knowledge as a social construction (Creswell, 2014; Denzin & Lincoln, 2013). Table 4.1 presents the basic philosophical beliefs associated with the constructive-interpretative paradigm.

**Table 4.1: Basic philosophical beliefs associated with the constructivist-interpretative paradigm (adapted from Creswell, 2013 and Mertens, 2010)**

| Basic beliefs | Constructive-interpretative |
|---|---|
| Axiology (role of values) | Individual values are honoured, and are negotiated among individuals |
| Ontology (nature of reality) | Multiple realities are constructed through our lived experiences and interactions with others |
| Epistemology (how reality is known; relationship between knower and would-be known) | Reality is co-constructed between the researcher and the researched and shaped by individual experiences<br>Knowledge is socially constructed |
| Methodology (approach to inquiry) | Qualitative (primarily)<br>Hermeneutical<br>Dialectical<br>Contextual factors are described<br>More of a literary style of writing used<br>Use of an inductive method of emergent ideas (through consensus) obtained through methods such as interviewing, observing and analysis of texts |

The philosophical assumptions embedding my study engage 'a relativist ontology (there are multiple realities), a subjectivist epistemology (knower and respondent co-create understandings), and a naturalistic (in the natural world) set of methodological procedures' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013, p. 27). This philosophical worldview relies on individuals' views of a situation and these varied subjective meanings are socially constructed through 'interactions with others' and 'historical and cultural norms' in a particular context (Creswell, 2014, p.8). Similarly, my research places emphasis on interpreting the meanings as constructed by the individuals regarding play-oriented learning in a 'specific context', which encompasses family settings, classroom settings and TTC settings. This enables me to understand socially constructed, negotiated and shared subjective meanings of different stakeholders regarding play as a learning approach in different institutional settings in the socio-cultural context of Bangladesh. This philosophical worldview informs my research methodology and underpins my embracing of a qualitative approach in the research strategy, which structured my research design and affected my choice of methods (Anfara &Mertz, 2006; Bryman, 2013).

### 4.3.1 Qualitative inquiry

My research objectives, theoretical perspectives and personal worldviews are entwined with qualitative research that involves an interpretive and naturalistic approach to inquiries (Creswell, 2013). A qualitative approach provides my present study with the scope to acquire intricate and in-depth insights into how play-oriented learning is perceived, construed and practiced by adults and young children in the ECE context of Bangladesh. Unlike scientific experiments, this research approach does not detach participants from its context; rather, it signifies the impact of political, social and cultural contexts on individuals' perceptions (Creswell, 2013). It investigates 'things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 3). In accordance with this, to explore cultural practices, my present investigation involved gathering information from natural settings (home, school and TTC) where play-oriented early learning practices occurred and were experienced by the participants.

As a legitimate means of social and human science inquiry, qualitative research emphasises subjective knowledge that is constructed symbolically through the experiences of individuals in particular contexts (Creswell, 2013; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; 2013). Creswell (2013) maintained that in quantitative measures our efforts to 'level all individuals to a statistical mean overlooks the uniqueness of individuals in our studies' (p. 48). Unlike a quantitative approach, my qualitative research focuses less on generalising the outcomes than describing the unique experiences and views of the participants as influenced by their socio-cultural, historical, political, economic and educational contexts (Naughton, Rolfe, & Siraj-Blatchford, 2010). This approach enabled this study to 'empower individuals to share their stories, [and] hear their voices' (Creswell, 2013, p. 48). With an inductive approach, my qualitative research is not concerned with proving or disproving a hypothesis, but rather suggesting a hypothesis based on the data (John W. Creswell, 2009; Naughton, et al., 2010). Data collected through the present qualitative study led towards a hypothesis regarding interpretation of play-oriented early learning practices in the Bangladeshi context.

Qualitative research depicts individuals' voices, while at the same time acknowledging the researcher's role. She/he plays the role of the key instrument in gathering data and constructing meaning from that. Hence, qualitative research is value-laden. The qualitative researcher is often regarded as an *interpretive-bricoleur* who emphasises 'taking on pieces of representations (paradigms, methods) to fit the situation' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003, p. 7) and constructs a

complete picture as shaped by collection and examination of different parts (Bogdon & Miklen, 1982, as cited in Hatch, 1998, p. 54). In my research I also became the bricoleur while employing my research approaches and gathering and interpreting data.

## 4.4 Section Two: Embarking on My Research

Prior to commencing my present study, I conducted a pilot project in four public schools in semi-rural Bangladesh. That study involved interviews of four pre-primary teachers and four parents and observations of four classroom practices to understand participants' perceptions about play-oriented teaching and learning in the ECE in the given context. Engaging in the pilot study allowed me to attain the initial experiences that guided my present fieldwork (Atkins & Wallace, 2012; Creswell, 2013). To begin the fieldwork for my present study, I obtained permissions from the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC) in Australia and the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) in Bangladesh (see Appendices H and I). After obtaining these permissions, I left for Bangladesh for the fieldwork in the second half of the 2013 and spent four months there for data collection. In this section I explain how I entered the field, selected the research sites and recruited the participants. It also describes how I collected and analysed data.

### 4.4.1 Research context and design

To explore play-oriented learning practices I used a mixed sampling strategy that included purposive, random and convenient sampling. This combination of sampling strategies provided flexibility to meet multiple interests of the research (Bryman, 2013; Creswell, 2013). My research encompassed multiple contexts. It included rural public primary schools that conducted the pre-primary class, families that sent their young children to those schools and the TTC operated centrally in Bangladesh. To ensure maximum variation in my data, selection of these research contexts were purposeful, but without any 'vested interest in outcome of study' (Creswell, 2013, p. 58).

Based on convenient sampling, I selected three upazilas (sub-district administrative units)—Mirsharai, Narshingdi Sadar and Delduar—in three different geographic locations in rural Bangladesh as my research sites (refer to Figure 4.1). These areas represent diverse socio-cultural and economic realities and educational practices (refer to Figure 4.2 for the summary of my research sites). Though convenience sampling compromises credibility (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002), it sometimes becomes unavoidable due to issues like personal security (of the

researcher and the participants) and accessibility. My site-sampling was shaped by the political, religious and security issues in the studied society. During the time of my data collection, the society was facing political unrest due to upcoming national parliamentary elections. A country-wide transportation strike was in force for two weeks. I also experienced the month of Ramadan (fasting for Muslims, who comprise the majority of the population in Bangladesh), which greatly influences the everyday practices of the entire nation. These issues determined my site-selection.

In each research site I randomly selected two public schools that conducted pre-primary classes and two families who sent their young children to those schools. From each school and household I selected one teacher, one parent and one child as my participants. I selected six government officials who were involved in pre-primary policymaking or policy implementation—one from each site and the remaining three from the central office (DPE). These selections were random (refer to Subsection 4.4.2 for details of the participant recruitment process), allowing me to choose participants without any biasness being a researcher (O'Toole & Beckett, 2010).
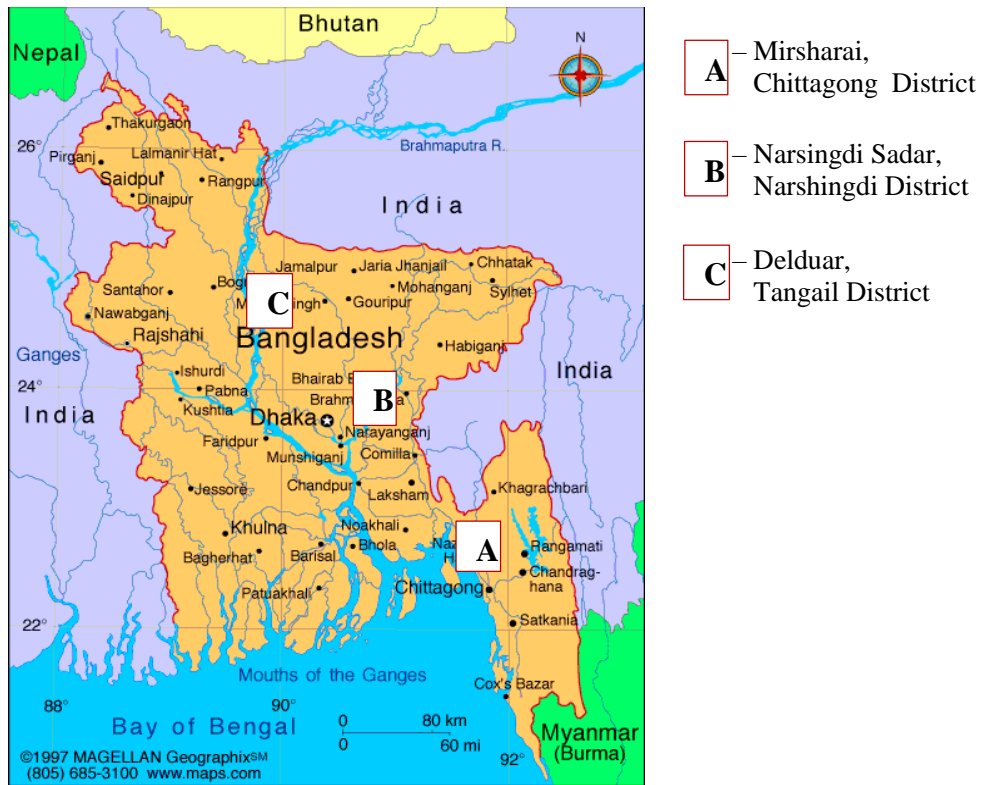
**Figure 4.1: My research sites on the map of Bangladesh.**

**Table 4.2: A glimpse of my research sites (Statistical Pocket Book of Bangladesh, 2014)**

| Site A: Mirsharai | |
|---|---|
|  | Mirsharai is a coastal upazila under Chittagong District in southern Bangladesh. The mountain range of the Chittagong Hill Tracts starts from its eastern border. It is approximately 60 km away from Chittagong city and 140 km away from the capital city Dhaka. Population of this 482.88 sq. km area is about 380,000, with 49.97% male and 50.03% female residents. Agriculture and agriculture-related works is the main occupation (about 50%). Other occupations include commerce, service, wage labourer, forestry, fishing and transport. The main crops produced here are paddy, potato, bean, tomato, pumpkin and radish. The industrial sector has a minor role in its economy. The majority of its population is Muslim (84.9%); a large number of Hindus (13.97%) also live in this area. There are 145 GPSs, 55 non-GPSs and 24 religious schools to support the education of children. However, the average literacy rate is 37.2% (males 45.1% and females 29.3%). |
| **Site B:Narsingdi Sadar** | |
|  | Narsingdi Sadar is an upazila in Narsingdi, a district in central Bangladesh. It is located 50 km north-east of Dhaka, the capital city. The river Meghna and its branches crisscross this area. A huge agricultural land lies in this river belt where mainly rice, bananas and sugar cane are produced. However, its economy does not solely rely on agriculture. Rather, it is famous for its textile craft industry and trade centres. This is a densely industrial area, and is home to many textile mills. Apart from these, this district possesses a gas field, a power plant, a sugar mill and fertilizer industries that play important roles in its economy. The majority of the people are Muslims;however, there are some Hindus and Buddhists residing in this area. This area has good road, rail and river communications with the rest of the country. |
| **Site C:Delduar** | |
|  | Delduar upazila is located in the south of Tangail district, 118 km north-west from the capital city. It has 32,696 household units and a total area of 184.54 sq. km. Delduar has a population of 175,684. Males constitute 50.46% of the population, and females 49.54%.Agriculture is the main employment generator in this area. About 49.53% people are involved with agricultural activities. The main agricultural products are paddy, jute, sugarcane and pulse. Other sectors of the economy include weaving (handloom), fisheries, industries and dairy and poultry farms. This area is well known for weaving famous Tangail *Saree* (traditional dress of women in Bangladesh and the Indian subcontinent), a handloom *Saree* made of both cotton and silk threads. Delduar has an average literacy rate of 34%. |

### 4.4.2 Recruiting the participants

To recruit the participants I used a mixed sampling strategy including random, purposeful and convenient sampling. It involved the following approaches:

- identify potential schools and approach the teachers
- following teachers' agreements to participate, approach the school principals for approval to conduct the study
- invite children and their families through the teachers
- submit request to DPE for access to observe teacher training sessions and interview government officials
- following that permission, invite concerned government officials to participate.

After obtaining the lists of public primary schools from the local education office in each research site, I identified potential schools and approached concerned pre-primary class teachers through the principals (in my research sites, each public primary school has only one pre-primary class and one pre-primary teacher). I provided them with the explanatory statements (see Appendix F[1]). The first teachers who responded to my request became my participants. After commitments were established with the teachers, I sought approval from school principals to conduct the study. After gaining access to the classrooms, I invited pre-primary children and their families to participate via the teacher participants. Like the teachers from each school/classroom, I selected one pre-primary child and his/her family. For access to the TTC and interviews with government officials, I sought permission from the DPE. Following the granting of permission, relevant government officials were approached to participate. This category of participants included officials who developed the curriculum, provided PPE training to the teachers or monitored the implementation of PPC. Among them I selected six government officials (three from the research sites, one per site, and three from the DPE) on a random basis (I selected the first officials who responded to my invitation to take part in this study).

All the teachers, parents, young children (guardians consented on behalf of them) and government officials who first responded to my invitations were recruited as participants. After receiving the singed consent forms, I recruited my teacher, parent, child and government official participants. Thus, my selection and recruitment of partici pants involved considerable variation. Table 4.3 presents the summary of my participants. To

gather data from these multiple sources, I employed a number of methods, elaborated in the subsequent subsection.

**Table 4.3: Summary of the Participants**

| Institutions | | Participants | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | **Teacher** | **Parent** | **Child** | **Govt. official*** |
| Site A: Bay-region (Mirsharai: South-east part) | Sea-Shore School& family | 1 | 1 | 1 | |
| | Road-Side School & family | 1 | 1 | 1 | |
| | Concerned upazila Education Office | | | | 1 |
| Site B: Lake-region (Narsingdi Sadar: Central part) | River-Bank school & family | 1 | 1 | 1 | |
| | Handloom School & family | 1 | 1 | 1 | |
| | Concerned upazila Education Office | | | | 1 |
| Site C: Mainland-region (Delduar: Central-north part) | Corner-temple school & family | 1 | 1 | 1 | |
| | South Mill School & family | 1 | 1 | 1 | |
| | Concerned upazila Education Office | | | | 1 |
| Directorate of Primary Education | | | | | 3 |
| **Total** | | **6** | **6** | **6** | **6** |

* Policymaker/monitoring officer/teacher trainer.

### 4.4.3 Data gathering methods

In my present study, a wide range of methods were used to collect data. This allowed me to accumulate a multifaceted and complex dataset, enabling 'thick description' (Spencer, 2011, p. 137) of the participants' perceptions and practices in relation to the play-oriented early learning approach. The following factors guided my choice and application of data gathering techniques:

- my research objectives/queries (what do I want to explore?)
- my research approach (what methods does a qualitative study usually apply to collect data?)

- my access and resource, such as time, space, technical support and skills (what am I, as the researcher, allowed and able to do in the field?)
- the flow of the research (what does the field demand?).

Merten (2010) suggested that 'researcher needs to make plans to enter the field in the least disruptive manner possible' (p. 251). Despite my specific targets, plans and predetermined choice of methods, my approach to data collection was moulded by access to the field and constraints on resources and expertise. With all of these concerns, my employed methods of data generation included observation (involving visual images), interview, documents, artefacts and field notes. Table 4.4 presents a glimpse of my data collection methods, while Table 4.4 provides a summary of the types of data generated.

**Table 4.4: My Data Collection Methods at a Glance**

| Methods | Subject/event/context |
|---|---|
| Interview(audio-recorded, individual, semi-structured) | Teachers, parents and government officials |
| | Young children (informal conversation) |
| Observation(non-participatory, video-recorded, still photographs) | Teachers' and young children's classroom practices |
| | Young children's play practices in their everyday lives in the family context |
| | Experiences of both young children and parents in play-oriented early learning practices |
| | Trainers' and trainee teachers' play-oriented teaching–learning practices at teacher training centres |
| | Still photographs of the participants, their play activities and surroundings/context in all the settings |
| Field notes | Contexts and surrounding environment of classroom, home and teacher training centre |
| | Participants' behaviour |
| | Participants' emotions, expressions and body language during observations and interviews |
| Documents & artefacts | EC policy documents; government orders |
| | Children's artefacts (drawings, writings and other creative works) |
| | Other documents provided by the participants |

**Table 4.5: Data Generation Summary**

| Sources | Classroom | Family | Teacher training institution | Central primary education office |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Observation(involving video-recording &still photograph) | 6(classrooms) x 2 ½ hours<br>Video | 6 (families) x 1 hour<br>Video | 3 (teacher training centres) x 1 hour<br>Video | |
| | Still photographs of participants, their play/play-oriented activities and surroundings/context | | | |
| Interviews (audio-recorded) | 6 (teachers) x 1 hour semi-structured<br>Individual | 6 (parents) x 1 hour semi-structured<br>Individual<br>6 (children) x 1 hour informal conversation | 3 (govt. officials) x 1 hour semi-structured<br>Individual | 3 (govt. officials) x 1 hour semi-structured<br>Individual |
| Documents & artefacts | Daily class routines<br>Information about school/classroom<br>Evaluation documents<br>children's artefacts (drawings/writings) | children's artefacts (drawings, writings and other creative works) | Training manual<br>Training guide<br>Trainer's guide | Curriculum policy documents (pre-primary & operational framework)<br>Government orders |
| Field notes | Researcher's self-reflexive field notes | | | |

*4.4.3.1 Observation involving visual images*

Observation is an 'act of noting a phenomenon' in natural settings (Creswell, 2013, p. 166). It provides data about 'individuals, interactions, and culture' (Lichtman, 2013, p. 236). In my present study, I applied this method to obtain an in-depth understanding about how individuals (the participants) were involved in play-oriented early learning practices in the studied context. It allowed me to collect 'open-ended, firsthand information' and record and study actual behaviours that the participants might have difficulty verbalising or have subconsciously concealed (Creswell, 2008, p. 221). I collected data as a non-participant observer, which

allowed me to watch and record data from a distance without being a part of my targeted activity/behaviour/people (Angrosino & Rosenberg, 2011; Creswell, 2013). My goal was to observe 'how they do things'; that is, how my participants practiced play-oriented learning activities. This was to provide a necessary supplement to 'how they see things', meaning how they comprehended those activities (Silverman, 2001, p. 76).

During observations I adopted visual images as the instruments to record data. Visual images that convey powerful messages and allow researchers to capture the reality as moving/still images have become more popular as a qualitative method in present day research (Bryman, 2013; Hamilton, 2006; Lichtman, 2013; Mertens, 2010; Prosser, 2011). All my observations were video-recorded. I also used still images/photographs to capture both the activities (or play behaviours) of my participants and their contexts. These visual data were collected following the written consent of the participants or the guardians on behalf of the minors (I explain this ethical issue in Subsection 4.4).

My observations included one daily session of 150 minutes of the pre-primary class in each selected school, young children's play practices in each household for at least one hour, and one session that lasted for at least one hour in each of three teacher training centres. For video-recording and still photographs, I used an iPad and two digital cameras with which 'images are both easy to create and instantly available' (Lichtman, 2013, p. 222). Using digital technology, I shifted the data to my computer, which later assisted me in organising and analysing my data. The visual data assisted me in authentic representation of the observed events and offered the opportunity for repetition of actual events that supplemented my data analysis procedure.

Images (still/moving) themselves do not 'tell us about their world … it is also necessary to have considerable additional knowledge of the social context to probe beneath the surface' (Bryman, 2013, p. 546). Belonging to the same society as I observed was an advantage for me, as it provided me with an in-depth understanding of the given culture and norms while making meaning of my participants' observed cultural practices. This visual method is not free from the researcher's subjectivity. Lichtmena (2013) warned that images that seem to represent reality are 'created or used by the researcher to reflect a particular stance or point of view' (p. 234). What I saw and how I saw those things visually were at my discretion. I was aware of this limitation and always relied on my self-reflections to avoid manipulation of visual images and, thus, observations.

Visual images assisted me to capture non-verbal expressions of my participants during interviews. As a recall technique, visual data allowed my participants to analyse a given situation and assist their own analysis of their work/behaviour. Monk (2010) suggested that:

> Just as [with] photographs … the use of video data can be extended beyond the capturing and analysing of an observation by introducing clips of data into an interview situation as a stimulus for analysis and further discussion as part of an iterative, interactive and holistic approach to the data generation process. (p. 148)

In accordance with this, I used the video clips and still images as prompts/stimuli (Lichtman, 2013) during the interviews.

### 4.4.3.2 Interview

Since this qualitative inquiry was designed to hear the stories/voices of individuals (Creswell, 2013), I adopted interviews as an acceptable data gathering technique that allowed the participants to tell their stories, views and opinions openly and honestly (Atkins & Wallace, 2012; Macdonald et al., 2002). My interviews were semi-structured (see Appendix – P as an example of semi-structured questions), which offered the flexibility to reshuffle questions as the situation demanded(Lichtman, 2010, p. 141) and to 'seek further clarification, expansion or exploration about a response'(O'Toole & Beckett, 2010, p. 132). Considering the age of young children, I conducted their interviews more as informal conversations. This enabled the young participants to express themselves freely (Subsection 4.4.3 details how my interview strategies changed while dealing with these child participants).

The interviews were conducted at a time and place convenient to the participants and lasted no longer than one hour per participant. I used a digital audio-recorder to record the interviews. Audio-recordings allowed me not to be 'distracted by having to concentrate on getting down notes on what is said' (Bryman, 2013, p. 482). Digital recording further assisted me in maintaining accuracy while transcribing the words of the participants into text, and transcriptions allowed me to conduct thorough and repeated examinations of participants' responses (Bryman, 2013).

Since my participants' first language was Bangla, all the interviews (including informal conversations with the young child participants) were conducted in Bangla. After transcribing the recorded interviews/informal conversations, I translated them into English. However, electronic equipment like audio-recorders 'can only capture the words not the gestures and

paralanguages, the emotional subtexts that may be more important to the research'(O'Toole & Beckett, 2010, p. 128).To overcome this limitation, I took still images of my participants and kept self-reflexive notes. Throughout my data collection, my field notes assisted me in capturing participants' non-verbal expressions that 'could provide a more nuanced reading of the interviewee's discourse' (Atkins & Wallace, 2012, p. 90).

### 4.4.3.3 Field notes

Researchers 'create written material in the form of field notes, memos, or a researcher journal' (Lichtman, 2013, p. 222). My personal notes during field visits later became a valuable data source (Bryman, 2013). These field notes allowed me to record 'the actions of participants' and 'my reaction to them' (O'Toole & Beckett, 2010, p. 142). I kept notes of the surroundings of the schools/TTC, classroom contexts/practices, families' residences and neighbourhoods, and the participants' interactions. Simultaneously, I recorded my reflections about my works with the participants and their approaches, behaviours, gestures, expressions and emotions (Lichtman, 2010; O'Toole & Beckett, 2010). Throughout my field work, I recorded my reflections on my participants and their contexts in the form of 'self-reflective or introspective' notes (Lichtman, 2013, p. 222).

These field notes aided me in taking account of the contexts in the qualitative analysis (Rivalland, 2010) based on the learning tradition prisms (as described in Chapter Three). Besides my own written notes and reflections, I utilised other written sources of data, such as documents, records and artefacts (Lichtman, 2013).

### 4.4.3.4 Documents and artefacts

Documents and artefacts created by the participants were also collected. These supported me 'to get the necessary background of the situation and insights into the dynamics of everyday functioning' that this study was examining (Mertens, 2010, p. 373). Documents that I collected were of two types (Lincolm & Guba, 1985; Mertens, 2010):

- formal documents (prepared for official purposes)
- personal documents.

In the first category, I gathered formal documents, including Bangladesh's early childhood curriculum documents (for example, PPC and operational framework for PPE), teacher training manuals, teacher's guides, textbooks for pre-primary classrooms and government orders (GOs)

that provide guidelines for implementing play-oriented teaching–learning practices. These documents represented valuable data regarding philosophy, ideology and objectives that inform the interpretation of preschool curriculum. I also gathered formal school documents, such as statistical and demographic records of schools.

In the second category, I collected personal documents from my participants (such as teachers' daily routines and test/exam scripts of young children). These assisted me in understanding teachers' classroom practices. Besides these texts/written documents (that included existing records; Lichtman, 2013), participants' artefacts were also included as a data source. I collected artefacts of young children (such as drawings, writings or any creative work), teachers (such as learning materials developed by teachers to support play-based learning) and teacher trainers (such as posters for the lectures). However, in rural areas where I conducted my study there were limited facilities to photocopy the documents I collected from participants. Some documents (like GOs) or artefacts (such as posters) were not suitable for photocopying. At times, I was shown the artefacts but was not allowed to bring them with me. To resolve this issue, I used still photographs to collect images of those documents/artefacts, with permission of the participants. It assisted me to 'extract the essence' (Lichtman, 2013, p. 236) of these documents and artefacts to understand perceptions and practices regarding play as a teaching–learning approach.

### 4.4.4 Processing and analysing data

As a researcher, my data analysis began at the time of data collection. During fieldwork, collecting and analysing data is a parallel process. Data collection stimulated my ongoing data analysis; that analysis further modified my collection of data. For example, when I came across an issue during a participant's interview response, it triggered my thinking and led me to seek further questions in relation to the specific point, issue or context being raised. Again, data collected through one method stimulated my constant analysis and directed me to gather specific data through another method. For instance, my ongoing analysis during classroom observations guided my questions for teacher interviews. However, at the time of my field visit my data were not yet organised and my analysis was not yet framed. At the completion of fieldwork, systematic organisation of my data led me towards framed analysis.

Digital coding assisted me in storing and sorting data (Creswell, 2013; Lichtman, 2014). I used computer programs (like Microsoft Word and Windows Media) to process data. Visual data

(video recordings and photographs) were processed using Media player program. Images (photographs and images of artefacts/documents) were organised in JPEG format. Text-based documents and transcripts of audio-recorded interviews were uploaded in the computer as Word documents. Numbers were assigned to lines of the transcripts for easy detection of data. The participants of this study are Bangladeshi and their language is Bangla. Thus, all the interviews were conducted in Bangla. Further, most of the collected documents are written in the same language. These interviews were first transcribed verbatim into Bangla and then translated to English. Relevant parts of collected documents and video-recorded observations were translated to English.

The first step in data analysis is to become familiar with the collected data (Adams, 2010; Creswell, 2013). I read each interview transcript multiple times, watched the video recordings and still images several times, and went through the collected documents and my field notes thoroughly. Data gathered through different instruments were coded, labelled and organised digitally; the data's analysis led to my developing categories and subcategories that helped me identify concepts or themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Creswell, 2013; Lichtman, 2010). Lichtmna (2013) depicted this process as three Cs: codes, categories and concepts or themes (refer to Figure 4.2).
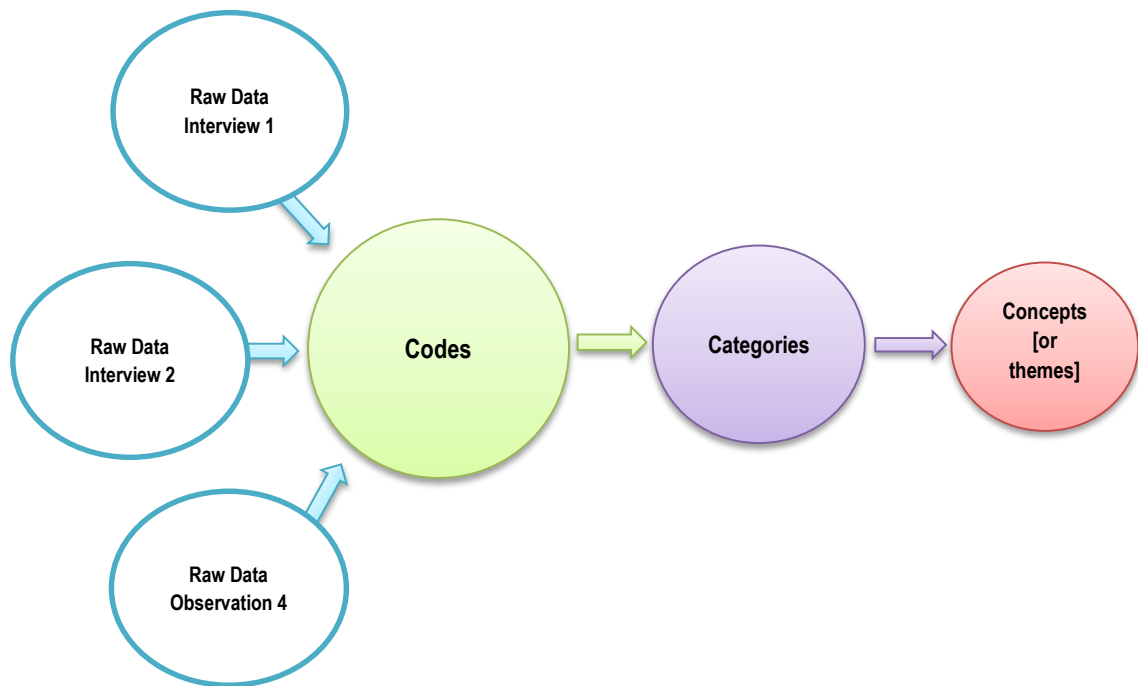
**Figure 4.2: Three Cs of data analysis: codes, categories and concepts or themes (Lichtman, 2014, p. 328).**

Following these analytical approaches, I separated different categories with different codes and numbers. Data reflecting similar or contrasting ideas were placed together for easy comparison. Further, developing charts of data (integrating codes into categories and subcategories into broad datasheets) facilitated easy reading across the whole dataset and mapping and interpretation of the themes (1993, as cited in Adams, 2010). In this process I applied both individual analysis and comparative analysis of data, and followed thematic analysis of data (see Figure 4.3).

| Coding data | Labelling lines/paragraphs/parts of interview transcripts, documents, video segments and photographs | Mapping/describing data at a concrete and conceptual level |
|---|---|---|

**Comparing & contrasting** (searching similarities & differences in different sources of data, individually & collectively)

**Developing themes**
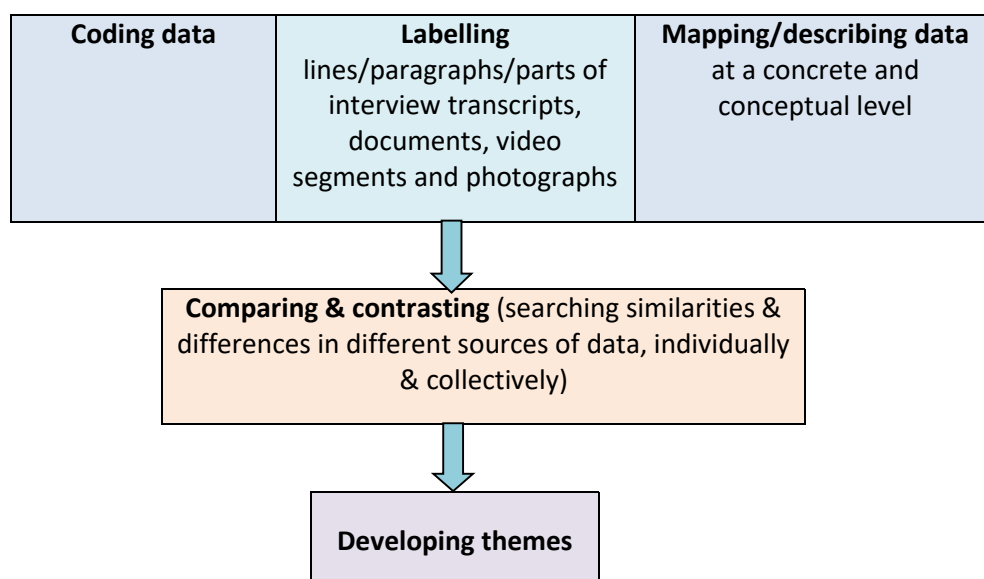
**Figure 4.3: Thematic analysis of data (adapted from Braun & Clarke, 2006)**

For data analysis, I relied on Rogoff's latest learning theory, which specifies cultural organisation of learning traditions in different contexts through three prisms (explained in Chapter Three). I used the seven idiosyncratic features of the prisms as my tools of analysis to explore patterns of cultural participation (in the play-based ECE practices influenced by the PPC) in different settings (see Appendix-O as an example of my data analysis). These settings involved family practice, classroom practice and TTC practice. Subsequently, these practices became my analytical units. Chapter Five depicts my interpretation of data gathered through multiple sources using multiple methods. When designing my research, generating data and interpreting the data's meaning, I faced a number of issues that required special attention. These issues included ethical considerations, credibility, issues relating to young children and limitations of my research.

## 4.5 Section Three: Issues in My Study

### 4.5.1 Research ethics

Regardless of the inquiry approaches, the qualitative researcher comes across a number of ethical issues throughout the research process (Creswell, 2013; 2014; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Spencer, 2011; O'Toole & Beckett, 2010). Wiles et al. (2008) maintained that 'it is crucial that researchers are able to understand, articulate and argue the ethical or moral case for the decisions they make about the design of their research and the ethical issues that emerge

throughout the research process' (p. 34). As a qualitative research bricoleur, my ethical concerns in this study entailed a number of issues, as discussed below.

### 4.5.1.1 Attaining ethical approvals

Ethical approval was obtained from MUHREC (see Appendix H) to research human subjects. MUHREC's ethical protocols became my professional guidelines. I further attained permission from the DPE in Bangladesh (see Appendix I). After arriving in Bangladesh, I selected research sites and distributed explanatory statements (see Appendices F [1] – F [4]) clarifying why I was conducting the study, how data would be collected and what I was going to do with it. It clarified that participation in the study was completely voluntary, without any compulsion on the participatory institutions and persons. I obtained permission as written/informed consent from the participants with the exception of young children (as explained in Subsection 4.4.2) and institutions and participants. The consent forms (see Appendices G [1]– G [4]) for examples) explained to participants their role and provided them choices over their level of engagement (for example, whether they wanted photos/videos taken).

### 4.5.1.2 Care for the participants

Denzin and Lincoln (2011) affirmed that 'ethical decisions are made on the basis of care, compassion, and a desire to act in ways that benefit the individual or group that is the focus of the research' (p. 494). Therefore, participants' convenience and comfort were given priority. Interviews were held at a time and place convenient to the participants. At every setting, prior to my data generation I explained my purpose to participants. I introduced them to my instruments (such as video/still cameras, iPad or audio-recorders), explained what I was going to do with those instruments and their role in the process of data generation. Participants were informed of their rights to respond or not respond and to withdraw from the study at any stage if they felt uncomfortable. All the participants were provided with the promised rewards (as per MUHREC's approval). In fact, these rewards assisted me in developing cordial relations with the participants, particularly with the young children (Mertens, 2010). I paid special attention while dealing with the young participants (discussed in Subsection 4.4.3).

Showing respect to the participants allowed me to remain ethically accountable. Creswell (2013, p. 58) urged qualitative researchers to 'respect' the site and the 'norms and charters' of the local people, which is a tenet I followed throughout my data collection process. For example, village women in my research context never say the name of their husband, which is considered rude;

due to religious factors, some women do not unveil themselves or do not allow photographs to be taken; if I visit a house and do not eat the food they offer, it is taken for granted that I am disrespecting them. A qualitative researcher has to honour such cultural norms, which ultimately assist in minimising unequal power dynamics that undoubtedly existed in this research.

### 4.5.1.3 Addressing unequal power dynamics

Creswell (2013, p. 58) advised researchers to be vigilant of 'potential power imbalances' in qualitative research. My presence as a researcher was subject to power relationships with my participants. The government officials counted me as a senior official (since by profession I belong to an official position superior to them); teachers considered me a high official; to parents, I was an educated and well-dressed person who belonged to an urban culture and from a socio-economic status higher to them; and, for young children I was a stranger with strange equipment and different accents, gestures and posture. To moderate power imbalances, I developed a trust with the participants (Creswell, 2014). I took the government officials into my confidence, explaining that I was conducting the research only for academic purposes, and it had no link to the respective government. They were also provided the option not to answer or to withdraw any comment they made. It helped to ease the tension among them. Before data collection, I visited the classrooms and families and spent time with the teacher, parent and child participants to make them familiar with me. This made them feel comfortable to talk to me.

Power imbalances also existed among the participants (for example, between government officials and teachers, teachers and parents, and parents and children). To minimise those imbalances, I tried to select interview venues in places where no one could hear our conversations. I took the teachers into my confidence, explaining that none of their responses would be reported to government officials. To ensure their anonymity, pseudonyms are used to quote their words while reporting this research. While interviewing the parents, they were hesitant to comment about the teachers or schools. I tried to convince parent participants that the teachers would not have access to their responses. The young children's responses were influenced by attending parents/family members. I took several initiatives to moderate this influence, as elaborated in Subsection 4.4.3. I always remained careful about these young participants and their confidentiality.

*4.5.1.4 Confidentiality towards participants*

With visual methods such as videos or photographs (as used in this study), confidentiality towards participants is in question, since identity is exposed through visual data (Creswell, 2013; Wiles et al., 2008). Qualitative researchers are tangled in the dilemma of using visual images while addressing the issue of maintaining the ethical 'principle of anonymisation' (Wiles et al., 2008, p. 22). This is complicated when a vulnerable population (such as young children) become the subjects of research.

In this regard, I used visual images as data only with the appropriate written consent of the participants. To maintain confidentiality in relation to the information provided by my participants (Litchman, 2014), I avoided 'disclosing' personal information (such as names or address) that might cause 'harm' to the participants (Creswell, 2013, p. 59). I have used pseudonyms to refer to the participants, their schools and their villages. These ethical practices ultimately add to the credibility of this qualitative research.

**4.5.2 Research credibility**

Qualitative research emphasises the quality of the study rather than the quantity. Thus, it is argued that quantitative measures of reliability and validity do not adequately account for qualitative research that deals with the unpredictable nature of socio-cultural practices, contextual relativity of complex cultural phenomena and researcher reflexivity. Qualitative researchers value qualities such as trust, believability, credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, consensus, coherence and construct validity as substituting quantitative understandings of validity and reliability (Bulfin, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2013, Lanksear and Knobel, 2004; Lather, 1991; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This study considers the following constructs as research credibility.

*4.5.2.1 Communicative validity*

Freebody (2003) described validity as the 'adequacy of the representation of the social events and practices to which the research project refers' (p. 69). In a qualitative study, communicative validity is determined by how the researcher presents their interpretations and whether they provide adequate evidence to support their claims (Lanksear and Knobel, 2004, Bulfin, 2009). To strengthen this validity, I followed an analytical framework guided by the theory of culturally organised learning traditions (as explained in Chapter Three). Multiple facets of the

learning tradition prisms determined the structure of my data analysis. While interpreting data gathered from multiple sources, I applied constant comparative analysis. This theory-driven systematic analysis of data aided my presentation of evidence to support my interpretations. Adequacy of evidence was further supplemented by a complex dataset combining transcripts, visual images, documents, artefacts and field notes.

Researcher subjectivity—which heavily influences the construction of meaning-making and interpretation of data—is generally considered to hinder research credibility. In qualitative inquiries, the researcher is considered 'the conduit through which information is gathered and filtered' and interpreted. This increases the possibility of him/her to influence the research and its results (Litchman, 2010, p. 20). This study is not free from this drawback. Thus the study emphasises the importance of rigorous, systematic and less-biased research (Freebody, 2003). To reduce the influence of my possible prejudices, I used self-reflections. I avoided manoeuvring or manipulating data/subjects. I reported my findings, even negative/contrary ones. Feedback from my peers (in conferences where I presented the findings of this research) supported the validity of my preliminary interpretations. To enhance the validity of my present research, I further undertook several measures, such as triangulation and respondent validation (Litchman, 2010).

*4.5.2.2 Triangulation*

This study applied the following triangulations, which add to its validity:

- triangulation of participants (teachers, parents, young children and government officials)
- triangulation of methods (interview, observation, documents, artefacts and field notes)
- triangulation of research sites (three different regions as research sites)
- triangulation of research settings (classroom practices, family practices and teacher training practices).

This triangulation of data sources and methods helped me to 'clarify the meaning of the information gathered'(Naughton, et al., 2010, p. 338). Spencer (2011, p. 140) warned that 'simply adding different forms of data does not automatically confer validity'; similarly, 'using multiple methods is not the same as triangulation'. Triangulation is a term which 'suggests that if two or more forms of data lead to the same conclusion the conclusion can be upheld with more confidence' (Spencer, 2011, p. 140).While extracting the essence of a particular activity from my multi-sourced data (combining information from transcripts, visual data, documents,

artefacts and field notes), I emphasised their interpretation in harmony with each other to understand/construct the meaning (Lichtman, 2013).

### 4.5.2.3 Respondent validation

To ensure validity, I committed to provide the participants (or guardians in the case of child participants) with a copy of transcripts of their interviews/informal conversations, video recordings and photographs. Member checking allows participants to verify their interview responses, delete/change their responses and add comments or supplementary information(O'Toole & Beckett, 2010, p. 133). This was applied for the participating teachers and government officials. However, the same practice became difficult with the parent and child participants, as they lacked reading/writing abilities and access to electronic equipment, as required. To overcome this limitation, I let the parents hear their recorded interviews and showed them the video recordings using my audio and visual equipment. Children also enjoyed listening to their recorded voices and seeing what they were doing in those videos/still photographs in the little screens of my iPad and digital cameras. Even during the classroom observations, they were very enthusiastic about those recordings and their displays. In this research, respondent validation was the first step towards initial scrutiny (though from participants' perspectives) of its data.

### 4.5.2.4 Trustworthiness

While dealing with reliability in qualitative research, questions arise about:

> to what extent we can know that what the interviewee is telling us is 'true'; and how certain we can be that a different interviewer asking the same questions of the same interviewee would receive the same answers as we did. (Atkins & Wallace, 2012, p. 86)

Because of the unpredictable nature of socio-cultural practices, the influence of contexts and the complexity of studied phenomena, the issue of replication in qualitative research is questioned and challenged. In qualitative research, reliability does not mean mere replicability; rather, it refers to openness, transparency and trustworthiness of researchers' methods and research processes. It involves conducting research in a trustworthy fashion and maintaining coherence in research design (Lankshear & Knobel, 2004; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In the present study I adopted a coherent research design and enforced consistency during data collection, analysis and interpretation processes for each participant (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009).To

ensure trustworthiness of data, interview questions and observations focused on the research aims that were framed according to Rogoff's learning theory. Participants were asked semi-structured questions that provided me with the opportunity to obtain responses for particular repeatable questions (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009), with further clarification, expansion or exploration as necessary (O'Toole & Beckett, 2010, p. 132). To maintain transparency, I employed standardised methods for data analysis, such as transcribing interviews (Li, 2011). It assisted the systematic and comprehensive analysis of data (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003).

To collect data, I adopted digital (audio-visual) methods that are more trustworthy than traditional note-based methods of interviewing or observation. Digitally recorded interviews assisted in authentic representation of participants' responses regarding their views, beliefs and approaches concerning play-oriented teaching–learning. Similarly, video recordings and photographs were used to obtain the actual scenario of the teaching–learning and play events in the research context. These visual methods minimised my subjectivity as a researcher.

*4.5.2.5 Issue of generalisability*

The possibility of achieving broad generalisation is very much limited in qualitative research. This study counts upon the individuals' construction of meanings, rather than constructing the truth about a situation of life experience of others (Crotty, 1998). As a qualitative and interpretivist researcher, I was concerned with the participants' individual perspectives about play as learning and their play-oriented practices at a certain time and place. I acknowledge that the limited sample size of this study does not represent all preschool teachers, parents, government officials or children in Bangladesh. Therefore, it is not acceptable to claim broad generalisation of its findings. Instead, I concentrate on demonstrating 'wider resonance' through the claims or arguments (Mason, 2002, p. 8).

Though due to limited samples data analysis might not lead to 'generalisation of ideas', this qualitative study uncovered ideas generated by individuals (government officials, teachers, parents and young children) and institutions (home/school/TTC) that might be 'broadly applicable' (Suter, 2012, p. 353) in the ECE context of Bangladesh or cultural contexts similar to that of Bangladesh.

### 4.5.3 Issues in conducting research with young children

At the core of this study are pre-primary children's play-oriented learning approaches and related cultural practices. Thus, young children constitute an important part of this study. As a qualitative researcher, I honoured the responses and rights of this vulnerable group, recognising the 'richness and complexity of their thinking' (Robbins, 2007, pp. 174–175). While designing research, employing data generation methods and reporting gathered information in accordance with research ethics (to obtain informed consent or use participants' visual images), I remained sensitive to issues while engaging the young children as my participants (Lichtman, 2014). As the vulnerable participants, their age became a major factor in deciding what information to collect from them and how to do so (Mertens, 2010).

I observed 5-year-old young children's play-oriented learning activities in the classroom and at home. During six classroom observations, 12 to 45 children were present in each class. Six pre-primary children were my youngest participants for home-observation and interview. The interviews were audio-recorded and observations involved video recordings and still images. I collected their artefacts as a form of data. However, it was not easy to gather data from these vulnerable participants through methods like interview, video-recording or photographs. It made me realise that '[w]orking around this problem may require alternative methods better suited to young participants' (Bulfin, 2009, p. 138).

The popular method of formal interviewing demands high verbal/written abilities among participants; as such, it disadvantages young people (Valentine, 1999). I found that some techniques of interviewing adults were not effective with the young participants. It was very difficult to conduct a formal interview, which involved the young participants sitting in a quiet place in front of a stranger (me, the researcher), talking strangely (different from their dialect) and being faced with unusual instruments, such as audio-recorders, digital cameras and video recorders. Such an environment may have created psychological pressure among the young children. Thus, they hardly responded to my formal interview questions. As an alternative, I turned my interviews into informal conversations. To put them at ease during these conversations, I chose a time when they were engaged in play or other daily routine activities. I found that young children responded better while playing or in a group of peers/siblings. I took advantage of that and used the participants' or other children's (non-participant) words or activities as prompts for the informal conversations. During transcription of these conversations

I was selective in focusing only on the participants' activities or responses while 'dropping others into the background or excluding things altogether' (Bulfin, 2010, p. 125).

For ethical and moral obligations, I only talked with the young participants in the presence of their parents or adult family members. However, my child participants were influenced by attending adults' comments on my questions or children's responses to those. I took initiatives to reduce this influence. For example, I reframed my questions to them as follows:

What you think about this?

Do you think same as your mother? Or, do you have any other idea about it?

This is an interesting way of counting, as your grandmother said. Do you know any other way of counting?

Your mother told me about the things you like to do. What else you like to do?

Sometimes, presence of adults doubled child participants' uneasiness in answering questions relating to those adults. To meet this challenge, I deliberately chose a time/place when/where the attending adults/guardians were present but were concentrating on their daily household work, such as cooking or washing. For example, I conducted my informal conversation with one child participant beside the pond where her mother was washing dishes. She was sometimes commenting on the child's activities or responses, but mostly engaged with her own work. Since the adults were otherwise engaged, it reduced the probability of their intervention in children's responses.

The child participants' responses were also affected by the unequal power relationship between them and myself (as the researcher). I found them to be shy and not at ease with me. Sometimes child participants may intentionally try to 'confirm or deny the researchers' hypothesis' (Mertens, p. 252). To minimise these issues, I changed my approach. In fact, the age of the child participants determined my role as the researcher (Mertens, 2010). Since my young participants were 5-year-old pre-schoolers, I chose to 'act childlike or to just hang around and wait for gradual acceptance' (Mertens, 2010, p. 252). Prior to collecting data, I spent additional time with them, which assisted in breaking the ice and building trust (Creswell, 2014; O'Toole & Beckett, 2010). In addition, I kept their secrets (for example, their responses about their personal matters or about parents/teachers) without disclosing them to the adults (parents/teachers). I was aware that 'breach of faith' would result in their losing confidence in me, thus affecting

their responses `(Creswell, 2013, p. 175)`. These approaches moderated power imbalances and made them feel comfortable during filming, photographing or conversations.

Further, to develop friendly relationships I gave young participants gifts (Lichtman, 2014; Mertens, 2010), including candy, drawing books, colour pencils and rhyme books (as per MUHREC's approval). As Mertens (2010) suggested, I tried my best to use their dialects while talking to them. To make them feel comfort, I introduced them to my equipment—including an audio-recorder, iPad and digital cameras—and I let them touch the equipment and showed them how the equipment functions. They found it interesting to see how their images were captured by the iPad/digital cameras and displayed on its screen, or how their voices were recorded and then sounded when played.

This study used visual images (both videos and still images) of the minor participants as data. Therefore, as an ethical obligation, prior written consent from the participants was required (Lichtman, 2014). However, I neither presented the explanatory statement to the minor participants nor attained their written consents. Rather, I approached their parents/school principals, since this is the culture of gaining consent on behalf of the young children in the given society. The same applied to the issue of member checking. However, during data collection I verbally (in simple words) explained to the minor participants what I was going to do and why, and what they were expected to do (their role, which encompassed conversation). I also asked them if they were happy to be a part of my study and with photos/videos being taken or their voice being recorded. At the end of observations/conversations, I played recordings for them on digital cameras/iPad or the audio-recorder. They considered it fun—they enjoyed seeing their recorded images (still/moving) and listening to their voices.

Sometimes young participants' verbal responses were coloured by body language or facial expressions. These could not be captured in audio-recordings; however, my field notes and visual data (photographs and video recordings) assisted me in minimising this limitation. Transcriptions of these delicate conversations required special attention. At the same time, I had to be very careful while translating my minor participants' words from their local language (dialects) to English. In all my efforts to address the challenges in doing research with young children, I tried to uphold the interests of my minor participants and avoid biases, such as manipulating the participants, manoeuvring data or interpreting data with prejudice.

## 4.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter illustrates my research framework. It elaborates the constructivist-interpretivist worldview and qualitative approach that justifies my procedures of data collection, processing and analysis. This research focuses on interpreting the meanings, constructed by the individuals, regarding play-oriented learning in a 'specific context', which encompasses family settings, classroom settings and TTC settings. In conjunction with this a sociocultural theoretical framework has been applied based on Rogoff's work on learning traditions (as elaborated in Chapter 3). This enables understanding socially constructed, negotiated and shared subjective meanings of different stakeholders regarding play as learning approach in different institutional settings in the socio-cultural context of Bangladesh. This chapter also discusses the issues related to my research ethics, credibility and engaging of young children as participants. As Lichtman noted, 'Collecting data is often challenging, but very enjoyable. The stories you hear are often amazing and revealing. The images you see can be extremely revealing. But the data themselves are not the final story' (Lichtman, 2013, p. 236). Constructing meaning from data was a great challenge for me. The next part of this thesis presents my interpretation of the collected data.

# Chapter 5: Presenting Data Analysis

[Q]ualitative researchers use an emerging qualitative approach to inquiry, the collection ofdata in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study, and data analysis that is both inductive and deductive and establishes patterns or themes. (Creswell, 2013, p. 44)

## 5.1 Overview

This chapter portrays my analysis of data collected through video observations, photographs, documents, artefacts, field notes and interviews (with six participants from each category, including pre-primary teachers, young children, parents and government officials). While interpreting multi-sourced data, I focus on the prevailing patterns of play-oriented early years learning practices in the studied settings—that is, the family, classroom and TTC in the ECE context of Bangladesh. My data analysis relies on the common seven features of the learning traditions, as offered by Rogoff and her colleagues (see Chapter Three for details).

## 5.2 Prevailing Patterns of Play-Oriented Learning Practice

My data analysis depicts how play-oriented learning practices occur in the pre-primary classroom (involving both indoor and outdoor activities), TTC and family settings in the context of Bangladesh (see Appendix J for details of the studied settings). To analyse these cultural patterns, I applied Rogoff's theory of culturally organised traditions of learning practices, particularly the learning tradition prisms: ALI, GR and LOPI (see figure 5.1; my analytical framework is further elaborated in Chapter Three). Each of these prisms entails constellations of seven common interrelated feature configurations representing distinct learning traditions in divergent cultural communities (Paradise & Rogoff, 2009; Rogoff, 2014;Rogoff, et al., 2007). These features include:

    i.    community organisation of learning
   ii.    motive
  iii.    social organisation of endeavours
   iv.    goal of learning
    v.    means of learning
   vi.    communication

vii.    assessment.
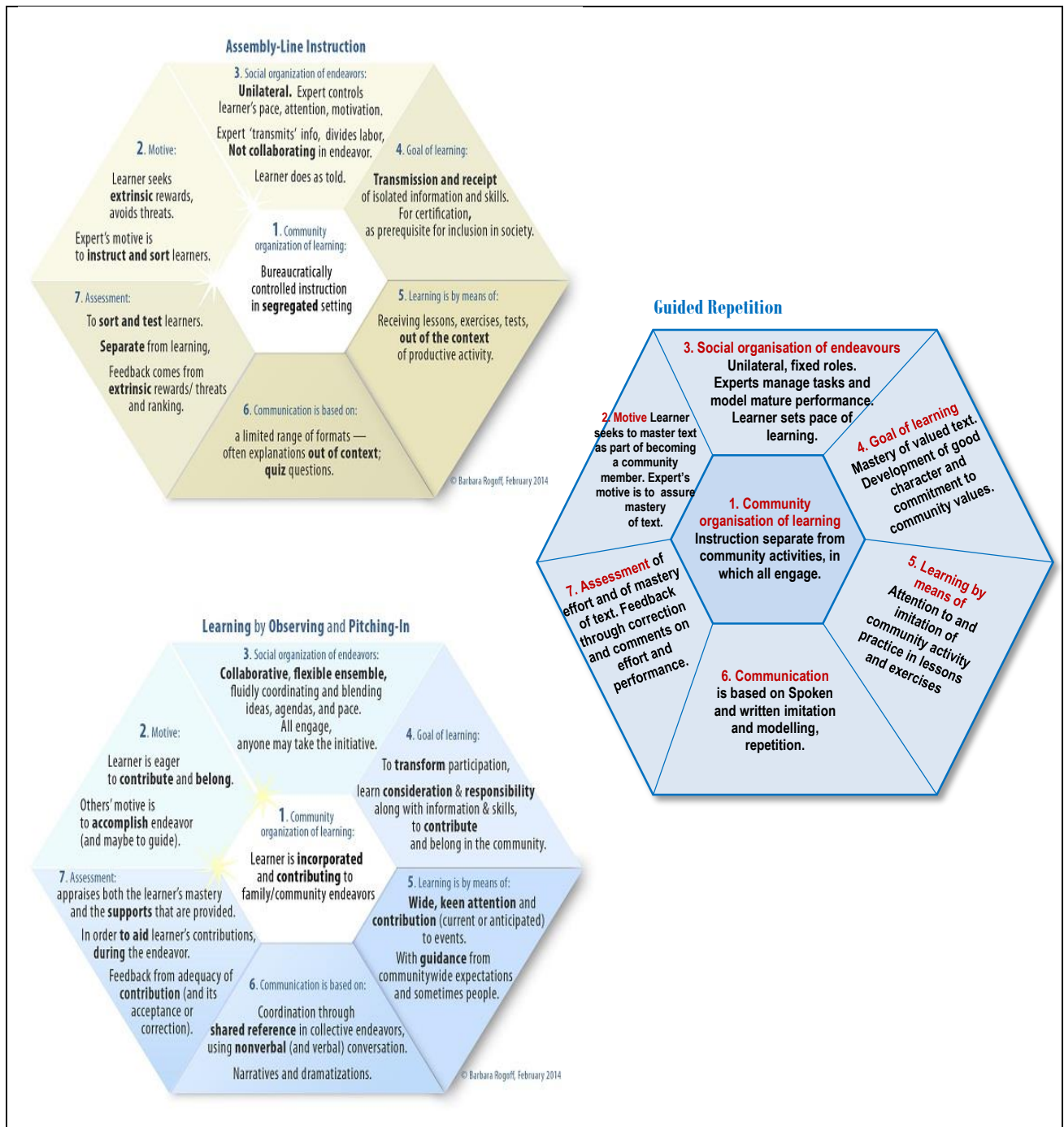


**Figure 5.1: Different prisms of learning traditions and their features**

In analysing gathered data, I concentrated on how all these features captured the play-oriented learning patterns and cultural practices in the studied institutional settings—the family, TTC and classroom contexts of Bangladesh. To assist my analysis, each of the following subsections

includes a synopsis of the pattern of practices of a particular feature, as elaborated in the three prisms.

**5.2.1 Community organisation of learning**

The pattern of involvement and contribution to ongoing everyday cultural activities determines the nature of a learning tradition (Rogoff et al., 2007). Thus, to define prevailing learning practices in Bangladesh's ECE context, it is essential to know children's/learners' patterns of engagement in routine activities. To unfold the community organisation of learning, data analysis focused on the nature and extent of children's engagement in play-oriented activities in different settings. A synopsis of the patterns of community organisation of learning in different traditions is depicted in Figure 6.1.

| **ALI:** | 'Bureaucratically controlled instruction in segregated setting' (Rogoff, 2014, p. 76). |
|---|---|
| **GR:** | 'Instruction separate from community activities, in which all engage.'(Rogoff, et al., 2015, p. 483) |
| **LOPI:** | 'Learner is incorporated into and contributing to family/community endeavours' (Rogoff, 2014, p. 73). |

**Figure 5.2: Community organisation of learning in three prisms.**

*5.2.1.1 Community organisation of learning in the classroom context*

The data indicates that the ALI pattern dominated the classroom practices. In ALI practices, children learn through controlled instructions in segregated settings (Rogoff, 2014; Rogoff et al., 2007).
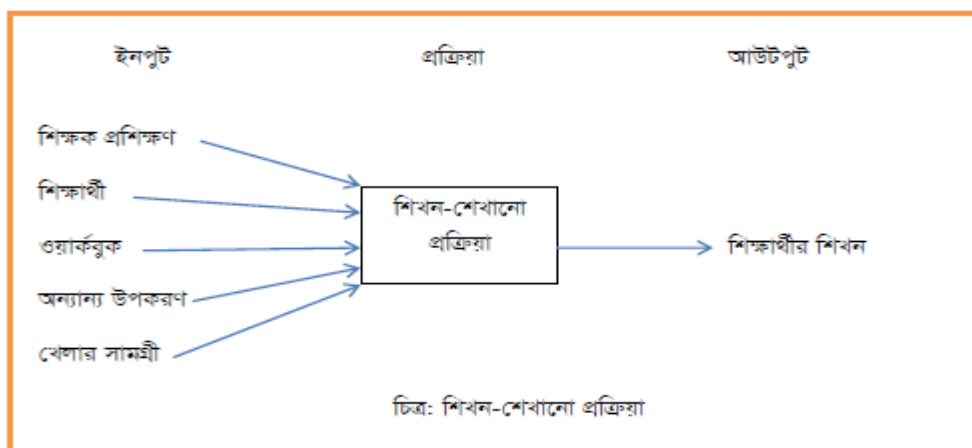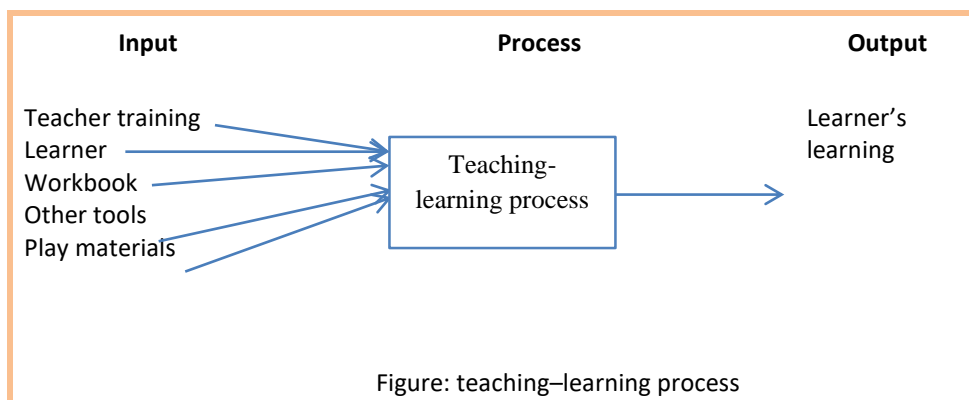
**Figure 5.3: Teaching–learning process as presented in the PPC (in Bengali language) followed by a translation (NCTB, 2011, p. 45).**

Short PPE training, guided by PPC, has a great influence in teachers' understandings of play-based learning and their classroom practices. In PPC, teaching–learning is illustrated as a 'process' (see Figure 6.1), which is quite similar to the factory model mentioned in the ALI tradition (Rogoff et al., 2007).

Data indicates that teachers in the studied classrooms integrated young children into a range of cultural activities through play (such as story-telling, physical exercise, singing songs, drawing and playing games, as seen in Images 1, 2 and 4). However, most of these observed classroom activities were introduced by the PPC as new learning activities and were not previously considered teaching–learning tools. Rather, some activities (like singing songs or story-telling) remained a part of the local culture, while some were imported, such as guided play (for example, 14 games that were recommended in the teacher's guide; Teacher's Guide, 2010). These prescribed play activities, organised in specialised settings (classrooms), were initiated by the teachers and highly structured (see Images 1 and 2for examples).

'We have a routine to follow. Say for, we have singing songs in our plan. At first I sing the song. Then I ask them [young children] to sing it with me.' (Abid, teacher, Sea-Shore School)

**Image 1**: The teacher in South Mill School explains to the children how to play a game with the ball.

**Image 2:** The children follow the teacher while singing a song on Bengali alphabets at Road-SideSchool.The teacher standing infront of the children and playing a tambourine and the children are clapping with that.

As specified in the PPC young children get free play time in the classroom. Again, these free plays are mostly directed by the teachers.

> 'They [young children] have free play time. They can play on their own. They can draw pictures, or play with ball, doll or board game. You see, the class is huge, so I divide them into groups and tell them what to play.' (Sohana, teacher, Road-Side School)

> 'Madam [teacher] shows us what to draw, and you draw.' (Asif, child, South Mill family)

These configurations of community organisation of learning are similar to ALI practices. In teacher-directed play the teachers were observed demonstrating the activities while young learners imitated and repeated those activities to attain accuracy (see Images 3, 4 and 5). These practices were similar to those described as GR practices. In GR, learners are not segregated from valued cultural activities; rather, they are involved in the activities via imitation (modelling) of experts (Rogoff et al., 2007).
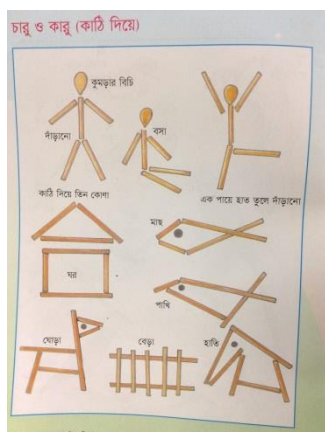
**Image 3**: Examples of shapes made with sticks as provided in pre-primary textbook.



**Image 4:** The teacher in Handloom School is demonstrating how to make a house with sticks.



**Image 5**: Children follow steps as demonstrated by the teacher until they are able to make houses with sticks accurately.



**Image 6:** Children creating shapes of their own choosing(a star, a flower and a human) with the sticks.

However, unlike GR, these structured plays offer young children the opportunity not only to participate and imitate but also to contribute. This is observed in Image 6 where children are creating shapes of their own choosing with the sticks, beyond those modelled by the teachers and prescribed in the textbook. This pattern of participation resembles the LOPI tradition. Again, the concept of learning through observation and pitching in as full/peripheral participants is evident in the children's perceptions, as illustrated below:

'I like to play with balls. Sir [teacher] says, "you [indicating one group] sit, and you [indicating another group of children] play". I watch them playing games. I play when it is my turn.' (Jamal, child, River-Bank family)

**Image 7:** A drawing that evidences how a child added his own perceptions of community life. A young boy of Sea-Shore School has drawn a mango, his friend, a flower, a fish, a plate of food, a table and a water pot. He also added his name.

This is further reflected in the PPC and perceptions and practices of the participants:

'Children instinctively learn informally since their birth. Children's active and innate participation in experiences and transformations, through which they grow up every moment since their birth, is the base of their learning … Since their development and learning process are perpetually influenced by home, school and surrounding social environment creating the scope for them to learn actively at every level is the core tenet of their learning and development.' (Translated from Bangla, PPC, 2011, p. 8)

'They [young children] enjoy learning by playing. They like to play board game. At the same time they learn the rules of the game. I try to make the concept of numbers clear to them by counting moves.' (Abid, teacher, Sea-Shore School)

'Sometimes I ask them [young children] to draw a flag, then I give them the freedom to draw whatever they like, then I find some children are drawing a mango or flower instead of a flag.' (Maksuda, teacher, River-Bank school)

*5.2.1.2 Community organisation of learning in the family context*

At home young children are observed as becoming more integrated into daily cultural activities rather than in the classroom context. Further, their learning is encouraged when their participation and contribution is valued by family/community members. These practices in the studied families resembled LOPI, as seen in the following excerpts:

'He [young son] goes to the village shop and buys candy for himself. I give him the money; he takes it as a fun.' (Shorifa, River-Bank family)

'We have cows and hens. I can feed them. I see Amma [mother] feeding them.' (Kakoli, child, Road-Side family)

'She [the young girl] plays with her younger sister [10-months old]. She can take care of her while I'm engaged in other household works.' (Amena, parent, Sea-Shore family)



**Image 8:** Atika (from Sea-Shore family) is taking care of her younger sister while her mother is busy with household works.

Apart from being involved in valued cultural activities, young children brought the themes of adults' activities into their play. Observation, participation and contribution in taking care of younger siblings or young family members was reflected in their role play when playing with dolls (see Image 9). In addition, young children took their classroom experiences home. As prescribed by the PPC and teacher's guideline, 12 imported games were incorporated in the daily curriculum. Young children played these games at school; they subsequently practiced those non-indigenous games during their free play at home.



**Image 9:** Young girls play with handmade dolls, with the shoe box as the doll-house. They take turns in their role play as mother, father and children.

However, apart from being engaged in child-centred play, children were also integrated into adult-dominated non-interactive learning practices. For example, parents did not recognise

children's' play as academic learning; rather, they emphasised learning academic skills (see Images 10 and 11). At home, parents (mostly mothers) were observed teaching their young children. While teaching, they emphasised learning alphabets and numbers, counting, reading and writing (see Images 12and 13). They also taught recitation of rhymes, but as rote-based learning rather than as a play-like activity. This pattern, similar to bureaucratically controlled instruction, represents ALI practices at home, as observed below:



**Image 10:** As school ends, the mother looks at her young daughter's notebook to see what she learned at school.



**Image 11:** The young girl shows her mother what she did in class.



**Images 12:** The mother guides her daughter to read and write



**Images 13:** The child is involved in traditional learning practices to attain academic skills.

'At home she also plays with her friends in the neighbourhood. They play to pass time … But she also needs to study, you know. She must read, write and memorise what the teacher teaches in the class … I want her to get higher education, become a successful person in future life.' (Sufia, mother, Handloom family)

'I do what my mother asks me to do. I read, write. I can recite six rhymes! I know from A to Z. I can write all of those … She taught me.' (Asif, child, South Mill family)

*5.2.1.3 Community organisation of learning in the teacher training centre context*

ALI-guided practices were also observed in the community organisation of learning at the TTC. Similar to the ALI configuration of community organisation of learning (Rogoff, 2014), trainees were engaged in play-oriented learning activities in specialised settings under bureaucratic control at the TTC. The trainers applied controlled instruction with the objective of attaining certain training goals through structured lessons, as guided by PPC. As mentioned earlier, in PPC teaching–learning is described as a process (see Figure 1). Similar to the ALI tradition, it represents a factory model that treats learners as the raw materials and their learning as the output (Rogoff et al., 2007). The same approach is applied in the TTC where trainees are involved in various activities introduced by the trainers in a specialised learning setup with controlled instructions. Image 14 illustrates how trainees' involvement was organised by the trainers in a specialised setting. This resembles ALI patterns, as evident in the following extracts and images:

'When we developed the PPC and lesson plans for the teacher training program we kept in mind that we have to engage them in activities that we will introduce to them. We expectthem to follow our guidelines.' (Riaz, PPT trainer and policy implementer)

'We plan some practical lessons that can help the teachers to practice and grab some ideas about how to conduct the pre-primary class, but you know the time is limited, so we ask them to follow what we say.' (Ashraf, teacher trainer)



**Image 14:** In a practical session, trainers explain to trainee teachers how to play a game involving children; the trainees observe the demostration and take notes (image provided by Riaz, PPT trainer and policy implementer).

Community organisation of learning at TTC, as guided by PPC, represents ALI patterns. Again, GR and LOPI practices were also evident at the TTC. The trainees were integrated into ongoing

play-oriented teaching–learning activities. Similar to GR trends, they imitated the demonstrated activities (see Image 15 for an example).



**Image 15:** A trainer demonstrates how to dance with a specific song and the trainee teachers follow (image provided by Riaz, PPT trainer and policy implementer).

It is not always mere imitation of what is introduced to them. Trainees sometimes get the opportunity to participate and contribute (with their own ideas) in those activities (see Image 16). This pattern of engagement and contribution harmonises with the LOPI tradition.

'We introduce a topic; show them [trainees] how we do it. We engage them into those. They also come up with their own ideas.' (Raihan, teacher trainer)

**Image 16:** A brain-storming session where,in groups, the trainees compiletheir ideas about a topic (image provided by Riaz, PPT trainer and policy implementer).

### 5.2.2 Motive

In the present study, motives are considered the reasons, spurs or incentives that drive or inspire young children/learners to learn through play-oriented activities. Before moving onto the findings that indicate what motivates young children's learning in play-oriented activities and adults'/experts' roles in those motivations, I have summarised the pattern of motives, as stated in the three prisms (see Figure 6.3).

| **ALI:** | 'Lerner seeks extrinsic rewards, avoid threats. Expert's motive is to instruct and sort learners' (Rogoff, 2014, p. 76). |
|---|---|
| **GR:** | 'Learner seeks to master text as part of becoming a community member. Expert's motive is to assure mastery of text' (Rogoff, 2015, p. 483). |
| **LOPI:** | 'Learner is eager to contribute and belong. Others' motive is to accomplish endeavour (and maybe to guide)' (Rogoff, 2014, p. 73). |

**Figure 6.3: Motive in three prisms.**

#### 5.2.2.1 Motive in the classroom context

The data suggests that in the classroom ALI practice prevailed in terms of motives. In each of the six studied classrooms, teachers were observed offering play opportunities to the children as a 'reward' for their good behaviour, which is common in the ALI tradition. They threatened children with being disallowed access to play activities as a motivation strategy. Verbal praise was another motivational approach often used by the teachers to inspire the young learners to engage in and learn through instructed play activities. Teachers provided instructions to

children for play-oriented activities and sorted them into groups as per their performances. Thus, interest to be a part of the group that performed well and was praised by the teacher also motivated young children.

'If they finish their work and do not create any chaos in the classroom, I allow them to play.' (Mohsina, teacher, South Mill School)

'I ask them to move into one shape [drawn in the playground with a stick], for example, girls into the circle or boys into the triangle, if they can do it I praise them, I say 'well done' or 'girls did it faster than boys'. They feel more inspired to play it more.' (Sohana, teacher, Road-Side School)

'When they [children] do activities like drawing or making shapes with sticks as per my directions, then I can see who is doing it properly and who is not. Then I give him/her the support to do it accurately. Sometimes I ask the children who are good at the activity to support the others.' (Gulshan, teacher, Handloom School)

Another motivation strategy used by the teachers was promotion to an upper grade. Children were aware that they could only be promoted to Grade One if they studied 'well'. This desire to be promoted to a higher grade acted as an incentive. This incentive motivated children to learn at home and school.

'My teacher said if I study well, then I will be promoted to Grade One. Shapan thinks the teacher will promote him to Grade Two [laughing].' (Kakoli, child, Road-Side family)

It was further observed that play, as an incentive, worked to motivate young learners to attentively engage in various learning activities in the classroom. Images 17and 18demonstrate how a play activity captured a child's attention and motivated her learning with active involvement when she was bored by formal teaching–learning activities. This reflects the learner's desire to be engaged in the play-oriented activity. However, motivation is highly influenced by the teacher who controls the activity and the children's involvement.

**Images 17:** At Corner-Temple School a little girl is bored with the traditional learning activities (writing and memorising).

**Image 18**A play-oriented activity motivates her to be engaged attentively in the learning practice.

*5.2.2.2 Motive in the family context*

In the studied families, young children were mostly motivated by adults' cultural activities in daily life. The opportunity to engage in valued adult/cultural activities inspired them to learn.

> 'Sometimes I go to the village shop to buy things for my Amma [mother]. I buy biscuits, potato, onions and salt, I buy candy for me. Sometime I make mistakes; then she [mother] shows me how to count Taka [local currency]. Then I count it right.' (Jamal, child, River-Bank family)

Young children followed those adults they came across in their everyday lives, such as elder siblings, parents, uncles, aunts or grandparents, and tried to act like them, even in their play (see Images 19 and20). Their intention to participate/contribute in those cultural activities in real life was exhibited in their play themes and this inspired them to learn those everyday cultural activities.

**Image 19:** Mina's mother cooks in the kitchen.



**Image 20:** Mina and her friend bring the cooking themes into play.

Parents sometimes used play as an incentive for learning at home. For example, if the children studied attentively then parents promised to buy them toys or candy, or to hug them; if they did any job properly parents allowed them take engaged further in those adult/valued activities. Thus, in the family context, 'rewards' turned into 'appreciations/incentives' while motivating young children's engagement in everyday cultural settings. An example is when Jamal accurately counted money, or when Champa was able to make round-shaped bread: the mother/grandmother appreciated that and the child subsequently felt encouraged to learn more about that cultural activity.

> 'Amma [mother] teaches me numbers, O, A, Ka, Kha [Bengali alphabets], A, B, C, D. You know if I don't learn she yells. But if I study, she hugs me. Then she promises to buy me new toys. But she does not give me that every time.' (Kakoli, child, Road-Side family)

> 'I tell her that Abida [a child in the neighbourhood] studies attentively, and if you study well then I will buy you toys. Then she studies attentively.' (Kulsum, mother, South Mill family)

Thus, praising, scolding, comparisons (with peers/siblings), promises, appreciation, incentives and love/affection (during/following an activity) by adults act as motives for young children during learning. It was observed that motives of the parents/adults in the family were directed towards guiding the children's particular activity and supporting them to accomplish that; this practice is attuned to LOPI.

### 5.2.2.3 Motive in the teacher training centre context

TTC practice resembled GR practices. The intention to attain expertise in play-oriented teaching–learning techniques encouraged the trainee teachers (see the excerpt below), while for trainers the motive was to design and model the tasks and instruct the trainees (Rogoff et al.,

2007). As per GR, learner motives were to attain accuracy in a particular skill, enabling them to perform/enter a valued cultural activity. In Image 21trainees are seen trying to attain dancing skills. However, all of them did not get the equal chance to get involved in each activity due to time constraints of the training sessions).

> 'During the training, mostly new themes of learning motivate them [trainee teachers]. If there is a new idea in the training, such as a dancing or singing activity, then they get motivated to learn that. For example, maybe a teacher never knew how to sing or dance, but in this training she/he had to sing and dance.' (Ahsan, PPE trainer and URC instructor)



**Image 21:** A male and a female trainee demonstrate their attained skills in dancing with songs, as demonstrated by the trainers (images provided by Riaz, PPT trainer and policy implementer).

This was also evident in the words (see the interview quotation below) of the policymakers who developed the training modules. They focused on the PPC guidelines that suggest class teachers should inspire young children's learning through engaging them in playful activities in a child-friendly environment (NCTB, 2011). For their part, the trainees repeated the demonstrated activities to attain accuracy. The trainers also expected attaining the same skills through GR.

> 'For training the module is being developed in such a way so that trainers can train the teachers properly. We emphasise on practical aspects and train how to engage young children in learning through playful activities. So the trainers demonstrate those teaching–learning activities to them [trainees] and they practice those during the session.' (Riaz, PPT trainer & policy implementer)

> 'We display an activity, say for how to sing and dance. Then we ask them [trainees] to practice that. And they enjoy that.' (Ahsan, trainer)

### 5.2.3 Social organisation of endeavours

Social organisation of endeavours in learning could be unilateral or collaborative and fixed or flexible. In this regard, investigation of the nature of play activities (either adult-/expert-dominated or child-/learner-centred) assists my analysis. The nature of play activities and positions/roles of the expert/teacher and learners in cultural activities determine their pattern of engagement in the process of learning (Rogoff, 2014; Rogoff et al., 2007). This feature is configured differently in three prisms (see Figure 6.4). In ALI, it is a unilateral process in which experts 'transmit' information and control learners' roles. In GR, it is the same unilaterally controlled and fixed roles. In addition, experts design and manage tasks and model mature performances while the learners imitate those in a prescribed way (Rogoff, et al., 2007). In contrast, LOPI is a collective, collaborative, ensemble and flexible organisation of participants' engagement in cultural activities (Rogoff, 2014).

| | |
|---|---|
| **ALI:** | 'Unilateral. Expert controls learner's pace, attention, motivation. Expert 'transmits' info, divides labor. Not collaborating in endeavour. Learner does as told' (Rogoff, 2014, p. 76). |
| **GR:** | 'Unilateral, fixed roles. Experts manage tasks and model mature performance. Learner sets pace of learning' (Rogoff et al., 2015, p. 483). |
| **LOPI:** | 'Collaborative, flexible ensemble, fluidly coordinating and blending ideas, agendas and pace. All engage, anyone may take the initiative' (Rogoff, 2014, p. 73). |

**Figure 6.4: Social organisation of endeavours in three prisms.**

*5.2.3.1 Social organisation of endeavours in the classroom context*

The data indicate that in the studied classrooms teachers controlled young children's pace during play activities and children followed teachers' instructions, as observed in the following examples. In Image 22 Maksuda, the teacher in River-Bank school, is seen instructing children how to perform addition by counting marbles. The children were observing and following the instructions. In Image 23, teacher Gulshan is seen guiding children's moves during a physical exercise in Handloom School. Classroom practices were observed as mostly teacher dominated. Thus, hierarchy existed in these play activities. This pattern of practice mirrored ALI practices.

**Image 22:** Maksuda, the teacher in River-Bank School, gives instruction to two children on how to count with marbles.

**Image 23:** Teacher Gulshan guides children's moves during a physical exercise in Handloom School.

Play practices in the classroom were an interactive process that encouraged collaboration between teachers and young children. For example, teachers asked children to bring materials from home and use them for play activities in the classroom (see Images 24 and 25).





**Images 24:** In Handloom School a young boy and his elder sister bring water lilies, as requested by the teacher.

**Image 25:** The teacher made a necklace of the water lily using its long stem.

These practices demonstrated the LOPI pattern. In the classroom, during physical exercise teachers often engaged the children by asking questions about fitness or cleanliness. In play-oriented activities like drawing, playing games, singing or dancing, children acted as full/regular participants and attempted to contribute. Again, the collaborative nature of play-oriented learning activities added flexibility to the existing hierarchy. During play, participants (those who led and followed) changed their positions/roles. For example, during games the teacher and children often changed their positions, taking turns (as observed in Image 63).

Though play practices in the classroom were mostly interactive and collaborative, children's voices were sometimes suppressed. The teachers did not always pay attention to children's choices. Children rarely possessed the scope to select an activity of their own choice.

'I like to play with ball. I tell her [teacher] that. But she asks to draw flowers.' (Asif, child, South Mill family)

Teachers mostly applied their pre-planned lessons. They had fixed lesson plans and targets (see Image 26 as an example). When the teachers were asked about this, they replied that it was not possible for a single teacher to address the children's individual choices or demands due to time constraints (the classes ran for 2 ½ hours), the huge number of students (ranging from 20–50), limited resources and fixed targets.

'You know, only one teacher is assigned for this class. The number of student is high. And, we have some learning targets. So it is not always possible for me to let them play as per their own choices. Again, sometimes it makes chaos if they are allowed to play as they like. But I try my bests to cope with their interests.' (Mohsina, teacher, South Mill School)



**Image 26:** Prescribed daily lesson plan (in Bangla) followed by Sohana, the teacher in Road-SideSchool. See the translation in Table 5.1.

**Table 5.1: Daily Lesson Plan for the pre-primary class**

| Daily lesson plan | | | | | | | | Date: 10/07/2013 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A) Create a safe environment in the class | | | | | | | | B) Develop emotion in the class | |
| Class | Subject | Lesson | Learning outcome & capability | Learning strategy | Assessment strategy | Material | Time | Intelligence | |
| Baby [pre-primary] | Bangla literacy | Making words using letters | Will be able to identify letters in words | Using cards & pictures | Oral Written | Cards Pictures Textbook | | | |
| Do | Environment | Surrounding things | What we have around us | Using pictures | Oral | Textbook | | | |
| Do | Maths | Addition using numbers | Will be able to do addition using pictures | Using pictures Counting orally | Writing on board Writing in notebooks | Pictures Textbook | | | |
| Do | Guided play | | | | | | | | |
| Signature of the principal | | | | | | | | Signature of the class teacher | |

However, theclaim of not addressing children's desireswas contested by some findings. The opportunity for collaborative participation further enabled young learners to exercise their own agency, though in a limited form, as can beobserved in Images 27 and 28 in which a child added rainbow colours while drawing the sun. Childrenalso createdtheir own rules during play (see Image 31). We may further take the example of story-telling. In all the studied classrooms, teachers encouraged children to use their personal thoughts/experiences to elaborate stories (see the extract and Images 29 and30).

'A local NGO has given us some big story books with illustrations. I read those stories to them, and show them the pictures. They enjoy it. I ask their responses. Say for, when I showthis [showing a big story book] story of a king eating different foods with different shapes. I ask them if they can tell about any shape of any food they have had. They tell me about round pancakes, or square bread. I use those examples to further explain the shapes to them.' (Gulshan, teacher, Handloom School)



**Images 27:**The teacher shows the children how to draw the sun.

**Image 28:**A child's drawing in which he added rainbow colours to the sun.

**Images 29:** Teacher Kabita tells a story to the children in Corner-Temple School as they listen attentively.

**Image 30:** In the middle of the story the teacher pursues responses from the children.



**Image 31**: In Road-SideSchool two younggirls play with a dolllike it is a ball—spelling and catching.

*5.2.3.2 Social organisation of endeavours in the family context*

At home, play is mostly an interactive activity, except for solo play. Sometimes, children engage in solo play when siblings are busy or no peers are available. Even in solo play, young children often bring their integrating approaches to become involved in cultural activities through imitation (see Images 32and33).

**Image 32:** Asif plays alone with marbles while other playmates are not around.

**Image 33:** Chapma bringsa cooking theme into her solo play.

Usually, young children interact with peers, siblings or neighbours as playmates. In these practices they are neither integrated into nor removed from valued cultural practices. Rather, they closely observe adults' activities in everyday life as peripheral participants, and bring those themes into their play activities. They also represent those themes in their artefacts (see Images 34, 35 and 36, and the following).

> 'We play with dolls. I have two dolls, Sima has one. My ones are more beautiful. One day I am the mother in our play, another day Sima becomes the mother. And then I become the father. We play this way.' (Mina, child, Handloom family)



**Image 34:** Children play with handmade dolls.They act like mother and child. The shoe box is the house and the doll in the hand of the left child is the baby.

**Images 35:** A young boy's house by the river.

**Image 36:** His drawing representing things he observes in everyday life, such as the national flag raised at school every mornig, his house by the river and how his uncle fishes in the river.

Learning through play also appeared as a collaborative process in which young children acted as full participants (rather than peripheral ones) and coordinated with others while becoming involved in a cultural activity (see Image 37). For example, Champa learned from her grandmother how to make handmade bread using the kitchen utensils, Atika carried washed dishes with her mother from pond to home, Mina swept the floor and Jamal bought grocery items from local shops for his mother. Children considered these activities to be fun.



**Image 37:** In their yard,Jamal helps his mother dry shredded woodchips that they burn for cooking.

Through these play-like activities the children were engaged in valued cultural activities in everyday life. In these activities they either keenly observed adults' activities or followed their directions. Hence, children's agency remained limited while adults were involved with them in

those cultural activities (see Image 38). In contrast, during free play children created and follow their own rules.

'These are ours [chicks]. We have more hens. I like to feed them. I go with Amma and feed them. If I feed alone, Amma yells. She says I give them too much food like this [she spreads her hands to show the size].' (Jamal, child, River-Bank family)



**Image 38:** Champa makes bread under the guidance of her grandmother and following her instructions.

At home, young children were more engaged in free play activities during which they guided or determined the configuration of participation, made their own rules and exercised their own agency (see Images 39and 40).

'We also play "dhula-dhuli". It's our new game. I throw sand on them, they throw sand on me. We push (laughing). But Amma (mother) does not like that. She yells at us. But we don't stop (laughing).' (Kakoli, child, Road-Side family)

**Image 39:** Jamal plays with his cousin in the pond; they create their own games and rules and find new ways to enjoy playing.

**Image 40:** Children feed a calf by themselves.

There was no fixed hierarchy in these free plays; rather, children often took turns. For example, young girls decided who would be the parents or children while playing with dolls:

> 'We play with dolls. I have two dolls, Sima has one. My ones are more beautiful. One day I am the mother in our play, another day Sima is the mother. And then I become the father. We play this way.' (Mina, child, Handloom family)

> 'Lima is too young, so she always becomes the baby when we play with dolls.' (Champa, child, Corner-Temple family)

*5.2.3.3 Social organisation of endeavours in the teacher training centre context*

Similar to family practices, play-oriented TTC practices represent an interactive process that offers collaboration among trainers and trainees. At the TTC, trainers engaged trainees by asking for their ideas about alternate play activities. The trainees played the role of full/regular participants and attempted to contribute (the trainees can be observed taking part in a dancing activity in Images 15 and 21). It was also evident that play activities were organised by the trainers as per the instructions of the teacher manual and teacher training program. Again, ALI-based organisation of play activities in the classroom is influenced by the instructions of the teacher's manual/teacher's guide and teachers' TTC experiences.

While determining the configuration of participation in the TTC context, it appeared that learning practices were mostly expert-guided. Like ALI, TTC activities were mostly hierarchical and trainer-dominated. The trainers followed the pre-developed lessons. These activities were planned to attain certain training goals—to enable the trainees to learn specific

teaching skills/techniques. Thus, play-oriented learning activities were highly structured and dominated by the trainers (see Image 41). This hierarchy and expert-dominance also prevails in the GR trend. That is, similar to GR practices, the trainees followed what the trainers demonstrated/instructed. For example, during physical exercise the trainer modelled how to do it and the trainees followed their instructions.



**Image 41:** A trainer demonstrates how to conduct drawing lessons, a structuerd activity. Trainees follow and keep note(image provided by Riaz, PPT trainer and policy implementer).

However, the collaborative nature of these learning activities added flexibility to this hierarchy. While applying the structured plays, the trainee teachers were provided with the opportunity to participate and contribute with their own ideas. This supported learner-centred practices, resembling LOPI practices. When these trained teachers conducted their own classrooms, they engaged with LOPI practices as well.

'We have been asked by the trainers to arrange play materials locally by ourselves, during our training there was no government fund for that. So we collect materials that we think appropriate.'(Kabita, teacher, Corner-Temple School)

'I ask them [the children] to bring stuff like clay-made shapes, sticks, beads or bangles, or leaves or flowers. I use those for play and learning. Say for learning shapes.' (Sohana, teacher, Road-Side School)

**5.2.4 Goal of learning**

Every curriculum targets certain learning goals and objectives (Carr, 1993; McLachlan et al., 2013; Saracho and Spodek, 2002). These goals are reflected in the planned activities designed

for the classrooms, which guide the teaching–learning practices (Begg, 2008). PPC also has certain objectives. It is influenced by the PPC of developed/Western societies (NCTB, 2011). Hence, it echoes the learning goals of those curricula. Similar to Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) (DEEWR, 2009), PPC highlights communication and language (including literacy and numeracy), motor skills and social and emotional development. It emphasises young children's self-confidence, self-respect, wellbeing, sense of identity, belongingness to the community, cultural awareness, communication and collaboration (NCTB, 2011). The ultimate goal is to prepare the young children for primary school (Teacher's Guide, 2010; NCTB, 2011). All of these learning goals are exhibited in the PPC, the teacher training manual, the teacher's guide and the textbook for pre-primary. The influence of these learning goals at classroom, family and TTC contexts portrays a combination of the patterns of multiple learning traditions (see Figure 6.6 for a synopsis of these patterns).

| **ALI:** | 'Transmission and receipt of isolated information and skills. For certification, as prerequisite for inclusion in society' (Rogoff, 2014, p. 76). |
|---|---|
| **GR:** | 'Mastery of valued text. Development of good character and commitment to community values'(Rogoff et al. 2015, p. 483). |
| **LOPI:** | 'To transform participation, learn consideration and responsibility along with information and skills, to contribute and belong in the community' (Rogoff, 2014, p. 73). |

**Figure 6.5: Goal of learning in three prisms.**

*5.2.4.1 Goal of learning in the classroom context*

Through incorporating play-oriented activities in daily curriculum, teachers in this study moved away from traditional unilateral and rote-based learning practices. This new approach also brought changes in their expectations regarding young children's learning. When teachers were asked about the learning outcomes of various play-oriented activities that they adopted in their classrooms, they emphasised achieving common academic skills such as counting, writing or answering known questions that would prepare them for school.

'I teach them in a way different from the primary classes. My target is to prepare them for school.'(Maksuda, teacher, River-Bank School)

This perception and practice corresponds to the ALI pattern, which signifies transmission and receipt of isolated information and skills that are prerequisites for inclusion in society (Rogoff, 2014,). In addition, teachers mentioned that these play activities enhanced young children's physical fitness (through physical exercises), national identity (by singing the national anthem), skills such as sharing personal ideas/experiences (during story-telling), and other skills that included collaborating, turn-taking and contributing (in games with rules; see Image 42). From this perspective, learning goals reflected LOPI characteristics.

'I begin the class with the national anthem. We sing together. In the beginning they used to stand still. Now they know which one is the national anthem and they sing with me.' (Abid, teacher, Sea-Shore School)



**Image 42:** Young children learn turn-taking while playing a ballgame in the classroom.

'[T]here are some stories in the book. I read those to them [the young children]. I explain to them and ask to say what they think or understand. Then they share their own ideas.' (Maksuda, teacher, River-Bank School)

However, the teacher participants appeared not to be aware of learning outcomes as set by PPC. It was surprising that none of them ever saw the PPC. Their understandings evolved around the 6 days of training, teacher's guide, teacher's manual, textbooks and their own classroom experiences (both in the pre-primary and primary levels). Community and parental expectations about children's academic achievements further influenced their teaching–learning practices.

'Sister, you know the parents also want that their children should know how to read and write and count. We have to consider what the community wants.' (Sohana, teacher, Road-Side School).

*5.2.4.2 Goals of learning in the family context*

When parents were asked about the learning goals of PPE they mostly emphasised academic achievement of their young children. They wanted their young children to be able to enrol in Grade One. These expectations were attuned to the goals of learning, as depicted in the ALI tradition.

> 'If she does not learn well she might have to stay back in the same class next year. The teacher told me so. Sister, this is right that if she doesn't learn to read and write, then how she can study in the upper grade! So I want her to study attentively.' (Sufia, mother, Handloom family).

So parents taught their children rhymes, alphabets, number/counting, writing and memorising, which helped them gain good marks in exams and to cope with study in the upper grades. Again, for parents the ultimate goal of learning for their children was to become a successful person in future life. This target, as a cultural tradition, was transmitted to the young children.

> 'I will become a mother, I'm a girl. My grandmother said, I must learn to cook. When I will get married I will cook.' (Champa, child, Coner-Temple family)

> '[S]he [mother] first counts the money for me, then give that to me. Then I go to shop and bring things. If I don't know that, they [shopkeepers] will cheat me.'(Jamal, child, River-Bank family)

Thus, children learned cultural responsibilities through play-like activities (see Image 43). These further helped them to attain learning outcomes such as collaboration and cooperation skills required for their social and cultural requirement.

**Image 43:** Atika carries dishes washed
by her mother in the pond.

Hence, the data indicated that in the family context children learned their cultural responsibilities, sense of belongingness to their community and skills like collaboration and cooperation while playing with peers or interacting with adults. This enabled them to contribute to valued cultural events and adult family members supported them in attaining these learning goals. Thus, family practices upheld the LOPI patterns that highlight transforming participation; learning consideration, responsibility, information and skills; and contributing and belonging to the community (Rogoff, 2014).

*5.2.4.3 Goal of learning in the teacher training centre context*

Targeting the goals and objectives of PPC, the DPE developed and organised PPE training programs for the TTC. The programme is strongly linked to the realities of the PPE classroom.

> 'You know, PPC is different from primary curriculum. It has certain goals and strategies.
> Keeping those in mind we have developed the training programs for the pre-primary teachers.
> We also consider the issues teachers deal with in the classroom. We try to accommodate all
> these.' (Faijul, policymaker)

During teacher training, the trainers convey the learning goals (as exhibited in the PPC, training manual, teacher's guide and textbook) to the trainee teachers (see Image 45).Transmission and receipt of the information and skills is mostly organised in isolated contexts, which is similar to ALI patterns of learning goals (see Image 44). Again, through mock trials the trainees gained the ability to enter a valued activity—in this case, the pre-primary teaching–learning. From this perspective, the GR pattern is exhibited in the TTC. However, government officials who initiated and implemented PPE training mentioned that in recent trainings, where there was

access to a pre-primary class of the pilot primary school under a Primary Training Institute (PTI), trainee shad the opportunity to observe actual teaching–learning practices (as observed in Image 45, provided by one of the government staff participants). However, the teacher participants in this study did not have the opportunity to attend these types of demonstration class sessions. Thus, it appears that the TTC practices are evolving, too, changing their pattern from ALI to LOPI.

> 'They [the trainers] told us what should we teach and what they [the children] will learn through these play activities. They demonstrated those to us.' (Gulshan, teacher, Handloom school)

> 'Yes, it is right that the trainers demonstrate teaching–learning activities to the trainee teachers. But now we are changing it. First of all, the training is extended from 6 days to 15 days. And now they can observe the real pre-primary sessions during their training.'(Habib, trainer)



**Image44:** Trainee teachers receive information and skills in an isolated form, detached from the realclassroom context.



**Image 45:** Trainee teachers observe the pre-primary session of a pilot school during their training.
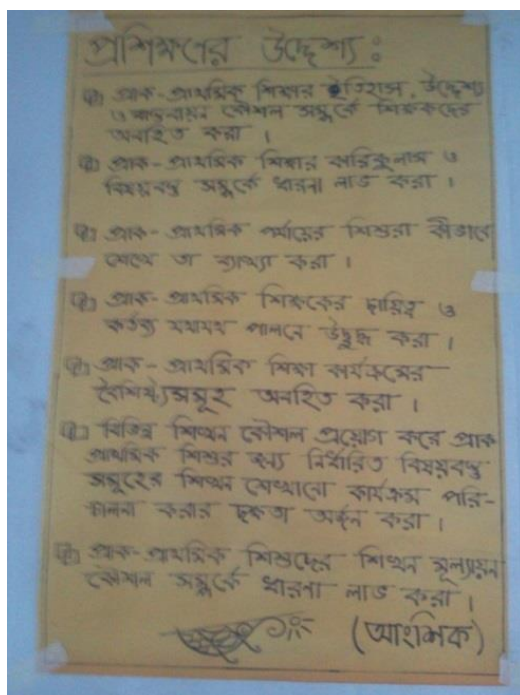
[Translated from Bangla]

Training objectives:

- To inform the teacher about the history, objectives and implementation strategies of pre-primary education.
- To get the concepts of pre-primary curriculum and subject matter.
- To explain how the children of pre-primary level learn.
- To inform the key factors of pre-primary curriculum.
- To attain the skills of conducting teaching–learning through applying various learning techniques for subjects specified for pre-primary children.
- To get the concept of methods of

**Image 46:** Left: training objectives displayed in a poster during the PPE training. Right: translation.

### 5.2.5 Learning by means of

Means of learning involves the strategies or techniques adopted to attain a particular skill. In the three prisms, means of learning is as below:

| **ALI:** | 'Receiving lessons, exercises, tests, out of the context of productive activity' (Rogoff, 2014, p. 76). |
|---|---|
| **GR:** | 'Attention to and imitation of community activity practice in lessons and exercises'(Rogoff et al. 2015, 483). |
| **LOPI:** | 'Learning by means of wide, keen attention and contribution (current or anticipated) to events. With guidance from communitywide expectations and sometimes people' (Rogoff, 2014, p. 73). |

**Figure 6.6: Means of learning in three prisms.**

*5.2.5.1 Means of learning in the classroom context*

In this study it appears that play-oriented classroom practices preliminarily resemble LOPI patterns in terms of means of learning, which is quite different from traditional means such as lessons or exercises. The studied teachers appreciated play-oriented activities as an easy means

of teaching young children, while young children consider it a valued means of learning. PPC, which guides teachers' daily curriculum and classroom practices, also emphasises joyful learning means that will inspire young children to learn (NCTB, 2011). During teacher training, play is also emphasised as a significant teaching–learning strategy. These perspectives are reflected in the words of the teachers:

> 'I am trained. I got the training where we have been taught how to teach the young children through different play activities. Besides, we have a teacher's guidebook. There are instructions about how to apply play activities as a teaching–learning approach.' (Sohana, teacher, Road-Side School)

> 'Teaching them by showing pictures or drawing is easier than giving lectures. This sort of techniques makes them more interested in learning. They like to learn while playing, and they enjoy it.' (Gulshan, teacher, Handloom School)

Based on PPC, PPE training, the teacher's guide and the PPE textbook, teachers adopted an array of play-oriented activities involving drawing, singing songs, story-telling, playing games, physical exercises and making shapes with sticks (see Images 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 18, 23, 27, 28 and 31). These are appreciated as easily attracting young children's attention and engaging them in the process of learning that ultimately assists their learning and development.

> 'The young children learn easily when they are playing. They like it, they enjoy it. It is a bit strange for us, for our educational practices, especially, at school. Anyway, we are applying it. For example, while drawing I take a colour pencil and say this is one, I take two pencils and say these are two. I teach them counting this way. We also teach them in traditional ways, like reading, writing and memorising.' (Abid, teacher, Sea-Shore School)

Children were observed learning contestation, confrontation, cooperation, turn-taking, sharing and many other skills through play. Young children learned through observation (listening, watching and using other sensory means) with keen intentions as legitimate peripheral participants or full participants and by participating in shared events. While incorporating play as the learning means, teaching–learning becomes more interactive, collaborative and interesting (see Images 47–49and the following excerpt).

> 'We teach the primary children through traditional means like lecture, writing, reading and memorising. But here, in the pre-primary class I teach them in different ways. As you can see, I let them play with these number and picture cards. It's easy to learn counting with these

cards. They don't have these at home. So they become interested in learning how to count through this new play activity. They become more curious if you provide them different means of leaning.' (Kobita, teacher, Corner-Temple school)



**Images 47:** The teacher uses a play activity to teach young children about shapes. She has drawn different shapes in the playground with a wooden ruler.



**Image 48:** The teacher asked the children to get inside the shapes drawn by a stick on the playground by taking turns.
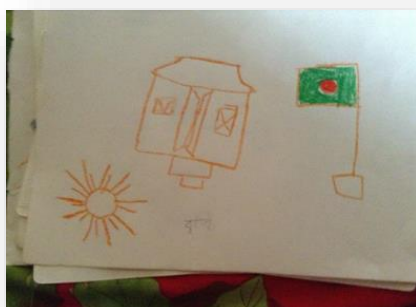


**Image 49:** A child's artwork; drawing is used here as a means of discovering what young children observe in their day-to-day life, such as the sun, the national flag and their own house.

Teachers also applied traditional learning strategies, such as specialised lessons, exercises and tests. When teachers adopted formal means of learning—for example, memorising, reading and writing—they followed the linear way of imparting knowledge, which is similar to the ALI practice. Even during play time, teachers provided guidance to help children accomplish a play activity. Thus, the traditions of ALI and LOPI seemed to overlap in teachers' and children's

classroom practices. Again, like GR patterns, children also mimicked an activity as demonstrated by the teacher (see Images 4, 5 and50).



**Image50:** Children copy activities during
physical exercises modelled by the teacher.

Apart from mimicking an activity demonstrated by the teacher in the classroom, young children brought in their own ideas/concepts/understandings while participating in or contributing to a play-based activity.

'I tell them [young children] stories. When I review the story or ask them questions about it, they share their own ideas with the others.' (Mohsina, teacher, South Mill School)

*5.2.5.2 Means of learning in the family context*

Though parents never opposed teachers' play-oriented learning strategies, they themselves did not value play as learning. Rather, they tended to understand play as disrupting learning (to be specific, in regard to academic learning). For them, play was a leisure activity rather than a learning activity. Parents valued activities such as reading, writing and memorising (see Image 51).



**Image 51:** A mother emphasises reading as a means of learning.

'At home she also plays with her friends in the neighbourhood… But she also needs to study, you know. She must read, write and memorise what the teacher teaches in the class … I want her to get higher education, become a successful person in future life.' (Sufia, mother)

My findings further indicate that the LOPI tradition was more prevalent in children's play-oriented activities in the family context. At home, learning was an interactive and collaborative process. Young children interacted and collaborated with adults (when they became engaged in adult-guided/dominated everyday cultural activities) and peers or siblings (during their free play). They observed adults' activities in daily life and imitated those by bringing those themes into their play (see Image 52). We may take children's role playing, games or drawing as examples.

'We also cook. We pretend to cook rice, fish and spinach. We cut pretend fishes. I learned it from Amma [mother]. She cooks, cuts fishes and vegetables every day. I watch her, I also saw my grandmother cooking.' (Mina, child, Handloom village).

'My mother cooks. I can cook like her. I put pretend rice on pot, we use leaves as rice, then add water. Then put on pretend fire. See, we cook and eat. Not really eat, pretend to eat. But Sadek really ate once [laughing].' (Kakoli, child, Road-Side family)



**Image 52:** Children learn adult skills through play
(pressing a tube-well to get water).

Dramatisation, which Rogoff mentions as a practice in LOPI (Rogoff, 2014, p. 73), also took place in GR in the form of modelling and performance. We may take the example of Champa's making of 'roti' (traditional handmade bread) in the Corner-Temple family. The young girl observed her grandmother carefully while she made 'roti'. Then, in her own attempt, she tried to roll the bread with a wooden roller as round as possible. The shape was not round in her first attempt. She moulded the dough again, after the grandmother's model, and rolled it—again and

again. Similar to teachers in the classroom, parents provided guidance when children were involved in play-like activities with them. In the family context, adults used this means of learning to teach young children cultural values and activities. From this perspective, learning means in the family context had some overlapping GR practices as well.

*5.2.5.3 Means of learning in the teacher training centre context*

In terms of means of learning, the TTC followed ALI practices. It involved traditional means of teaching–learning, such as oral lectures and using projectors or white boards (see Image 53). Teacher trainers (TTs) applied these ALI means to deliver their pre-fixed lessons.



**Image53:** A trainer prepares the projector to
support his lecture.

In the same setting, the learning means of GR could also be observed. The trainee teachers imitated, rehearsed or performed play-oriented teaching–learning means, as modelled by the trainers, to attain the skills they were required to apply in their own classrooms (see Images 54 and55).

**Image 54:** A trainer models an activity as a class teacher to the trainee teachers.   **Image55:** During the rehearsal, trainee teachers pretend to be young students.

Again, when they employed play-oriented activities as the means of learning, those activities resembled the patterns of LOPI, which asserts that learning is by means of learners''[w]ide, keen attention and contribution (current or anticipated) to events. With guidance from communitywide expectations and people' (Rogoff, 2014, p. 73).

> 'We offer them to come up with own ideas to conduct a particular play-oriented lesson, say for teaching shapes. Some teachers suggest to use sticks, some to use cardboards, some say to use clay-made or wooden shapes.' (Teacher Trainer1)

### 5.2.6 Communication

Communication is the mode through which messages are conveyed/transmitted from one to another. The process of learning involves multiple modes of communication between the teacher/expert and the child/learner and among the children/learners. Communication can be written, verbal or by non-verbal body language. In divergent learning practices, different modes of communication occur while imparting knowledge and responding to knowledge. In play-based learning, communication usually takes place through verbal and non-verbal body language. Young children also use different modes to communicate with each other during play. Play-oriented activities, which are the main focus of this research, enabled young children to understand the world around them and communicate with others (Kieff & Casbergue, 2000; Walker, 2011).In the learning tradition prisms, Rogoff and her colleagues elaborate how communication occurs in different learning settings (see Figure 6.7).

| **ALI:** | 'Communication is based on: a limited range of formats – often explanations out of context; quiz questions' (Rogoff, 2014, p. 76). |
| --- | --- |
| **GR:** | 'Communication is based on Spoken and written imitation and modelling, repetition'(Rogoff et al. 2015, p. 483). |
| **LOPI:** | 'Communication is based on: coordination through shared reference in collective endeavors, using nonverbal (and verbal) conversation. Narratives and dramatizations.' (Rogoff, 2014, p. 73). |

**Figure 6.7: Communication in three prisms.**

In the classroom, while employing play-oriented activities as a teaching–learning strategy teachers were observed using words (speech) and written communication modes to impart knowledge. They usually used words (as lectures, descriptions or narrations), textbooks (such as to teach rhymes) and writing on the blackboards to demonstrate, describe or draw something. They also asked quiz-type questions (as observed during story-telling), of which the answers were already known to the children. This resembles the ALI tradition (see Images 56, 57and 58).

**Image 56:** The teacher uses a big book during story-telling.

**Image 57:** The teacher asks children quiz questions about the text's story. For example, 'Can you tell me what the king was offered for lunch?'

**Image58**: The teacher recites rhymes traditionally using verbal and written modes—giving oral directions and showing the images and words in the textbook, and children follow her and memorise it through repetition. It also involves space and body language. The teacher faces most of the children, while showing her back to some.

'You have seen in the class this morning that children were making shapes and figures, say for a house, with small bamboo sticks. I explain them how to make the shapes. Not only that, I also show them how to make those'. (Gulshan, teacher, Handloom School)

If we consider Image 58, we may see a different way of verbal communication in the classroom. It is interesting that in this specific classroom the teacher was communicating with children who were located to her back. Within the direct communication sphere, those children appeared to receive messages indirectly. The teacher having her back to the children while communicating to them is not a practice in Western classrooms. However, this is a common approach in the given context, where a single teacher conducts the class to 50+ children.

Children for their part used their notebooks for writing/copying (things demonstrated by the teacher), the accuracy of which was checked by the teacher. In this effort, they repeated the exercise until they accurately completed a certain activity. Hence, similar to the GR tradition, modelling–imitating was evident as a means of communication in which young children repeatedly imitated an activity demonstrated by the teacher.

> 'I use the blackboard, as you see, to teach them [young children] how to write alphabets or numbers or how to draw something, like flowers or sun. And they copy in their notebooks. I check their notebooks individually to see if they were doing it properly or not. If they make mistakes then I ask them to practice several times, say for five times.' (Kabita, teacher, Corner-Temple school)

> 'Apa [the teacher] tells us and we do that way. She writes in the board, we write in our note books.' (Jamal, child, River-Bank family)

> 'She [teacher] asks us to write again if it is not right. Then we write again.' (Mina, child, Handloom family)

During play-oriented activities like drawing, rhyming, singing, doing physical exercises or playing games, children also tried to imitate the activity demonstrated by the teacher until they reached perfection (as observed in Image 59). These practices are similar to the trend of GR in which modelling and words are the means of communication. Thus, trends of both ALI and GR were evident in the classroom practices.

**Image 59:** A teacher uses physical exercises to communicate to the young children how it helps to remain physically fit.

The data further suggested that a play-oriented activity itself was considered an easy and informal means of communication (in the formal school setting) between the teacher and children. It involved interaction and collaboration between teacher and children and among peers. When it is hard to communicate through traditional means such as verbal/written instructions, play activities become the easiest way to convey messages from/to the young learners. For example, while informing young children about physical fitness teachers considered play-oriented activities as an easy means of communication.



**Image 60:** The teacher indicates a child's artwork in which she/he communicates understandings about the things that she/he encounters in everyday life including the national flag raised every morning at school, a flower, a bird, a car, leaves and a friend.

Play-oriented activities involved a range of communication modes, including drawing, writing (on the blackboard, notebooks or flash cards), words (as speech), body language and emotions like fear, laughter, anger or silence. Image 60 portrays how a child used her drawing to

communicate her understandings of engagement in everyday practices. Children also used non-verbal body language. Along with other non-verbal body language (such as shaking heads to agree or deny, or indicating with hands/eyes) they were observed using emotional expressions such as anger, fear, laughing/smiling and even crying to communicate their responses (see Image 62). Silence was also evident as a mode of communication. In the culture of Bangladesh, silence is often regarded as the sign of agreement or acceptance. When children wanted to communicate their message of agreement or acceptance of something demonstrated by the teacher, they used this mode of communication. Children were also found 'staring' at the teacher to communicate their query about the accuracy of their responses to the lessons (as demonstrated by the teacher; see Image 61). These practices resembled LOPI trends.



**Image61:** A child stares at the teacher to receive a response about her accuracy during the lesson.

**Image 62:** A child laughs, which communicates her response to the lesson the teacher is imparting through physical exercises.

Play activities also involved direct and indirect modes of communication. Messages were conveyed indirectly when young children were considered legitimate peripheral participants. It was conveyed directly when children were full participants in a cultural activity. This is observed in Images 63 and 64.

**Image 63:** The teacher plays a game with a group of children while the rest watches from the periphery.

**Image 64:** Teacher and children take turns in the game. Children who observe the teacher and another group's activity from the periphery participate as full participants during their turn.

To support early learning in the classroom, the PPC emphasises communication that reflects family practices. It highlights that:

> [T]he teacher should … communicate and interact with the child in such a way so that the child can rely on him/her [the teacher] with full confidence, the way he/she relies on the parents or other close relatives of the family. (Translated from PPC, 2011, p. 46)

*5.2.6.2 Communication in the family context*

In the family context a range of communication means—written, verbal, non-verbal (play activities and body language) and direct/indirect—were used among children and adults, which reflected LOPI practices (Paradise & Rogoff, 2009; Rogoff, 2014; Silva et al., 2014). In the daily routine of cultural activities, communication between adult and child was informal in the family context. Adults used verbal language, body language or actions/activities to communicate to young children, asobservedinImage65:

**Image 65:** Jamal follows his mother's verbal instructions about how to spread shredded woodchips, which the family burn for cooking.

Telling stories also helped convey cultural messages to the young generation, as Champa's grandmother told her own childhood stories about how she helped her mother with cooking. Children used words or body language, such as asking questions or staring at adults, when they needed to communicate, when they did not understand something, when they needed further information or when they wanted a response to know if they were doing something right or wrong. If they wanted something they used hugs, cries or smiles.

When children played with peers/siblings they used words, body language and activities to communicate with playmates (see Image 66). They were observed arguing fighting, laughing, becoming sad and even crying while communicating each other. For example, when they wanted to express something in agreement they laughed, whereas they cried, became sad or screamed to convey denial.



**Image 66:** Two young children laugh at each other, a means to communicate joy in their play.

At home, children and adults had both direct and indirect means of communication. Children learned through direct oral instructions of the parents; for example, Jamal's mother explained to him how to feed the hens and chicks and how to spread shredded woodchips to dry. This

learning process also involved indirect communication, in which the children followed the adults' activities or non-verbal body language. For example, Asif's mother showed him how to count money. Kakoli and her mother watered their vegetable garden together. Kakoli's mother communicated the cultural lesson and expectations through her actions.

> 'I water the vegetable garden. I do it with Amma [mother]. I do as she does.' (Kakoli, child, Road-Side family)

This pattern of modelling and imitating reflects GR practice. In the GR tradition, communication occurs through words and activities that take place through modelling and mimicry (Rogoff et al. 2007). However, unlike in the classroom, written forms of communication were rare in the family context. Communication between adults and children or among children mostly involved verbal or non-verbal body language. As mentioned above, adult–child communication entailed directions, narrations or speech and acts when engaged in shared endeavours. Apart from that, non-verbal body language such asfacial expressions, looks, smiles and touch were also evident as means of communication in both adult–child and child–child communications. We can observe these in the following examples:

> 'Dadi [grandmother] tells me stories. I like to listen to stories.' (Champa, child, Corner-Temple family)



**Image 67:**A happy mother and son portray emotional expressions as the means of communicating their attachment.

**Image 68:** Young children use body language to
communicate with each other during water play.

*5.2.6.3 Communication in the teacher training centre context*

TTC practices were observed as combining ALI, GR and LOPI trends. Similar to classroom
practices, while employing play-oriented teaching–learning strategies the trainers used words
(lectures, descriptions or narrations), visuals (multi-media and projectors) and writing (display
board, blackboard, posters, textbooks, teacher's guide book and training manual) as
communication modes to communicate with the trainees (see Image 69).

> 'We use multi-media, we now have projectors that we use to show them the video clips of the
> classroom practices from different schools and countries.' (Abid, teacher, Sea-Shore School)



**Image 69:** Trainers use display boards, posters and
written documents to communicate with the trainees.

However, play-oriented activities as practiced in the TTC entailed non-verbal body language.
Use of body language such as drawing and doing physical exercises and activities like making
shapes with sticks resembled LOPI practices. Again, play as an activity itself was used as the
mode of communication between the learners and the experts. At the TTC, trainee teachers

were taught how play might be used to communicate messages to young children in their own classrooms.

> 'During training we have been told how play scope welcomes young children at school. You know, they are still very young. Sometimes they are scared. If we let them play they get the message that we won't be harsh on them and they can enjoy their time.' (Mohsina, teacher, South Mill School)

> 'At the training, we train them how to communicate with children. We show them practically how to communicate and coordinate with young children so that they can do the same in their classrooms. They have to deal with young children, and they [the children] are very sensitive. So, it is important to know how to deal with them.' (Habib, PPE trainer and URC instructor)

> 'We explain, how young children should be taught to communicate and interact with other kids, this will help them to become more social and develop their communication skill.' (Ahsan, PPE trainer and URC instructor)

Again, in this setting GR trends were also observed. According to the GR tradition, communication occurs through words and activities that take place through modelling and mimicry/rehearsals/performances (Rogoff et al. 2007). Trainers modelled a particular activity and trainee teachers attempted to attain the skill through repetition. For example, while learning about singing the national anthem or doing physical exercises in the training sessions, trainees were observed singing or exercising along with the trainers to attain accuracy.

> 'You have seen we sing the national anthem in the class. During the training they [the trainers] taught us how to sing it perfectly. You know, like most of the male I'm not good at singing [laughing].' (Abid, teacher, Sea-Shore School)

### 5.2.7 Assessment

Every curriculum has specific learning goals, and assessment helps us to know when the goals are achieved (McLachlan, Fleer & Edwards, 2013). In ECE, assessment is generally aimed at understanding and recording young children's level of development and achievement of learning targets. Assessment involves a range of methods (as used by the teachers/adults/experts) to 'monitor whether children are achieving learning aims and objectives' (McLachlan et al., 2013, p. 5). These methods can be summative, formative, traditional or dynamic. A synopsis of assessment practices in different learning traditions is presented in Figure 6.7 to support the exploration of existing assessment patterns in the studied context.

| | |
|---|---|
| **ALI:** | 'To sort and test learners. Separate from learning. Feedback comes from extrinsic rewards/threats and ranking' (Rogoff, 2014, p. 76). |
| **GR:** | 'Assessment of effort and of mastery of text. Feedback through correction and comments on effort and performance' (Rogoff et al. 2015, p. 483). |
| **LOPI:** | 'Appraises both the learner's mastery and the supports that are provided. In order to aid learner's contributions during the endeavour. Feedback from adequacy of contribution (and its acceptance or correction)' (Rogoff, 2014, p. 73). |

**Figure 6.8: Assessment in three prisms.**

*5.2.7.1 Assessment in the classroom context*

In the context of Bangladesh, teachers usually adopt traditional assessment means (such as written testing) to record children's level of academic achievement. However, in play-oriented teaching-learning, assessment involves various non-traditional dynamic means (such as observation and portfolio) that aim to record the children's development level in various fields, such as communication, numeracy, literacy, motor skills and socio-emotional development. Addressing this target, PPC focuses on two types of assessment (NCTB, 2011):

- assessment for learning,
- assessment of learning.

The PPC provides clear guidelines to avoid traditional means of assessment (as used in the formal primary classrooms in Bangladesh) that might have negative impacts on the young learners (NCTB, 2011). Rather, it emphasises informal and continuous/ongoing assessment; this may involve strategies of observation, oral/written tests, portfolio and assignment. It further encourages the creation of an assessment table for the whole year in which children should be assessed based on the principle of 'criterion referenced assessment' instead of marking (NCTB, 2011, p. 61; see Image 69, provided by a PPE training participant). These assessment guidelines correspond to play-oriented learning activities, as adopted by the teachers in the classrooms.

পাঠ পরিকল্পনারই একটি অবিচ্ছেদ্য অংশ হচ্ছে মূল্যায়ন – যার দ্বারা শিশু নির্ধারিত শিখনফল অর্জন করেছে কিনা তা যাচাই করা হয় অর্থাৎ শিশুর শিখন অগ্রগতি পরিমাপ করা হয়, যাকে আমরা শিশুর শিখন অগ্রগতির মূল্যায়ন বলতে পারি।

'… through assessment, which is an indispensable part of a lesson plan, it is verified if children have attained the set learning outcomes or not, that means it measures children's learning progress, this might be called assessment of children's learning progress.' (Translated from Bangla, NCTB, 2011, p. 57)



**Image 69:** Annual assessment table based on criterion-referenced assessment, as presented by the trainers during PPE training (see the translation below).

| Annual assessment table of pre-primary student |
| --- |

Child's name ……………………………………………………………...…………Roll…………….…………

(Write A, B or C against the indicators stated below. Here A=good, B=satisfactory, C=need improvement)

| Assessment indicators | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |

The PPC outlines assessment strategies, such as informal and perpetual assessment, observation, oral testing (such as recitation, pronunciation, singing song, following instructions or role play), written testing (such as drawing and writing), portfolio and assignment (PPC, 2011).

'Through an intense participatory learning-environment the teacher will assess children's learning progress.' (Translated from Bangla, NCTB, 2011, p. 61).

Despite the PPC's clear guideline (see Image 71) not to adopt any formal assessment methods (ether oral or written), the teacher participants mostly applied traditional assessment techniques to assess children's learning progress. These methods included exams/written tests (terminal/annual), writing tasks and oral tests (rhymes as memorised) in the studied classrooms. They also marked children's worksheets/test papers with numbers (see Images 72and 73). They expressed that these assessment methods assisted them to obtain information (and record information) about the extent of children's early learning skills as taught in the class. It helped them decide if a child was ready to progress to Grade One.
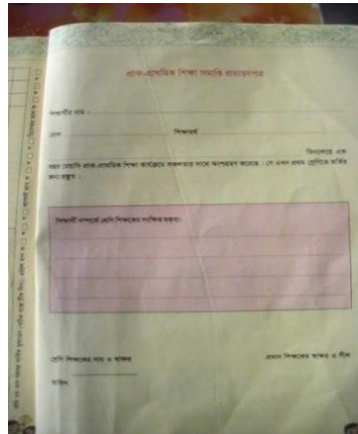
**Image71:** Left: the prescribed format to certify that a child is ready to be enrolled in Grade One, as provided during the PPE training. Right: translation.

'During our training we didn't get clear guideline about exams. But when primary students sit for exams, at the end of every term, I also arrange terminal exams for my children.' (Sohana, teacher, Road-Side School)

'Through the tests I can see how they [the young children] have improved'. (Mohsina, teacher, South Mill School)
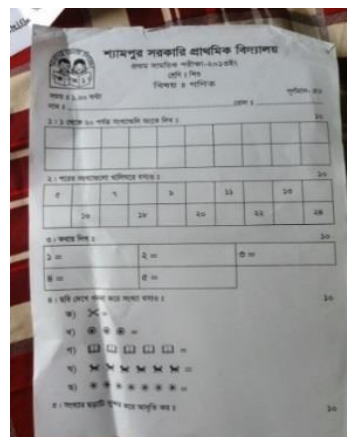


**Images 72:** A maths test paper from a school close to the urban community.



**Image 73:** Combined maths and literacy test papers in which a teacher has marked the answers of a young child of a school in a remote place.

It was observed that the teachers adopted various play-oriented activities to teach young children skills related to numeracy, literacy (alphabets), communication and various concepts

(such as shapes, fitness and cleanliness). However, the means they applied to assess the level of development though these play-oriented activities were traditional, such as exams or written tests in which they graded children with marks. These practices of teaching–learning do not align with the Western play approach. These exams, written tests or memorisation-based assessments correspond to ALI practices. In this tradition, children are asked questions to which the answers are/should be known to them (as taught by the teacher). Teachers followed these means, which are traditionally applied in the pre-primary and primary classrooms to know if young children have reached the standard/benchmark, while demonstrating their competence in various skills or strategies.

Apart from this, techniques like documentation and observation were sometimes applied by the teachers while assessing young children's learning and development in play-oriented classroom activities. In this study, teacher participants presented children's drawings, which is an example of a documentation technique they applied to assess children's learning and development (see Images 7, 37, 49and60). In the studied classrooms, teachers were observed using observation as a dynamic assessment method, though some teachers appeared to be aware about it, while some were not. These practices were in line with LOPI practices, which focus on the learner's mastery and provide supports. These practices were also close to the GR trend, since they emphasised feedback to provide ongoing correction and acceptance of performance (Rogoff et al. 2007).



**Image 74:** The teacher observes how the children match the numbers with pictures. She intervenes when they need help.

The teachers also mentioned parental expectations as influencing their assessment approaches. When the parents considered assessment at school, they emphasised traditional means, such as exams. Parents were also very eager to have a numeral value to the assessment, as it allowed

them to understand their children's progress level and particular weaknesses, if any. This approach influenced teachers' assessment practices.

> 'They [parents] come to me and ask when I will take their [children's] tests. After the exam they keep asking me about the marks obtained by their children.' (Teacher 6)

> 'I go to the teacher and ask when the test is. If there is no test, then how can one understand if the children are learning or not!' (Parent 2)

Surprisingly, the same parents applied different assessment means in the family context.

### 5.2.7.2 Assessment in the family context

At home, learning through play-oriented activities reflected non-traditional methods of assessment. The targets of assessment were also different from those of the classroom. At home, adults' assessments involved observation of children's activities while engaged in a cultural activity, targeted to correct their steps so that the young ones can do the task more accurately. In the everyday family context, learning and assessment were two simultaneous processes in which young learners intended to contribute to valued cultural activities and the adults' objective was to support young children's achievement of certain cultural skills through correcting their errors immediately in the ongoing activities. This accords with the LOPI practices.

> 'Selim likes to play with the cattle. He likes to feed those. I keep an eye on him. Sometimes he forces the calf, or drags it. I tell him what to do and what not to.' (Protima, mother, Corner-Temple family)

> 'During board game I show her how to play it. Now she knows the rules.' (Mother 6)

**Image 75:** A parent explains to the children how to play a board game, showing the cards.
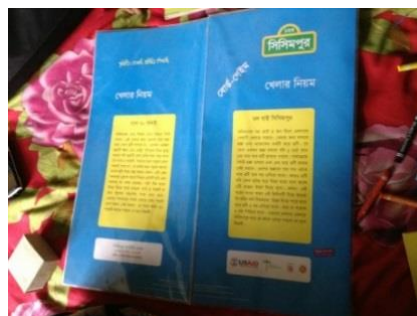


**Image 76:** The parent is explaining the rules of the game as stated on the back of the board.

Parents assessed children's learning by observing their activities; however, the ultimate target of this assessment was to help the children achieve specific skills by helping them overcome the weaknesses or errors. This was evidenced when the mother corrected the child while counting coins/money or gave guidance in how to water the vegetable garden. Parents compared their children's skill with other children (siblings, peers, neighbours or relatives). This comparison was also a mode of parental assessment.

For their part, young children were not aware of this aspect (that is, assessment) of learning practice. However, they did apply their own assessment means when they were engaged with other young children or even adults in their routine cultural activities, or specifically in play. They assessed their peers' ability in ongoing activities and applied that information to sort them (such as to assign roles in a role play as per ability of the children involved) or help them to attain required skills. Based on this assessment, they guided each other (see Image 77). Further, they assessed adults' expertise in an activity. They judged in their own ways to determine if an adult was able to do an activity accurately or know the fact while teaching them.

'Lima is still too young, so she becomes the Baby every time [in role play with dolls].' (Champa, child, Corner-Temple family)

'I like to water the vegetable. But Amma yells at me. She says I put too much water. I want them grow faster. If you give plants more water they grow more. My teacher told me. Amma doesn't know that. Amma doesn't go to school [laughing].' (Jamal, child)

**Image 77:** Atika guides Aman in how to climb trees
when they chase each other.

*5.2.7.3 Assessment in the teacher training centre context*

Teacher trainers at the TTC emphasised observation and feedback as assessment methods. In this context, trainees were asked to come up with their own ideas (beyond those presented by the trainers) about an ongoing endeavour and to demonstrate those (in writing or through activities). Trainers provided feedback in the form of appreciation, acceptance and correction to support the trainees' efforts as contributions, as highlighted by Rogoff in the LOPI practices (Rogoff, 2014).

> 'We observe teachers' reflections. We evaluate their performances through observations and give them the feedback so that they can improve.' (Selim, monitoring officer)

At the same time, TTC practices conformed to GR practice in so far as trainee teachers followed the role models displayed by the trainers (though the time-bounded schedule did not allow them to practice to attain accuracy). If we examine the synopsis of assessment in the three prisms, we find similarity between LOPI and GR practices in terms of assessment (see Images 78and 79). In both traditions, the learner's efforts in an ongoing cultural endeavour are corrected by the expert to support attaining accuracy in performance or adequacy of contribution.

**Images 78:** Trainees work in groups to present posters reflecting their ideas about responsibilities as a teacher, as introduced by the trainers.



**Image 79:** The trainees are writing down their own ideas. They also receive ideas from the teacher's guide and lecture notes. They gain feedback from the trainers on their performances.

The data presented above indicates variations in patterns of cultural organisation of learning practices within and across the studied institutional settings. This exploration reveals prevailing cultural beliefs, values and expectations concerning learning, perceptions and practices about play as teaching–learning and patterns of learning traditions. It is evident that play was incorporated as a joyful and interactive teaching-learning method that contrasted the traditional rote-based learning.

This play-focused curriculum approach brought qualitative changes in stakeholders' (including young children, teachers, TTs and parents) ECE perceptions and practices. In the studied context participants' understandings, values, expectations, approaches, roles and relationships mould play-oriented early years learning practices which are dis-similar to Western understandings and practices. The study suggests that the development and implementation of the imported play-oriented PPC became subject to how it was tailored to accommodate learning and developmental needs and goals for the young children. These issues are elaborated in the next chapter.

## 5.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter presents data analysis as explored in three learning contexts of Bangladesh: the family, classroom and TTC. While interpreting the data, I concentrated on how the seven features of the learning tradition prisms (as my analytical tools) capture the play-based learning practices in the studied context. It synchronised the patterns of cultural organisation of play-

oriented early learning practices. My data analysis revealed how these learning approaches define cultural practices in the studied context, as discussed in the next chapter.

# Chapter 6: Conceptualising and Contextualising Play-Oriented Learning

> [T]he systems of early childhood education … though buffeted by many of the same global forces and events, respond in unique ways, reflecting their unique combination of cultural traditions, social structures, and contextual features. (Tobin et al., 2009, p. 246)

## 6.1 Overview

This chapter discusses participants' perceptions and practices about play-oriented teaching–learning. The way participants interpreted play-oriented learning is different from the dominant discourse of play—that is, Western understandings of play as learning. Based on data analysis, my discussion in this chapter further elaborates how play-oriented learning, as introduced by the PPC, determines the cultural nature of learning practices in the context of Bangladesh. The present chapter is organised into two sections. The first section portrays participants' perceptions about play as a pedagogical concept in the ECE context of Bangladesh. This appears to be different from the Western notion of play. The data reveals that this conceptualisation is influenced by existing cultural traditions, social structures and contextual features, as maintained by Tobin et al. (2009). In the second section, my discussion sheds light on how play-oriented learning defines cultural practices in the studied context. Here, I focus on patterns of play practices as determining teaching–learning approaches and teacher–learner relationships. The discussion evolves around approaches of the teacher, parent and government official participants to play-oriented learning practices. It further encompasses how young children situate themselves into those cultural practices. My discussion suggests reconceptualisation of the play-oriented curriculum approach, particularly from a non-Western perspective. The findings of this study demand a new framing for the play-oriented early years learning tradition to address learning practices in the studied context.

## 6.2 Conceptualizing Play-Oriented Learning

The dominant discourse of play-oriented learning (as elaborated in Chapter Two) perceives play from the Western philosophical and ideological stances. Cannella (2005) denies the universal applicability of the Western play approach, as it is developed with certain cultural values and biases. Hence, the Western notion of play faces challenges when it encounters different cultural

values and educational realities (Chang, 2003; Gupta, 2011). This assertion is supported by the findings of the present study. Multi-sourced data indicated that, due to the different socio-cultural context of Bangladesh, incorporation and implementation of the imported play-oriented curriculum approach became distinctive in comparison with developed and Western societies. This is similar to the findings of cross-cultural studies that reveal the nature of play and its interpretations differ across societies, cultures and time (refer to Subsection 2.3).

In developed and Western societies, play-based pedagogy is supported by educated and education-conscious parents, qualified and adequate EC educators, and access to educational facilities. The present study uncovered the educational disadvantages in Bangladesh. In the studied community, parents' educational qualifications varied from Grade Five to Grade Ten. The teacher–children ratio was high. Overcrowded classrooms lacked adequate space and challenging play materials to explore. Teachers relied on only 6 days (which was later extended to 15 days) of PPE training to implement play-oriented curriculum. In addition, low socio-economic background, illiteracy and resource scarcity had great impacts on the perceptions of early learning and play. To ensure their young children's futures, parents emphasised attaining academic skills through traditional means of learning. To accommodate parental expectations, teachers incorporated traditional means, such as formal assessment (for example, written tests), as classroom strategies. This coincides with Gupta's (2011) argument that adults' expectations about young children's academic achievements and non-facilitated educational environments do not encourage Western play practices in classrooms in the socio-cultural context of a post-colonial society like India. With similar socio-economic and historical contexts, participants' perceptions contrasted the basic characteristics (see Figures 2.2 and 6.1) of the notion of play as learning.
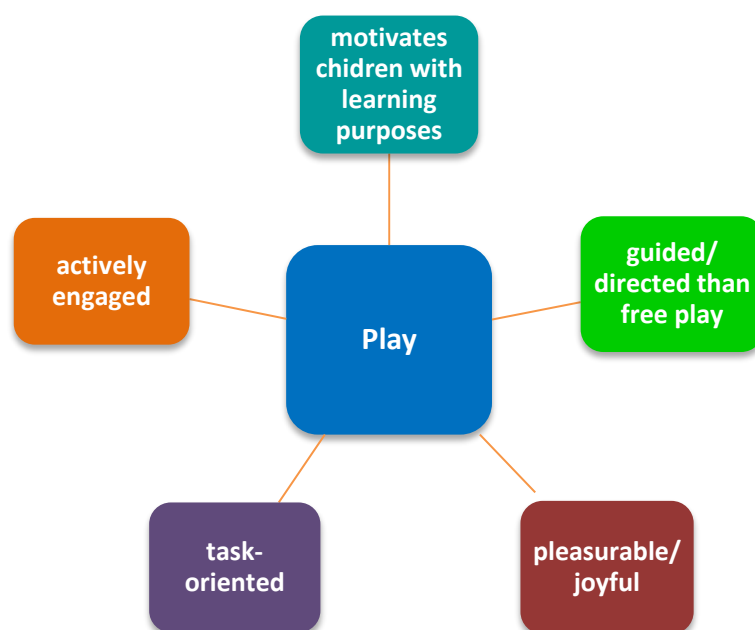
**Figure 6.1: Characteristics of play-oriented learning in the pre-primary education context of Bangladesh.**

Play, as a dominant ECE discourse, embeds pleasurable, intrinsically motivated and actively participated free play activities (Hughes, 2010; Kieff and Casbergue, 2000; Rubin, Fein & Vandenburg's, 1983; Saracho & Spodek, 1998; Walker, 2011). These activities involve imagination and creativity and are process-oriented rather than product-oriented (refer to Subsection 2.2.5 for details). This pedagogical perception of play is prominent in developed and Western societies, on the basis of which the Bangladeshi PPC was developed (NCTB, 2011). However, while corresponding to this discourse, findings of this study unpacked a different play approach in Bangladesh's ECE context. Kief and Casbergue ((2000)maintain that play is a freely chosen activity in which children are intrinsically motivated. In this study, learning purposes appeared to motivate children's play, which is mostly task-oriented and teacher-guided/directed, with limited scope for free play (see Figure 6.1). However, young children enjoyed learning through play and became actively engaged in those activities. Hence, in the studied context, play as a pedagogical tool might be defined as teaching–learning through purposeful and pleasurable/joyful activities in which children are actively engaged. Data indicates that play-oriented PPC resembles a flexible curriculum that combines both traditional and Western pedagogical approaches.

Bangladesh's prevailing early years learning tradition represents a combination of Western and traditional play perceptions. In Western societies, the child's image is embedded in play.

Children in the United States spend most of their time in play, and they play with toys (Tudge, 2008). In British society, play and conversation between mother and children is a common practice, which is not common among families with a Bangladeshi cultural background (Brooker, 2005). Unlike Western and developed societies, parents in this study did not value play as learning. Rather, they considered play as a leisure or trivia activity that disrupts learning (specifically, academic learning). For example, a parent of the Handloom family explained play as a time-passing activity and emphasised attaining academic skills to ensure her child's future life (see Subsection 5.2.1), which supports the similar claims of Chowdhury and Rivalland (2011).

Similar to Hegde and Cassidy's (2009) suggestion, in this study parental non-recognition of play in education hindered implementation of the play-oriented curriculum. However, the parents also considered play as an incentive—that is, a means to motivate their children for academic learning (see Subsection 5.2.2). For example, a parent of the South Mill family promised to buy her child toys if he studied attentively. This approach wherein play is used as an incentive was also observed in the classroom. Teachers applied play as an incentive to motivate young children's learning. For instance, the South Mill School teacher let the children play if they did not create 'chaos' in the classroom and studied attentively (refer to Subsection 5.2.2). Thus, as determined by adults' values and perceptions of learning and development (McLachlan et al., 2013), the organisation of play-oriented learning and patterns of both children's and adults' participation in those activities varied across and within studied institutional settings—namely, the TTC, classroom and home.

In defining play-based pedagogical practices, Walker (2011) signified it as child-owned active and creative activities that avoid worksheets and cloned expectations. Findings of this study challenge these propositions. In the studied classrooms and TTC, leaning practices involved:

- highly structured play
- guided play
- free play.

The data indicate that in the classroom and TTC, play-oriented learning was highly structured and adult/expert-directed. This pattern was observed particularly when teachers or TTs organised the play settings. In this category, the role of young children was fixed, with less scope to collaborate and contribute. This is similar to Mantilla's (2011) suggestion that in the

classroom children's interests and contributions are ignored and their role as the passive and receptive learner remains fixed. However, within this structured play, young children were observed exercising their limited agency through participation and contribution. For instance, apart from what the teacher had directed as the colour of the sun, a young child added rainbow colours to express his own understandings (see Images 27 and 28).

Again, when adults were involved in children's play with limited control, the play appeared to be a guided play. During guided play, both in the classroom and TTC, teachers/experts became the guide/facilitator rather than the instructor. They facilitated play-based learning with a specific purpose: to assist children/learners in accomplishing particular activities. This practice supports the claim that play is *purposeful* when it is linked to learning (Walker, 2011). However, when the children were in charge of play, they exercised their agency. During these free play activities, children/learners applied their own meanings to play-oriented activities and experimented with the rules. Similarly, in the observed TTC sessions trainee teachers were provided with the scope to develop their own methods to apply play-oriented learning. In the classroom, during free play time, young children added their own meanings to play-oriented activities. This was evident in two young girls' 'spelling and catching' play with a doll in the Road-Side School (see Image 31). This coincides with Saracho and Spodek's (1998) assertion that players add their own meanings to play activities and apply *flexibility* through controlling the activities. Kieff and Casbergue (2000) referred to this as *experimentation with rules*. Similar cultural practices were observed in the family context.

Considering adults' and young children's patterns of involvement, play-oriented learning practices in the family context can be labelled under three categories:

- adult-dominated non-interactive play
- adult-guided participatory play
- child-centred play.

When parents are concerned with their young children's academic learning, they emphasise traditional means of learning (Brooker, 2005; Chang, 2003; Parmer et al., 2004). In this study, the parent participants' objective was to enable their young children to attain academic skills (such as learning alphabets and numbers, counting, reading, writing and memorising rhymes) through structured learning. For example, parents taught their children rhymes and directed them to memorise those rhymes. They also emphasised traditional means of learning, such as

reading and writing (see Images 12, 13 and 51). This is similar to the linear-fashioned teaching–learning practices with the purpose to attain particular academic skills. The parents' emphasis on their children's academic learning was influenced by the parents' own schooling experiences and social expectations (Parmar, Harkness & Super, 2004; Silva, Correa Chavez & Rogoff, 2010).

Apart from academic learning, when adults were engaged in children's play in everyday life they tended to guide the play. As observed during watering of the vegetable garden, feeding of the cattle and roti-making, the parents/grandparents of Kakoli, Jamal and Champa guided their roles. Parents adopted the informal means of learning to guide their children to attain the skills required to carry on their cultural responsibilities. In contrast, when children played with peers or siblings they were in charge of their own play (see Images 38, 39 and 76). Similar to the classroom and TTC practices, during child-centred play children exercised their agency and experimented with rules (Kieff & Casbergue, 2000). Thus, in home, school and TTC contexts, teachers/experts and learners practiced multidimensional play approaches that encompassed child-centred or free play, guided play and adult/expert-dominated structured play. Organisation of these complex and diverse play settings delineated divergent learning and developmental goals, as valued by the community (in different institutional settings). These findings reinforce the assertion of McLachlan et al. (2013, p. 53) that curriculum reflects the community's beliefs and values regarding early years learning and development.

Societies determine the standards of judging what is 'normal' and 'not normal' (Gonzalez-Mena, 2008, p. 10). Similarly, the findings of the present study support the suggestion of the cross-cultural study of Goncu et al. (2000) conducted in four different cultural communities (Guatemala, Turkey, India and the United States): that different communities hold different understandings about the value of play. In this study, it was observed that different groups of people (in different institutional settings, such as the school, TTC and home) within the same community held divergent perceptions about the meaning and value of play. For example, within the same community, parents' and teachers' perceptions of play and learning differed. Practices also differed in the studied classroom, TTC and home contexts.

## 6.3 Play-Oriented Learning as Defining Cultural Practices

An increasing body of evidence signifies the developmental value of children's play, as determined by the communities' cultural values (Goncu et al., 2000; Fleer, 2010; Tobin et al.,

2009; Rogoff, 2003; Tudge, 2008). This proposition is supported by the findings of my present study. The data indicate that the culture of the studied community determined the developmental value of play-oriented learning. Reciprocally, play-oriented learning activities (as incorporated in the PPC) defined the cultural practices within the studied community. These were represented through participants' approaches and practices in relation to play-oriented teaching–learning and teacher–learner relationships.

Since ECE deals with nascent human minds, learning is expected to be tailored in an attractive way to the young children (Johnson, et al., 1999, p. 54). Thus, play is considered a source of natural attraction to the young children and an easy and meaningful means of learning and development (Bilton, 2002 as cited in Wilson, 2008, p. 2). This is supported by the findings of the present study. It was evident in the perceptions of the government officials (who develop, implement and monitor the implementation of the PPC; refer to Chapter Five for details); it was also observed that play activities naturally attracted young children towards learning. Teachers further appreciated these activities as an easy means to help young children develop certain concepts (such as learning alphabets through songs, learning numbers through the steps of physical exercise or learning shapes while playing games; refer to Images 2, 47, 48 and 59 and Subsection 5.2.5). These findings are similar to the assertion of Kibria and Jain (2009) that incorporation of playful methods stimulates young children's learning and makes teaching easier. The present study demonstrates that, as a social construction (Boreham & Morgan, 2008) learning occurred through young children's play—both in controlled environments and during free activities.

The teachers of this study further considered play as an easing element that helps young children to settle down in the classroom and smooth children's transitions from home to school. Though the parents did not value play as teaching–learning, they appreciated it as a teacher classroom strategy to ease children. Both the teachers and parents acknowledged that the unfamiliar school environment, study requirements (as per traditional role-based and linear-fashioned teaching–learning approaches) and detachment from the mother/family triggered feelings of fear among the young children, and that this was mitigated when the teacher introduced play-oriented activities. It was observed that since pre-primary class is the first level through which children entered formal schooling, they sometimes became upset or started crying. They were unwilling to attend the class or the parent/guardian had to stay with them in the classroom. When the teacher introduced play-oriented activities (for example, singing a song, telling stories or playing a game, as observed in South Mill School) the children became curious about those

activities and interested to participate. Thus, my classroom observations and participants' responses indicate that play-oriented learning activities played a significant role in reducing young children's feelings of fear and settling them down in the new classroom environment. This confirms the findings of my pilot study (Chowdhury, 2011).

Young children appreciated play activities as fun. They enjoyed these activities, as incorporated into the daily curriculum by the teachers, and participated with enthusiasm. Thus, the play-oriented curriculum approach enabled them to actively engage in the joyful learning activities in the classroom. Early years learning further emphasises the home–school relationship. A positive home–school partnership is considered an important element in accelerating young children's learning and development. However, this was not evident in the studied settings, other than for the enthusiastic parents who approached the teachers personally.

Play-oriented learning is not only valued by adult participants as supporting the transition from home to school, but also as enhancing school readiness among the young children. The PPC seeks to assist development of basic learning skills among the young children before they enter Grade One. To support the achievement of this goal, interactive and play-oriented teaching–learning practices have been integrated into this curriculum (NCTB, 2011). Corresponding to this curriculum approach, classroom and TTC practices incorporated play-oriented activities as a teaching–learning tool in their daily curriculum (see Images 1, 2, 5. 15, 23, 31, 42, 45, 50 and 54). Both TTs and teachers appreciated this play-oriented curriculum approach as an easy means to attain teaching goals and teach learners. The government officials' understandings and approaches towards play-oriented learning were disseminated through related documents (such as GOs, the training manual and teacher guidelines), teacher training (in the TTC) and monitoring activities. Again, to accommodate parental expectations, teachers were conscious of their performance to ensure children's attainment of academic skills. All these things influenced the teachers' daily curriculum and approaches towards teaching–learning.

Though the parents did not consider play a means of learning academic skills, they valued it as the means of transmitting cultural responsibilities to the new generation. This supports Rogoff's (2003) claim that cultural practices are transmitted to the next generation through everyday practices. Children were observed learning their gender role and future cultural responsibilities, as valued by their own community, through play-oriented activities. For example, as play activities, Champa learned from her grandmother how to make roti (handmade bread), Atika carried washed dishes from the pond with her mother and Mina and her friend engaged in

pretend play with dolls and cooking pots: through these play-oriented activities the young children were becoming aware of their expected gender roles as female members of the community (see Images 9, 20, 38 and 43). Thus, the study's findings (as echoed in the perceptions of teachers, parents, government officials and young children) reinforce Kief and Casbergue's ((2000)claim that knowledge, experiences, expectations and cultural values determine individuals' perceptions and practices about play-based learning, which evolve according to socio-cultural contexts and circumstances.

Framing of a curriculum document is considered both cultural and political (Carr, 1993; Saracho & Spodek, 2002; Schwab, 1983; Spodek & Saracho, 2002; Yates, 2009). While a society determines how they view their children and what they want their children to achieve (McLachlan et al., 2013), the government considers education a 'prominent part of their economic and social policy' (Yates, 2009). The findings demonstrate that, based on cultural values, social demands, economic realities and political manifestations, policymakers furnished curriculum documents with a formal shape by setting forward learning goals for children and the means to achieve those goals. Considering the experiences of foreign communities, the PPC of Bangladesh encompasses an imported play-oriented curriculum approach. Hence, it echoes the learning goals of those curricula. Like the EYLF of Australia (DEEWR, 2009), the PPC highlights communication and language (including literacy and numeracy), motor skills and social and emotional development of young children. It emphasises young children's self-confidence, self-respect, wellbeing, sense of identity, belongingness to the community, cultural awareness, communication and collaboration (NCTB, 2011). The goal is to prepare young children for primary school (Teacher's Guide, 2010; NCTB, 2011a) and in that way contribute to the ultimate objective of the government's ECE policies in Bangladesh: to enable young children to 'realize their human potentials' (MOPME, 2008, p. 10).

However, as David and Powell (2005) postulated, because of the divergent cultural nature of play and its values, the success of this imported pedagogy and curriculum model is subject to how this is tailored to accommodate the values and expectations of the given society. In accordance with this, cultural adaptation is reflected while incorporating the imported play-oriented pedagogical approach in the PPC. To accommodate the foreign play-oriented approach into the PPC, socio-cultural and historical aspects were taken into consideration (NCTB, 2011). For example, as per the PPC's guideline, the TTs instructed teachers to use local play materials in the classrooms and the teachers applied this strategy to adapt the non-traditional curriculum (see Images 24 and 25). Therefore, the learning and developmental mandates of PPC (NCTB,

2011) as a 'standardised and politicised curriculum' (Rogoff, 2011a, p.1) moulded the implementation of play-oriented learning. This supports Tobin et al.'s (2009) proposition that evolving socio-cultural, economic and political factors play a pivotal role in ECE policies and practices, as they observed in China, Japan and the United States.

Cultural beliefs, values, norms and practices that determine expectations from and responsibilities to children and their learning (McLachlan et al., 2013; Rogoff, 2003; Tudge, 2008) also evolve over time. In Bangladesh, the relationship between the teacher and learner is traditionally very formal. Teachers impart knowledge in a linear fashion, while the children are considered passive and receptive learners. In this context, when the play-oriented PPC was introduced it entailed a flexible curriculum approach with non-traditional means of learning, active participation of the learners, informal relationships and collaboration between the teacher/experts and learners. Consequently, incorporation of the play-oriented curriculum greatly influenced the traditional educational practices. The classroom benches and stools were replaced by an informal sitting arrangement (that is, sitting on the mat). Varieties of play-oriented activities were added as the means of teaching–learning (refer to Subsection 5.2.5 for details). Policy documents and training materials emphasised early years leaning goals and informal means of play-based learning and assessment. TTs conveyed these goals and means to the PPE teachers. The data indicates that pre-primary teachers with PPE training conducted their classes in ways that were remarkably different from the traditional teaching–learning practices.

The teachers, parents and learners considered play as a collaborative, interactive, `ensemble and engaging` teaching–learning strategy that contrasts with the linear and didactic teaching tradition in which children are considered passive learners (Mullick & Sheesh, 2008).This approach determined the teacher–learner relationship, which turned into an informal partnership in the process of meaning-making instead of a unilateral transmission of information. The teachers collaborated with the young children throughout play activities and enjoyed flexibility while implementing this curriculum approach. The PPC not only imported the play-oriented pedagogy, but also incorporated some imported play. For example, the teacher's manual (NCTB, 2011b) introduced 12 non-indigenous games that the teachers practiced in the classroom (refer to Appendix N for some examples of these games). These imported games were observed as influencing the local play culture. For example, young children played the non-indigenous game '*Mala go Mala*' with peers and the teacher in the classroom (see Image 64), and subsequently brought that experience home. The children were

observed to play the same game with siblings or peers at home. Thus, findings of this study suggest that it is not only the culture that influences the curriculum; rather, the curriculum also influences the cultural practices.

As per Bangladesh's traditional education culture, teaching–learning is hierarchy-based. The teacher is respected as the second parent of a child. Teachers control the children's role and pace in the process of learning. For their part, children obey the teacher without asking any questions. Confronting the teacher or direct eye contact with the teacher is considered rude behaviour. The power relationships between the teacher and learner were observed in the classroom and teacher training settings, particularly when the teacher/expert organised play settings and was in charge of the play. The teachers/TTs dominated the learning process. The children/learners followed the teacher's instructions until they attained accuracy in accomplishing an activity. We may take the example of the River-Bank School teacher giving instructions to children on how to perform addition by counting marbles, with the children following her instructions (see Image 22). Thus, it appears that hierarchy existed in these play activities. Within this hierarchy of power, children's voices were sometimes suppressed. Teachers acknowledged that, due to time constraints, the high teacher–children ratio and limited resources, they were unable to address children's choices. Children rarely had the scope to select an activity of their own choice, as the teachers were expected to keep to their pre-planned lessons. However, children had free playtime, which was mostly directed by the teachers.

Again, another pattern of participation was observed. The play-oriented teaching–learning approach challenged the teacher's existing hierarchy. In the play-oriented activities, the teacher engaged the children who participated, interacted and collaborated with each other and the teacher. Since play demands a collaborative and engaging teaching–learning approach, it reshuffled the power relationships between the teacher (or expert) and children (or learners). The teacher and children altered their roles. Sometimes the teacher led the activity, and other times the children led. When the children took the lead, the teacher became the playmate (see Image 64). This changing hierarchy offered the young learners the scope to exercise their own agency in the process of constructing meaning. Thus, the collaborative nature of play-oriented learning activities offered flexibility to the existing hierarchy, enabling young children to exert their sense of agency in the process of learning, though in a limited form.

## 6.4 Chapter Summary

Bangladesh's traditional unilateral (in which information is transmitted from teacher to children) and rote-based learning practices value academic learning as the parameter to determine child development and do not recognise the role of play as a mediator for learning. Despite limitations such as lack of training, unfavourable classroom contexts and absence of resources, play was incorporated as joyful interactive classroom activities, which reduced young children's fears about school and assisted their preparedness for school through developing basic academic skills. Hence, introduction of an imported play-oriented curriculum brought qualitative changes in stakeholders' (including young children, teachers, TTs and parents) ECE perceptions and practices. At the same time, considering learning and development as a reciprocal process of transformation through participation (Rogoff, 2003), participants' understandings, values, roles and relationships shaped the play-oriented early learning practices in the studied community.

The findings of this study reveal complex and diverse patterns of play-oriented leaning perceptions and practices that contrast with Western understandings and practices. As a socio-cultural and political construction, the development and implementation of the imported play-oriented PPC became subject to how it was tailored to accommodate learning and developmental goals for the young children (McLachlan et al., 2013). Participants' approaches and patterns of participation indicate that Bangladesh's unique cultural practices demand reconceptualisation of dominant discourses of play-oriented learning approaches. The findings further require a new theorising of non-Western understandings of play as an EC curriculum approach. The next chapter synchronises the cultural organisation of play-oriented early learning traditions, leading towards a new framing that addresses young children's learning and development in the context of Bangladesh.

# Chapter 7: Framing the Evolving Traditions of Learning Practices

It is essential for research to empirically examine the generality of practices rather than to assume that a common national, ethnic, or racial label automatically yields similar ways of learning and living. (Rogoff, 2014, p. 79)

## 7.1 Overview

The preceding data analysis and discussion chapters explored participants' perceptions of play (as an early years' learning approach), the changing nature of cultural practices (in relation to play-oriented early learning) and the prevailing patterns of participation (in three different settings: the family, classroom and TTC) that occurred through the implementation of an imported play-oriented curriculum approach in Bangladesh (NCTB, 2011).This chapter synchronises the findings presented in Chapters Five and Six and extends the discussion on the framing of the evolving play-oriented early learning traditions in three studied early learning settings in Bangladesh. This framing captures the reciprocal process of transformation of participation in socio-cultural activities since the introduction of the play-oriented PPC in Bangladesh. It defines the cultural nature of participation of adults and young children and elaborates how they approach, accommodate, interpret and practice a play-oriented learning approach in their everyday lives.

The present chapter begins with the discussion on framing the intricate learning tradition as culturally organised. This discussion is organised into two sections. The first section summarises the prevailing complex patterns of play-oriented early learning practices (as observed in the studied classroom, family and TTC settings) to configure their cultural organisation. The following section harmonises these patterns to define the evolving patterns of learning traditions since the implementation of the PPC. It further considers whether Bangladesh's play-oriented early learning practices can be situated within a particular learning tradition/prism (ALI, GR or LOPI, as introduced by Rogoff and her colleagues) and argues that none of these original prisms captured the traditions visible in different ECE settings in Bangladesh. What is observed is overlapping, parallel and/or contrasting traditions within or across the studied settings. Grounded on the data analysis of the present study, this discussion leads towards the ultimate framing of play-oriented early learning traditions in Bangladesh's

ECE context. My discussion foregrounds the argument for the development of a new prism (namely, *guided learning: encouraging participation, initiative and contribution* [GLEPIC]) with different configurations of the seven features as a whole to enable the intricate learning practices in the given context to be addressed.

## 7.2 Framing the Intricate Learning Tradition as Culturally Organised

Findings of the present study concur with the assertion of Chowdhury and Rivalland (2012), Fleer (2009) and Rogoff (2003) that as a cultural tool play patterns and practices greatly rely on the cultural aspects of a given society. Thus, learning practices related to an adopted or adapted play-oriented curriculum approach, as studied in the ECE context of Bangladesh in this research, vary from those of a developing/Western society from where it has been imported. A curriculum denotes the community beliefs and values regarding learning and development (McLachlan et al., 2013, p. 53) and sets forward learning goals/outcomes as valued by a particular community at a given time. Factors such as beliefs, values, social expectations, cultural activities, educational history, economic goals and political objectives mould the curriculum design and its implementation (Carr, 1993; McLachlan et al., 2013). Therefore, depending on socio-cultural variations across communities, interpretations and implementation of a play-oriented curriculum are determined by their specific constellation of cultural practices.

Further, interpretations or practices in relation to a play-oriented curriculum approach are not static; rather, they are a dynamic process of 'social reproduction—the process whereby a society reproduces itself over time and so maintains its identity across generations (Carr, 1993, p. 5). This statement is in agreement with Rogoff's (2003) understanding that development is a process of transformation through participation and leads to the proposition that curriculum interpretations and learning practices evolve as per changing social circumstances and cultural transformation of a given community. Findings of the present study reinforce this assumption. In this section, I have organised this discussion into two parts. The first part illustrates the configurations of the common features (of the learning tradition prisms) as defining play-oriented cultural practices in different early learning settings of Bangladesh; the second part focuses on the evolving pattern of play-oriented learning traditions in the given context.

### 7.2.1 Configurations of cultural practices

Rogoff et al. (2014) argued:

> [v]iewing culture in terms of *practices in which people engage* aids us in developing an idea of the patterns of cultural practices that form whole constellations that may be more common in some communities than others, while also allowing us to recognise change and variability within as well as across communities. (p. 93)

In line with this proposition, my present study explored cultural practices in relation to play-oriented early learning in three distinct early learning settings (the family, classroom and TTC) of Bangladesh. Findings of this study led to a deeper understanding of play as a pedagogical and cultural notion, patterns of participation of different stakeholders (including adults and young children) in different institutional settings (the family, school and TTC) and the constellation of cultural practices in early learning spheres. The patterns of participation and constellation of cultural practices across these contexts were found to be variously common, contrasting or overlapping (these are further explored in this chapter).

#### 7.2.1.1 Reciprocal influences among studied institutional settings

The PPC—specifically, the play-oriented teaching-learning approach—is directly linked to the classroom and TTC practices. Based on the PPC's goals, objectives and guidelines, teaching–learning strategies were developed and practiced/performed in these two settings. Thus, exploration of learning practices in these two settings provided a profound understanding of the influence of play-oriented curriculum approach in the ECE context of Bangladesh. Classroom practices and TTC practices reciprocally informed each other, though the extent of this reciprocity varied. For example, trained teachers mostly followed the training guidelines and applied their training experiences while implementing play as a teaching–learning tool. However, while developing training programs classroom realities were also taken into account. Apart from these two settings, this study examined the cultural practices in the family context. Children's cultural orientation and practices at home have become an important consideration in understanding, developing and implementing learning approaches (Brooker, 2005; Chan, 2012). Thus, family practices are acknowledged in PPC as a significant part of curriculum implementation:

'…class hours are not the sole consideration for the successful implementation of the curriculum rather the time children spend at home is also being included in many cases for this implementation.' (Translated from Bangla, NCTB, 2011, p. 66)

Teachers' and parents' perceptions of play as learning and development and their practices have reciprocal influences. For instance, during assessment teachers often applied standardised tests since they felt they needed to acknowledge and accommodate parental expectations of formal assessment of their young children's learning. Young children who experienced the influence of imported play-oriented learning practices brought that non-indigenous play culture into the home. Again, parents who did not value play as a means of academic learning nevertheless appreciated teachers' play activities, since they considered that these practices helped their children to settle down in class and to overcome fears about school and study. This reciprocity of influences in relationships among different stakeholders and institutional settings, as explored in this study, informed play-oriented early learning practices and cultural organisation of learning traditions in the ECE context of Bangladesh.

While investigating the play-oriented cultural practices in three ECE settings of Bangladesh, this study concentrated on configurations of the common seven features of the learning tradition prisms. As the data analysis suggests, intricate patterns of these features underpinning distinct learning tradition prisms (ALI, GR and LOPI) are present within the three studied settings, as discussed below.

### 7.2.1.2 Organisation of learning practices in the teacher training centre

In Bangladesh, PPC has been developed incorporating the play-oriented Western learning and development approach (NCTB, 2011). Hence, TTC practices are accordingly designed to meet the requirements of this adapted curriculum. In the PPC, the very process of teaching–learning is illustrated as a 'process' that is similar to the factory model mentioned in the ALI tradition (Rogoff et al., 2007; see Figure 6.1). In this 'process', learners and learning resources and tools are described as the input, and learning is described as the output.

In the TTC the trainee teachers were taught how to conduct play activities in specialised settings with specific learning targets. TTC activities were mostly hierarchical and trainer-dominated. The trainers followed the pre-developed lessons planned to attain certain training goals—to

enable the trainees to learn specific teaching skills/techniques. Trainees participated in these target-oriented play-based learning activities, which were highly structured and initiated by the trainers. Traditional means of learning were involved in the TTC, such as receiving lessons delivered through oral lectures, projectors or white boards. These patterns of social organisation of learning, means, goals and community organisation of learning are common in the ALI tradition.

In the TTC, trainers usually focused on attainment by the trainee teachers of certain teaching skills that they modelled, which is quite similar to the GR trend (Rogoff et al., 2007). Similar to GR practices, the trainees followed what the trainers demonstrated/instructed. They imitated, rehearsed or performed play-oriented teaching–learning means as modelled by the trainers to attain the skills they required to be able to apply those skills in their own classrooms. The hierarchy and expert-dominance observed in the TTC also prevails in the GR trend. As per GR, the learner's motive is to attain accuracy in a particular skill, enabling them to perform/enter a valued cultural activity. Similarly, the present study found that the intention to attain expertise in play-oriented teaching–learning techniques encouraged the trainee teachers (for example, trainees tried to attain skills such as dancing through imitation), while for trainers the motive was to design and model the tasks and instruct the trainees.

In addition, LOPI is also evident in this context. LOPI offers learning by means of learners''[w]ide, keen attention and contribution (current or anticipated) to events. With guidance from communitywide expectations and people' (Rogoff, 2014, p. 73). In TTC it is not always mere imitation of what is introduced to the trainers. Rather, trainee teachers can participate and contribute (for example, while working in groups or participating in play-like activities they contribute through adding their own ideas to the already introduced teaching–learning techniques or approaches). Thus, this study found that the TTC created the context in which trainees could engage themselves in a classroom-like environment and practice and attain the skills required to conduct a pre-primary class. This practice aimed to enable them to transform through participation so they could collaborate and contribute in a real classroom context. These patterns of engagement and contribution harmonise with the LOPI tradition (Rogoff, 2014).

*7.2.1.3 Organisation of learning practices in the classroom*

My findings reveal that classroom practices generally resembled ALI practices, in which children learn with specialised lessons to attain certain skills and they are assessed to determine to what extent they have acquired the delivered lessons (Rogoff, 2014; Rogoff et al., 2007). In this setting, prescribed and structured play activities, as organised in specialised settings, were mostly initiated and dominated by the teachers. Teachers controlled young children's roles during play activities and the children followed teachers' instructions. We may take the example of the teacher giving instructions to children on how to perform addition by counting marbles and children following her instructions. Thus, hierarchy exists in these play activities.

Within this hierarchy of power, children's voices are sometimes suppressed. Teachers mentioned that due to time constraints, a high teacher–children ratio and limited resources they were unable to pay attention to children's choices. Children hardly had the scope to select an activity of their own choice, as the teachers were trained and expected to keep to their pre-planned lessons. However, children had free playtime in the classroom. Again, these free playtimes were mostly directed by the teachers. The means teachers applied to assess the level of development through these play-oriented activities were mostly traditional, such as exams or written tests in which the teacher graded children with marks. These teaching–learning practices are specific to Bangladesh and are not valued in Western play curriculum approaches. However, exams, written tests or memorisation-based assessments correspond to ALI practices.

In addition, GR practices were also evident in this setting. For example, when the Sea-Shore teacher was doing physical exercises, the Corner-Temple teacher was telling stories or the River-Bank teacher was commenting on children's drawing, the practices and pattern of participation of teachers and children reflected GR features in terms of means, goals and assessment (Rogoff et al., 2007). Teachers who were trained in the TTC followed the similar means of teaching-learning. Their training experiences influenced these practices. They demonstrated an activity to the children and the children were expected to imitate the activity until they attained accuracy. We may take the example of the Sea-Shore School in which the teacher demonstrated the steps to draw the Bangladeshi flag and the children then imitated that (refer to Chapter Five for details). Children continued the process to attain the drawing skill and understanding of the National Flag. However, unlike GR these structured play activities offered young children the opportunity not only to observe and imitate but also to contribute.

Apart from mimicking an activity, young children brought in their own ideas, concepts and understandings as they observed, participated in and contributed to play-oriented activities. For example, children were observed creating shapes of their own choice with sticks beyond those modelled by the teachers and prescribed in the textbook. Again, in South Mill Village the schoolchildren observed, from the periphery, the teacher's steps in a ball game and then participated as full participants in that activity during their turn (see Image 1 in Chapter Five).These practices are in line with the LOPI tradition. Play practices in the classroom can also be characterised as an interactive process that offers collaboration among the teacher and young children while making meaning.

My findings further indicated that pre-primary teachers who had attended the PPE training sessions conducted their classes in ways that were remarkably different from the traditional teaching–learning practices in the public primary sphere of Bangladesh's education sector. By incorporating play as a means of learning, their approach to teaching–learning became more interactive, collaborative, ensemble and engaging, rather than being a mere unilateral way of transmitting information. For example, teachers asked children to bring materials from home and used those materials for play activities in the classroom (see Images 24 and 25 in Chapter Five). These LOPI practices influenced teachers, parents and young children's approaches towards learning and their relationships with each other. Again, the collaborative nature of play-oriented learning activities added flexibility to the existing hierarchy, enabling young learners to exert their sense of agency in the process of learning, though in a limited form. For example, during rule-based games the teacher and children often changed their positions, thus altering hierarchy (refer to Image 63 in Chapter Five). While drawing the image of the sun, as demonstrated by the teacher, a child added rainbow colours as his own concept of the sun (see Images 27 and 28 in Chapter Five).

### 7.2.1.4 Organisation of learning practices at home

The observed family practices, which offer young children more opportunities to learn through engaging in valued cultural activities, are in line with LOPI (Rogoff, 2014; Rogoff et al., 2007). At home, the LOPI pattern was observed to be the dominant practice.

In the home setting, learning appeared as an interactive and collaborative process. Children made meanings of everyday concepts through keen attention and contribution through participation. They learned through observation (involving sensory organs) of adult activities

and contribution in ongoing shared cultural activities through participation either as peripheral or as full participants. Research indicates that children learn through being integrated into valued community activities for examples, buying groceries for the mother from local shops, watering the vegetable garden and feeding domestic animals. They also learn through bringing the themes of adult activities into their play for examples, children took turns as mother, father and young children in their role plays with dolls (see Chapter Five for details). Parents appreciate that through play activities the children become accustomed to adulthood, which may help them attain skills essential for future living (Rogoff, 2003). Children learn their cultural responsibilities, sense of belonging to their community and skills such as collaboration and cooperation while playing with peers or even interacting with adults in the family context. These enable them to contribute in valued cultural events and adult family members support them in attaining these learning goals. Therefore, family practices uphold the LOPI patterns that highlight transforming participation, learning consideration and responsibility along with information and skills, contributing and belonging in the community (Rogoff, 2014).

In the everyday family context, learning and assessment appeared as two simultaneous processes. The young learners intended to contribute to valued cultural activities, while the adults' objective was to support young children's achievement of certain cultural skills through correcting their errors immediately in the ongoing activities. For their part, children apply their own assessment means when they engage with other young children or even adults in routine cultural activities, or specifically in play. That is, they assess their peers' ability in ongoing activities and apply that information to sort them such as to assign roles in a role play according to the ability of the children involved. Children also help their peers to attain required skills. However, the children's agency is compromised when adults are involved with them in shared cultural activities for example, Jamal's mother often controlled him when he fed the chicks; she thought that he over-fed them. In contrast, during child-centred play at home, children follow their own choices, control their own pace and create their own rules for example, young girls decided who would be the parents or children while playing with dolls (refer to Chapter Five for details).

Dramatisation, which Rogoff includes as a practice in LOPI (Rogoff, 2014, p. 73), also takes place in GR in the form of modelling and performance. Children were observed learning by imitating adults' demonstrations. For example, when Champa made 'roti' as demonstrated by her grandmother, and tried repeatedly to make the shape perfect (see Chapter Five for details).

Parents/adult family members provided guidance when children were involved in play-like activities with them. In the family context, adults used this means of learning to teach young children cultural values and activities. From this perspective, means of learning in the family context embodied GR practices as well.

ALI patterns are also evident in family practices. At home, children were observed engaged in adult-dominated non-interactive learning practices (for example, learning alphabets and numbers, counting, reading, writing and memorising rhymes). Parental targets about their young children's academic learning resulted in emphasis of these traditional means of learning (Brooker, 2005; Chang, 2003; Parmer et al., 2004). This was influenced by the parents' own schooling experiences and social expectations (Parmar, Harkness & Super, 2004; Silva, Correa Chavez & Rogoff, 2010). Parents taught their children the alphabet, number/counting, reading, writing and memorising, which they considered would help their children achieve good marks in exams and to cope with study in the upper grades. Though parents never opposed teachers' play-oriented learning strategies, they themselves did not value play as learning. Rather, they tended to understand play as disrupting learning, to be specific, concerning academic learning. For them play was leisure, not learning. They preferred means such as reading, writing and memorising for academic learning. Again, for the parents the ultimate goal of learning was to become a successful person in future life. This target, as a cultural tradition, was transmitted to the young children.

Based on the above-mentioned major findings, the study reveals that:

- In play-oriented ECE practices, LOPI patterns were prominent in all three ECE settings (the TTC, school and home).
- The emphasis on 'attaining certain academic skills' through specialised lessons and means represented ALI patterns in the classroom and TTC, and even in family practices.
- Learning though play activities in all institutional settings was guided and demonstrated by adults/experts and repeated by learners to attain accuracy, hence resembling GR patterns.

Thus, introduction of a play-oriented curriculum and its impacts on the TTC, classroom and family practices have created intrinsic patterns of early learning practices. The data suggests evolving patterns of play-oriented early learning traditions prevailing in different ECE settings of Bangladesh.

**7.2.2 Evolving patterns of learning traditions**

Rogoff and her colleagues introduced different learning traditions/prisms namely LOPI, ALI and GR (Paradise & Rogoff, 2009; Rogoff, 2014; Rogoff, et al., 2007)that 'can help make sense of what we observe in everyday life' (Rogoff, personal communication). Each of these prisms represents 'a coherent multifaceted way of organising children's learning' in distinctive cultural communities (Coppens et al., 2014, p. 150). These prisms, elucidating unique ways of organising learning, provide the analytical foundation of this study in understanding the pattern/organisation of play-oriented learning practices in different ECE settings in rural Bangladesh. Findings show that early learning practices in the different studied settings are not solely represented by any one of the three traditions. Rather, an intricate pattern of learning practices is evident in this study.

From a broader perspective, early learning practices in Bangladesh as influenced by the implementation of the new play-oriented PPC are not limited to any one of the given prisms. Even at the micro-level (for example, a single setting such as the classroom, family or TTC), practices cannot be labelled with a particular learning tradition/prism. This means classroom practices (for instance, practices at Sea-Shore School) cannot simply be labelled as the ALI/GR/LOPI tradition. The same applies to the other studied settings –classrooms, families and TTCs. This supports Rogoff and her colleagues' assertion that the learning traditions/prisms may vary across communities with divergent cultural practices (Rogoff et al., 2007). In this study it was evident that, similar to the LOPI tradition, learners exercisedtheir own agency with altered hierarchy with adults/experts in shared activities and contributed in the process of play-oriented learning. Again, learners actively participated in the learning practices and imitated modelled activity as is observed in the GR tradition. However, unlike LOPI, they did not contribute, but rather copied an activity. Further, as per ALI practices, learning settings were organised/dominated by adults/experts and learners did not enjoy freedom of choice in the process of learning.

The findings of the present investigation, though conducted on the basis of three learning tradition prisms, suggest that no single prism is prevalent in the play-oriented early learning context of Bangladesh. Rather, the following three patterns of learning practices appear to be prominent in the studied contexts:

  i.     overlapping pattern

ii. parallel pattern

iii. contrasting pattern

In *overlapping pattern*, idiosyncratic configurations (as per distinct prisms) of a particular feature intersect in a given context. For example, in each of the studied settings (classrooms, families and TTCs) ALI, GR and LOPI practices overlapped in terms of means of learning (see Figure 7.2). In *parallel pattern*, configurations of some features of multiple prisms remain common within similar contexts or across contexts. For example, the LOPI pattern of community organisation of learning was evident in all three learning contexts—the classroom, family and TTC (refer to Figure 7.3). The *contrasting pattern* delineates opposing cultural practices. Here the organisation of a feature, dominating learning practices in a particular context, varies across different settings. For instance, in terms of means of learning, ALI, LOPI and GR dominated practices in the classroom, family and TTC, accordingly (see Figure 7.4).
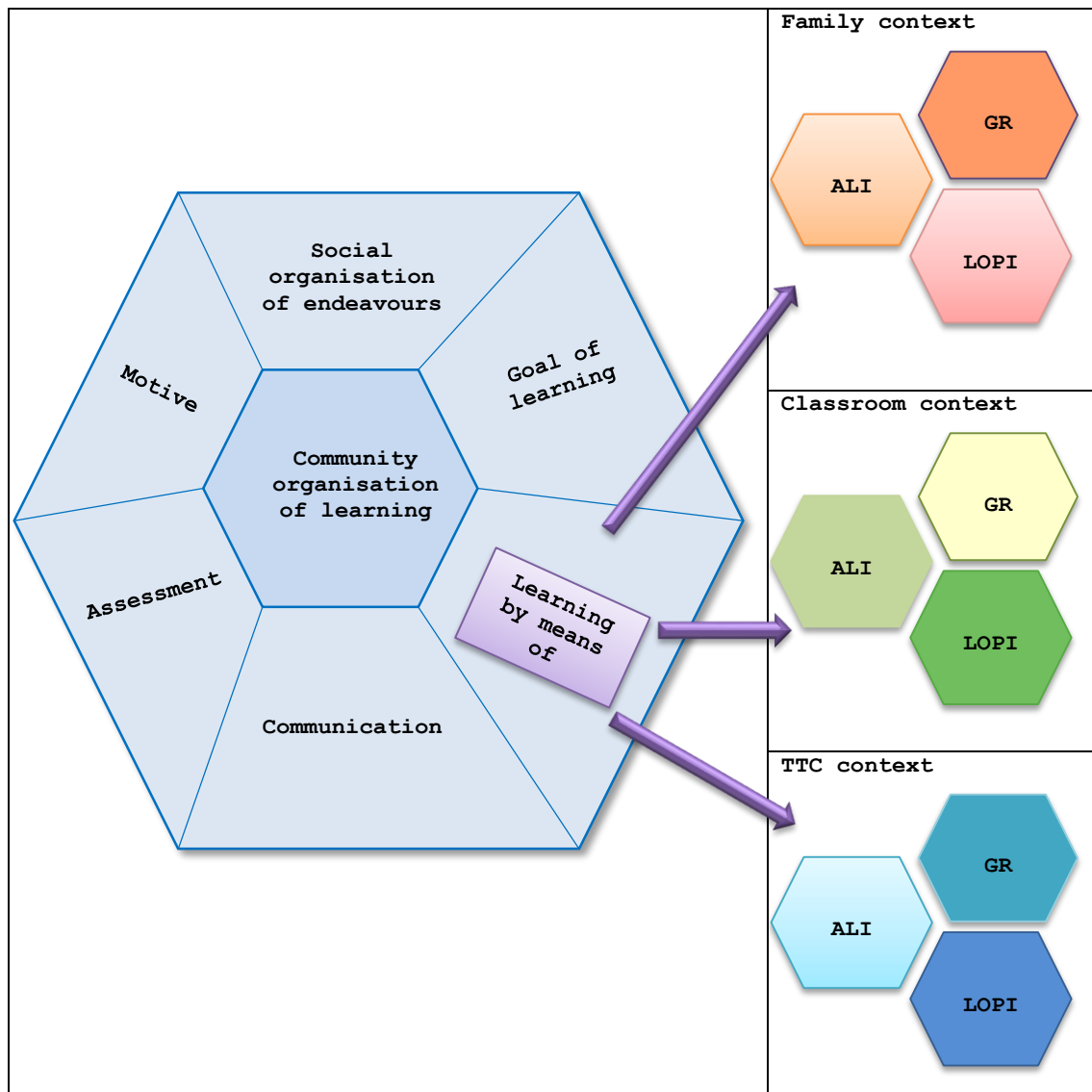
**Figure 7.2: Overlapping pattern: patterns of distinct prisms intersect while configuring a particular feature (for example, means of learning) in a given context.**
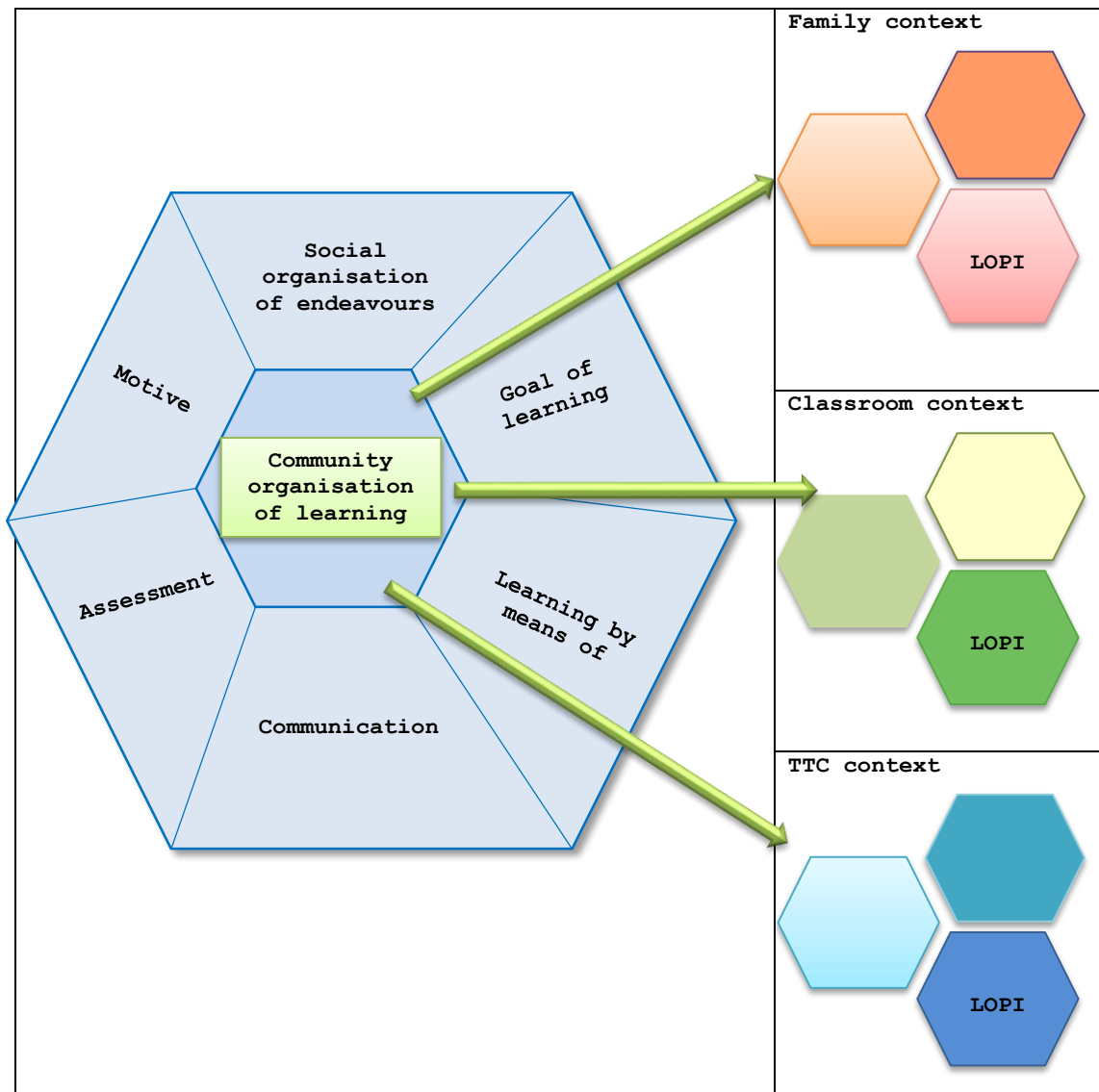
**Figure 7.3: Parallel pattern: configuration of an idiosyncratic feature of a learning tradition/prism (for example, the LOPI pattern of community organisation of learning) remains common within similar contexts/across contexts.**
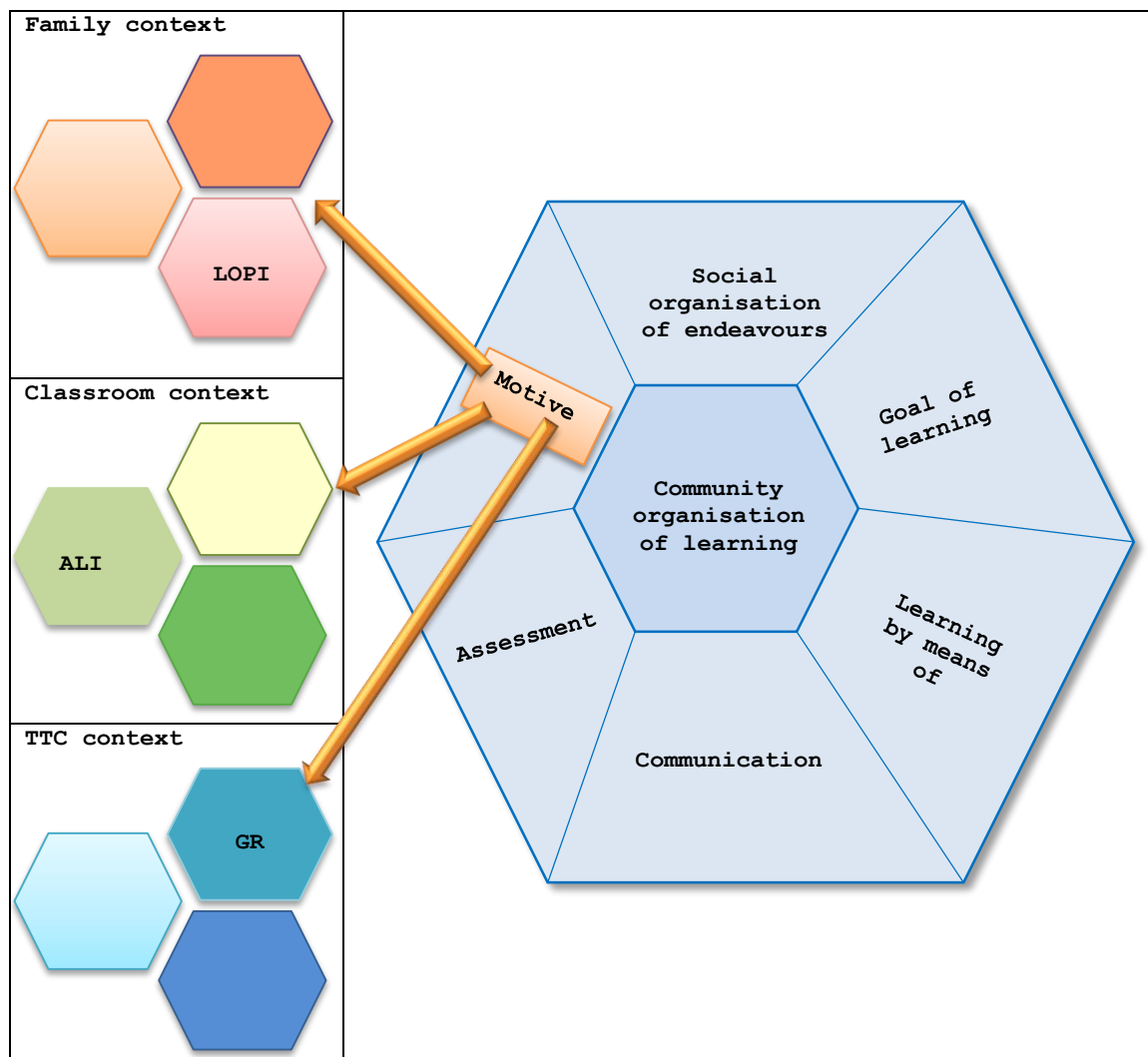
**Figure 7.4: Contrasting pattern: configurations of a feature (for example, in terms of motive) dominating learning practices in a particular context vary across different settings.**

These three patterns of learning practices did not occur in isolation. They were simultaneously present within the same setting or in different settings. For example, while observing community organisation of learning it was evident that ALI and LOPI practices overlapped within the family context; again, LOPI appeared to be commonly occurring in all the families in six studied communities. Contrasting patterns were also evident in this setting. While considering parents' perceptions about community organisation of learning—specifically, engaging their children in academic activities—it appeared that families from Road-Side and Handloom communities emphasised ALI characteristics (which is aligned to parents' exposure to formal schooling experiences [Silva et al., 2010]; see Subsection 5.2.4. in Chapter Five for details), while their counterparts form other communities continued with LOPI practices. These contrasting patterns are also evident across contexts (see Figures 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4).

While experiencing these distinctive patterns of cultural practices, no individual prism appeared to be adequate in capturing the constellation of cultural practices in the ECE context of Bangladesh. Hence, the *overlapping, parallel* and *contrasting patterns* demand a more flexible framing to fit the ongoing play-oriented early learning practices. The findings of this study indicate that a synthesis reconciling divergent propositions, as presented through three prisms, better embodies the prevailing *complex tradition* of play-oriented early learning practices (see Figure 7.5). However, the amalgamation of learning trends in a *complex tradition* does not offer any consistent pattern that can help frame the prevailing early learning practices of Bangladesh into a uniform tradition; rather, multiple intricate patterns prevail in different settings. Based on these findings, this study argues that no specific and generic form of learning traditions/prisms (ALI, GR or LOPI) can solely capture Bangladesh's play-oriented early learning culture. The Figure 7.5 demonstrates the complex traditions prevailing in classroom, family and TTC settings in Bangladesh.
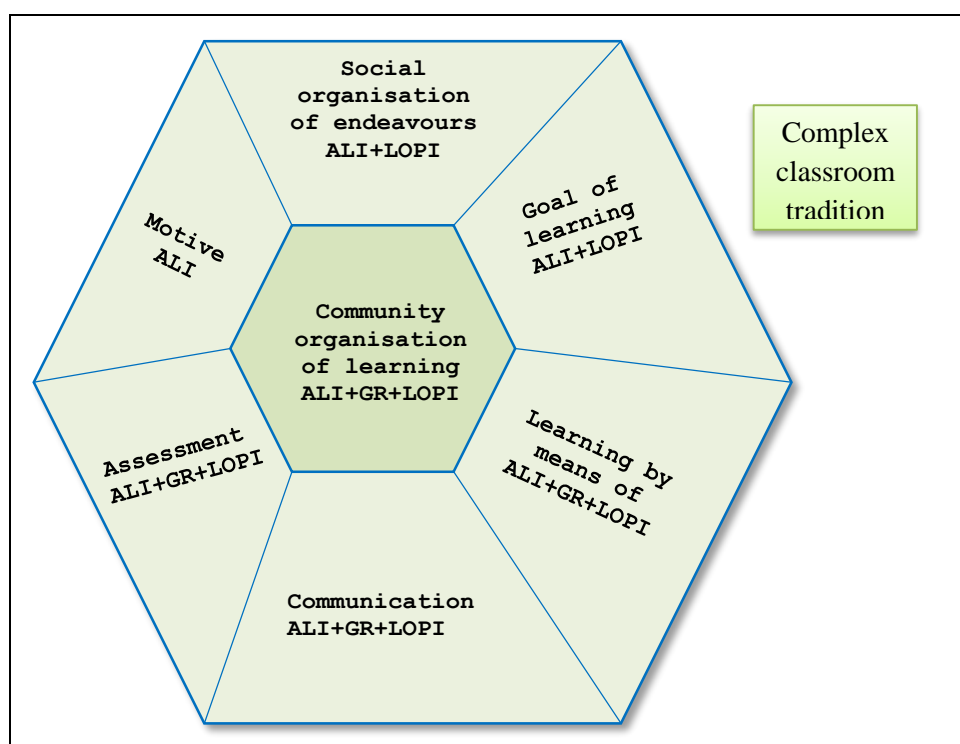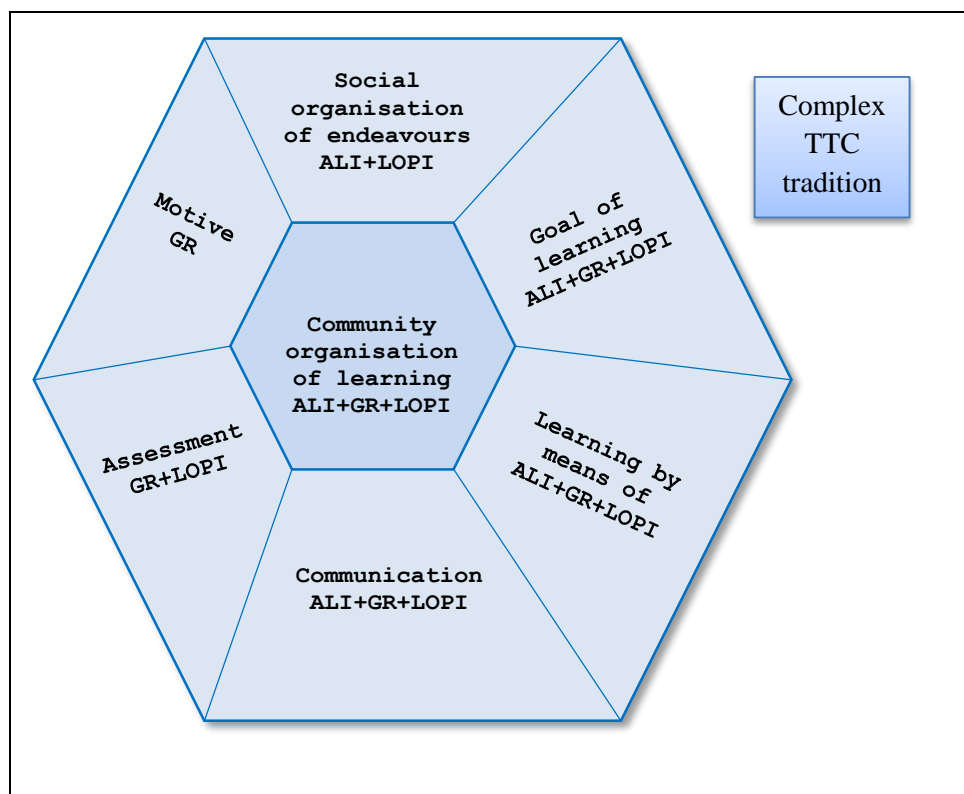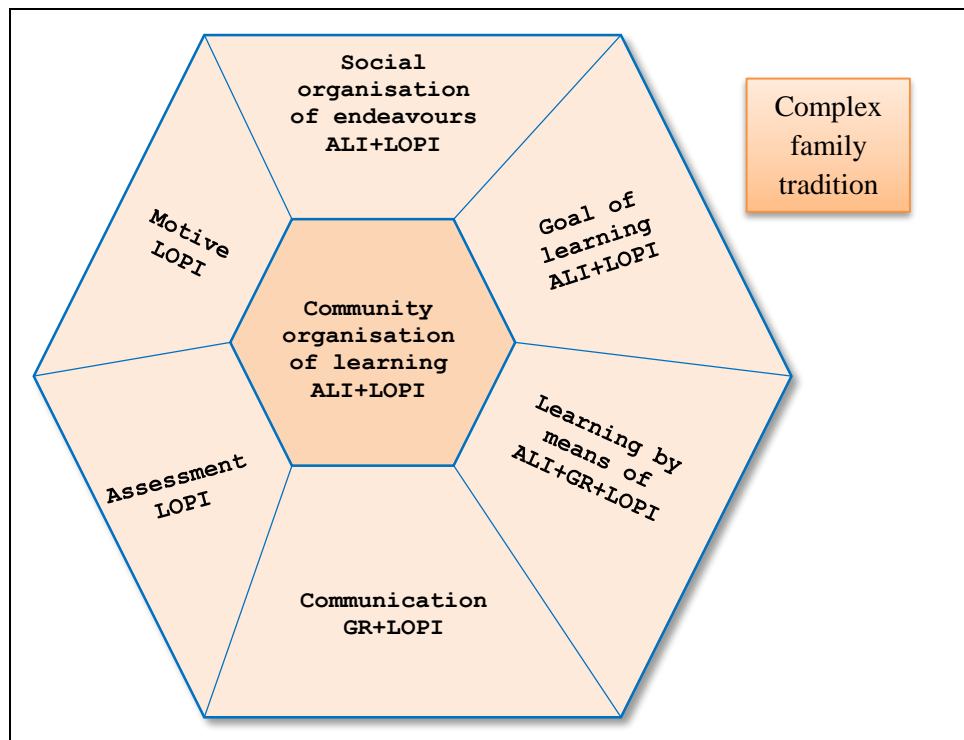
**Figure 7.5: Complex tradition: multiple intricate patterns prevail while configuring the seven common features that determine a particular prism/learning tradition in classroom, TTC and family contexts.**

Based on the above-mentioned learning patterns and practices, this *complex tradition* of learning can be categorised as an *interim/provisional tradition*. This may assist to define prevailing cultural practices resulting from the introduction of an imported play-oriented participatory learning culture. It is acknowledged that these prevalent patterns of practice are still evolving; thus, the paradox of transition may take an enduring and uniform shape over time. These *complex* and *interim/provisional* traditions propose a *transitional learning tradition* with a *flexible* framing of cultural organisation of learning practices. Such a *flexible* framework offers the scope to adapt the evolving and diverse cultural practices evident in different ECE settings and accommodate any possible changes.

The compiled configuration of learning patterns, as revealed through data analysis based on all the seven features of the prisms, leads towards a new understanding of a *complex, flexible* and *transitional* play-oriented early learning tradition in the ECE context of Bangladesh. A comparative analysis of the configurations of these seven features, as outlined in the three learning tradition prisms (ALI, GR and LOPI) and as revealed by this study, guided this outcome (refer to Appendix L for an example of comparative analysis of these features' configurations). Consequently, the present study reveals 'a cultural approach that deserves its own characterization' (Rogoff, 2016, personal communication). Hence, differing from the three prisms (ALI, GR and LOPI), a new learning tradition is herein developed to frame the cultural organisation of Bangladesh's play-oriented early learning practices. This *complex, flexible* and *transitional* framework is presented through a new prism, as elaborated below.

### 7.2.3 The new prism of learning tradition: Guided learning encouraging participation, initiative and contribution (GLEPIC)

How learning occurs in a particular community is subject to their repertoires of cultural practice and their perceptions and pattern of engagement in everyday routine activities. Socio-cultural variations across communities determine the complex relationships among the participants in shared endeavours and thus their way of learning and development:

> To study cultural aspects of human development, we recommend examining individuals' participation in varying cultural practices of distinct, overlapping, and changing communities. This approach focuses on the 'repertoires of cultural practices' that individuals develop overtheir personal histories participating in specific communities [Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003], as well as examining the histories of cultural practices that are common in specific communities. (Rogoff et al., 2014, p. 82)

Based on the 'repertoires of cultural practices' (Rogoff et al., 2014, p. 82), as occurred in the process of transition from rigid and rote-based formal learning to an imported and adapted play-oriented interactive and collaborative learning practice model in the studied context, this study offers a new model of learning traditions. This new prism is termed Guided learning encouraging participation, initiative and contribution (GLEPIC). Configuration of the features in this prism differs from the traditions of ALI, GR and LOPI. Rogoff and her colleagues acknowledge the possibility of variations to their three prisms. According to them, specific features of a particular tradition 'may vary across generation and places' (Coppens et al., 2014, p. 151). In this new proposed tradition, configurations of the features of different prisms (ALI, GR and LOPI) are blended. This supports Rogoff and her colleagues' affirmation that '[t]he generic forms portrayed in the prisms vary in specific characteristics when instantiated within a particular community or institution, at the same time as fitting the generic form of the prism' (Rogoff et al., 2007, p. 495–496).

Rogoff and her colleagues further suggested that cultural settings of these learning traditions can be revised, blended or resisted, and community members who belong to a particular tradition may switch to other practices (Rogoff et al., 2003; 2007). Findings of this study indicate that learners encounter more than one learning practice within and across contexts. Coppens et al. (2014) argued that opportunities to learn in more than one way benefit children's learning by expanding their repertoires of practice. Rogoff (personal communication) affirmed: 'in daily life, of course people mix approaches together, but the aim of the prisms is to characterize the approaches as ideals that may underlie some parts of everyday practice'. These assertions are reinforced by the proposition of GLEPIC.

Rogoff (personal communication) clarified that 'the multifaceted learning approaches' as represented by three prisms 'are not representations of what people do on a daily basis, but rather "idealized" accounts of patterns that we can discern in watching what people do'. The idealised accounts of play-oriented learning practices in everyday lives of young children and educators in rural Bangladesh that appear to be different from those of LOPI, ALI and GR traditions is presented through a new multifaceted prism of learning tradition termed GLEPIC (see Figure 7.6).

Adults/experts guide the process of learning. *Guided learning* involves instructions, structured learning, modelling and learning through observing ongoing cultural activities.

*Encouraging* refers to the scope that the learners get beyond the bounds of what is being modelled/instructed/presented to them.

*Participation* means to learn through participating in ongoing activities/cultural practices as an active learner instead of being passive.

In this tradition learning occurs as a collaborative process. Learners are not treated as mere recipients of knowledge but as active participants in the process of constructing knowledge.

**Guided learning encouraging participation, initiative and contribution (GLEPIC)**

In addition to structured learning, learners are provided with the space to take free *initiatives,* which refers to their agency to choose activities as they like, initiate those activities by themselves and make their own decisions about the rules of the activities and roles of the participants.

In the process of collaborative learning, learners not only follow the instructed, modelled or observed activities; rather, they have the opportunity to participate and *contribute* in the ongoing cultural practices while making meaning of their everyday lives. These contributions are valued by their cultural community.

**Figure 7.6: Main themes of the GLEPIC: Guided learning encouraging active participation, free initiatives and valued contribution.**

As per this new learning tradition, adults/experts guide the process of learning. *Guided learning* involves instructions, structured learning, modelling and learning through observing ongoing cultural activities. *Encouraging* refers to the scope that the learners have beyond the bounds of what is being modelled/instructed/presented to them. *Participation* means to learn through taking part in ongoing activities/cultural practices as an active learner instead of being passive. In this tradition, learning occurs as a collaborative process. Learners are not treated as mere recipients of knowledge but as active participants in the process of constructing knowledge. Besides structured learning, learners are provided with the space to take free *initiatives*, which refers to their agency in choosing activities as they like, initiating those activities by themselves and making their own decisions about the rules of the activities and roles of the participants. In the process of collaborative learning, learners not only follow the instructed, modelled or

observed activities; rather, they have the opportunity to participate and *contribute* in ongoing cultural practices, while making meaning of their everyday lives. These contributions are valued by their cultural community (Figure 7.7 and Table 7.1 present the configuration of the features of the prism of GLEPIC).
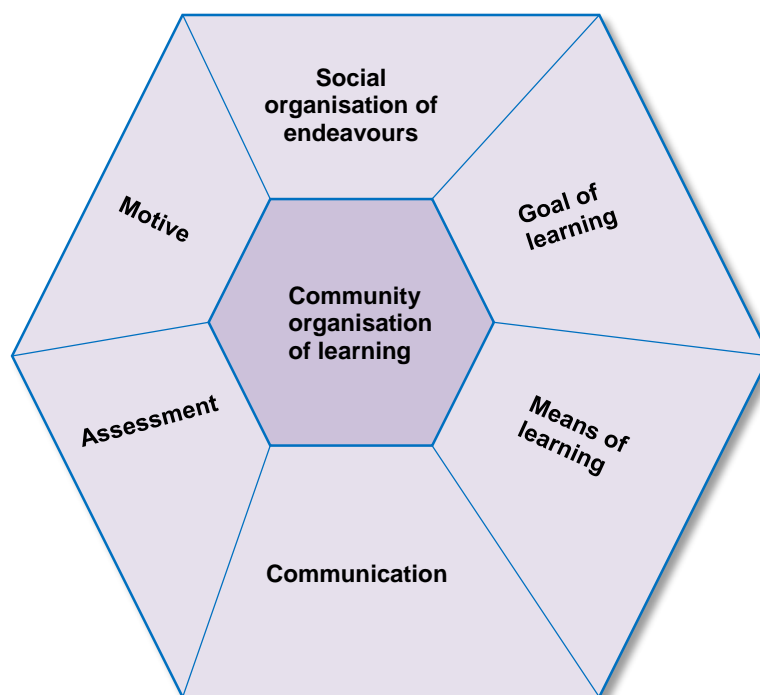


**Figure 7.7: The features of the prism of Guided learning encouraging participation, initiative and contribution (GLEPIC).**

**Table 7.1: Detailed configuration of the features of GLEPIC**

| Features | Patterns of the features |
| --- | --- |
| Community organisation of learning: | Learners are integrated into a range of structured/non-structured (either adult/expert or child/learner dominated) play-oriented activities in which they observe and participate (sometimes imitate) with/without adults'/experts' instructions and contribute in daily cultural endeavours. |
| Motives: | Parents guide and teachers/experts instruct children/learners to help them accomplish their activities. They use rewards, threats, praising, promises, incentives, affection and opportunities to be engaged in 'fun' or valued cultural activities to motivate children's/learners' learning. |
| Social organisation of endeavours: | Learning occurs through collaboration, flexible ensemble and active participation in ongoing activities with altered hierarchy between the adults/experts and children/learners. During free play, children/learners take initiatives, develop ideas, determine agendas and control pace, roles, rules and motivations. In contrast, while involved in play-oriented teaching–learning with adults the latter control learners' pace, attention, motivation and agency. However, in guided play, learners have the scope to exercise extended agency with reversed hierarchy when adults/experts become their playmates. |
| Goal of learning: | Through integration into a range of cultural activities, children/learners learn social skills and cultural responsibilities that enable them to contribute in routine cultural practices and develop a sense of community belongingness. |
| Means of learning: | Learning occurs both by traditional means (such as reading, writing and memorising) to achieve skills required for social inclusion and play-oriented interactive means that involves experts' (the community members/teachers) guidance, observation with wide and keen attention, and sometimes imitation and contribution. |
| Communication: | Communication takes place through words (written/verbal) and non-verbal means (such as body language, expressions and even silence) of communication. It also involves activities, which sometimes take place through modelling and mimicry/rehearsals/performances, and sometimes by coordination through shared reference in collective endeavours. |
| Assessment: | Learners are assessed through informal (such as observation) and formal (such as written or verbal tests, particularly in the classroom) assessment. It also involves ongoing corrections (which appraise learners' mastery and the supports provided in learning social skills) to facilitate learner's contributions during shared cultural endeavour. |

Play itself is a participatory approach. In the studied context, if we consider play as mere pleasure it may represent the same universal characteristics—intrinsically motivated, freely chosen, pleasurable, nonliteral and actively engaged activities (refer to Chapter Two). Findings

of the present study suggest that as a learning or pedagogical approach play entails different perceptions, particularly when adapted by a non-indigenous culture like that of Bangladesh. In this study, play-oriented learning portrays the format of instructed, modelled or structured practices as well as freely initiated practices. Adults instruct children or model an activity purposefully, or children as peripheral participants observe adults' activities and copy those or bring those themes into their play.

When play-oriented activities become a pedagogical approach and a teaching–learning tool, the children's learning setting is mostly organised by teachers. Again, within an environment of structured, instructed and modelled learning, young children are offered the scope to take their own initiatives, participate actively and contribute in the process of meaning-making. This is evident in the drawing of the young child in which he represented his own concept of the sun by adding rainbow colours, as directed by the teacher (see Images 27 and 28 in Chapter Five). In this practice, the adult becomes the guide/facilitator to assist the children in accomplishing their activities, rather than being their instructor. Hence, flexibility appears to be present in the process of learning when play is adopted as a teaching–learning tool.

This flexibility not only provides space for young children's initiative or contribution, but also revises the role of and relationship between the teacher and the learner. In the present study, play-oriented learning was evident as cultural activities (either native or imported ones) structured by adults/experts. This trend has its roots in the century-old historical and educational culture of Bangladesh (refer to Chapter One) characterised by formal, rote-based and structured learning in which children are treated as passive learners. However, findings of this study indicate that when the teacher became the learner's playmate and they took turns (by changing their roles) in play-oriented activities, the hierarchy was reshuffled between them. As young learners' roles were valued culturally, they exercised their own agency in play while constructing knowledge through participation. Though family context was the foci of this practice, this practice was also evident in the classroom and TTC contexts. Thus, play-oriented learning, as espoused by the PPC, offers a shift in the early years learning practices in Bangladesh's cultural context. It provides the opportunity to move from traditional rote learning (in which children are being treated as passive learners) to the practice of learning through participation.

In the words of Rogoff(personal communication),'a cultural logic' exists in every learning tradition 'that has an internal coherence' (Rogoff, personal communication). Similar to the

prisms of ALI, GR and LOPI, features of GLEPIC (refer to Figure 7.7) possess specific patterns constituting 'coherent fields of practice' that embed the internal 'logic' (Rogoff et al., 2007, p. 495). Again, the constellation of these holistically interrelated features as a whole (Rogoff, 2014; Rogoff et al., 2007) symbolises the broad and distinct culturally structured learning tradition of GLEPIC that is flexible in nature. It offers flexibility by providing space to accommodate any possible changes (for example, from structured to unstructured learning or from guided play to free play) in ongoing cultural practices. This approach may aid in framing the perceptions, practices and engagement patterns of different stakeholders, both adults (parents, teachers and government staff) and young children, in divergent cultural settings. This *complex* and *transitional* tradition of learning is still subject to variations. Though different traditions share some common features differences exist in patterns of approaches to children's learning. These similarities and differences remain to be 'articulated by researchers with intimate knowledge of their regions'(Coppens et al., 2014, p. 152). Continuing testing of the tradition/prism of GLEPIC by the researchers in similar or divergent cultural contexts may ensure its credence.

However, this new prism, which differs from the three learning tradition prisms of cultural organisation (ALI, GR and LOPI, as presented by Rogoff and her colleagues), offers a change in the sphere of early learning culture, particularly in the teaching-learning practices of Bangladesh, since it places play-oriented activities as central to early learning and development. This evolving tradition of learning practices, phrased GLEPIC, indicates the beginning of a new trend (involving participatory learning practices with revised power relationships between learners and adults/teachers and revived agency of learners) in the cultural context of Bangladesh. This evolving trend may bring changes not only in the early years' education of rural communities but also in the domain of overall educational practices in Bangladesh.

Rogoff et al., (2014) warned that:

> The cultural practice approach opens questions regarding which practices may be more stable or resilient when people become more distant from their roots or when they engage in communities or institutions with conflicting practices. (p. 93)

Hence, the studied society must be allowed time to realise how this shift brings changes in their cultural practices. The new transitional approach (GLEPIC) to culturally organised learning tradition may take a 'pure' shape (Rogoff et al., 2007, p. 495) over generations. The young children who are proceeding with a play-oriented learning experience at the early stage of their education will bring changes in the practices of the next generation. This study reinforces Chan

(2012) and Weinstein's (2002) claim that the present perceptions, beliefs, views, expectations and understandings of adults/parents (without play-based learning experience at school) influence their children's learning and development. Findings suggested that parents' own childhood experiences and social demands mould their perceptions and practices in determining learning context, goals, means, motivation, communication, assessment, engagement patterns and social organisation of learning practices. Similarly, today's young children (with a play-based learning experience at school and exposure to a play-oriented curriculum) will have different approaches towards early learning and development as adults/parents than those of their own parents. In other words, when they reach parenthood or adulthood their approaches towards their own children's learning and development might not be the same as those of their parents/teachers/community members. Therefore, an ethnographic study adopting a generational approach (Rogoff et al., 2014) may be useful to explore the uniform learning tradition that may take shape over generations. Further research, as demanded by Rogoff and her colleagues, is required to establish generality:

> Generality of particular cultural practices within ethnic groups cannot be assumed; it is an empirical question, aided by examination of patterns of historical continuities and changes in constellations of practices across generations and migrations. (Coppens et al., 204, p. 152)

## 7.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter synchronises the major findings outlined in previous data analysis and discussion chapters, and provides an extensive discussion on framing the evolving play-oriented learning traditions in the ECE context of Bangladesh. It brings together participants' perceptions, approaches and practices, as influenced by the incorporation of an imported play-oriented curriculum approach. It further configures prevailing overlapping, parallel and contrasting patterns of play-oriented early learning practices, as occurred in the classroom, family and TTC contexts.

Findings of this study suggested that no single prism of culturally organised learning traditions solely represents existing intricate play-oriented early learning practices in the studied settings of Bangladesh. This foregrounds the reason for reframing the existing prisms and ultimately leads towards a *complex, flexible* and *transitional* approach, named GLEPIC, to better address the play-oriented early learning practices in the studied context. It is also acknowledged that this proposed model is a transitional approach that may take a 'pure' shape over generations.

# Chapter 8: Conclusion

## 8.1 Overview

In this concluding chapter I summarise my study (including research background, queries and approaches) and highlight its major findings. This chapter further sheds light on the implications of this study (for theory, policy and practice), its limitations and directions for future research.

## 8.2 Synopsis of the Research

Introduction of a formal and organised PPE (as 1 year of study before entering mainstream education within the public primary school setting) and the PPC are two new additions in Bangladesh's education sector. This latest PPC adopted a non-indigenous play-oriented pedagogy that is at odds with the traditional rote-based learning culture. Teachers, parents, young children, policymakers and implementers encountered challenges when this imported curriculum approach was being implemented. When the curriculum was incorporated in the classroom it greatly influenced existing cultural values, beliefs, understandings and practices in relation to young children's learning and development. These unexplored issues are the focus of this study in which I explored the tensions between the new play-oriented approach of teaching–learning and existing cultural values and practices in the ECE context of Bangladesh. It unpacked the evolving cultural nature of participation (as influenced by the implementation of the play-oriented PPC) of both adults and young children in the process of learning and development.

The research queries that determined the scope of this study are as follows. Main research question:

> How does the introduction of the play-oriented PPC inform the cultural nature of learning practices in the ECE context of Bangladesh?

Subsidiary research questions:

a) What are the social organisations of adults' and young children's participation in play-oriented learning activities in different settings (including the home, classroom and TTC)?

b) What are parents' expectations from such learning endeavours and how do they assess their children's achievement of those learning goals?

c) What motivates young children in play-oriented learning and how do they experience these learning activities?

d) How do government officials (who develop/implement policies) interpret this play-oriented curriculum and communicate it to the teachers?

e) How do teachers perceive and implement this curriculum approach as a teaching–learning strategy and integrate themselves and young learners in such practices?

This qualitative study adopted a socio-cultural approach to explore play-oriented early learning perceptions, approaches and practices of both adults and young children in three different settings: the TTC, pre-primary classroom and family in rural Bangladesh. Data collection involved multiple sources: video observations of classrooms, family and TTC practices, still images, documents, artefacts, field notes and interviews of six participants in each category (young children, parents, teachers and government officials who develop/implement policies including TTs).It investigated the impacts of the recently introduced play-oriented PPC on the cultural nature of participation (of young children, parents, teachers and government officials who develop/implement policies) and organisation of learning traditions in the ECE context of Bangladesh.

The work of Rogoff and her colleagues that posits culture as determining the organisation of learning traditions and the nature of participation within early childhood educational practices (Paradise & Rogoff, 2009; Rogoff, 2014; Rogoff et al., 2003; 2007) informed the conceptual, theoretical and analytical framing of this study. This study presented their work, particularly the multifaceted prisms (ALI, GR and LOPI, which represent distinct learning traditions in divergent cultural settings) of culturally organised traditions of learning practices as a comprehensive theoretical framework. This framework guided my data analysis and interpretation when examining how the studied adults' and young children's cultural practices evolved as they were introduced to an imported play-oriented PPC.

## 8.3 Summary of Major Findings

This study suggests that the play-oriented PPC has brought about a change in the early year's teaching–learning approaches and practices at school, home and in the TTC. It has introduced new understandings of learning—moving away from the traditional rote-based passive mode

of learning towards an active and interactive learning. Teachers' or trainers' ways of imparting knowledge in a one-way/linear fashion has been replaced by a participatory learning approach. They have adopted the play-oriented teaching–learning method that easily attracts young learners and engages them into the process of learning. These changes have significantly affected cultural practices such as the teacher–children relationship. Parents' approach to learning at school has been modified. Parents recognise play as a means of learning that reduces young children's fears about school and study and helps them settle into a new environment. Both the teachers and parents considered play-oriented activities as easing children's tension during transition from home to school. Besides, young children brought their classroom experiences home. Hence, the classroom practices of imported play influenced the community play culture.

However, the concepts, understandings, approaches, implementation and practices of learning through play-oriented activities as a curriculum approach are not same as those of a developed/Western society. These have been moulded as per cultural and educational contexts of the studied community. These perceptions and practices remained subject to the nature of participation of different stakeholders in play-oriented activities, parental/community expectations from young children's learning, teacher–children relationship, daily curriculum and the classroom context. Hence, the concept and practices of play-oriented learning revealed a new understanding in the studied socio-cultural context. This new approach considers learning more as playful learning than play-based learning.

The pattern of play-oriented practices and cultural participation (involving community organisation of learning, learning motives, social organisation of endeavours, goals of learning, means of learning and communication and assessment practices) also demanded a new approach to frame the play-oriented early years learning tradition in the studied context. Features/characteristics of three learning tradition prisms (ALI, GR and LOPI, as presented by Rogoff and her colleagues) are blended in the given community. Findings of this study suggest that though some of the patterns of ALI, GR and LOPI are present in the TTC, classroom and home settings in rural Bangladesh, no single prism solely represents the learning tradition in the given context. To better explain prevailing intricate patterns of play-oriented early years learning practices, this study introduces a new complex, flexible and transitional framework, termed *guided learning encouraging participation, initiative and contribution* (GLEPIC). It is 'complex' because it merges 'overlapping/contrasting/parallel' patterns of the features of three

prisms (ALI, GR and LOPI). It is 'flexible' because it tries to fit divergent patterns of practices (the classroom, family and TTC) into one framework. It is 'transitional' because it addresses cultural practices that are undergoing a phase of transition (from rote-based learning to a play-oriented participatory learning approach). This study acknowledges that this transitional learning tradition may be modified and take a 'pure' shape (Rogoff et al., 2007, p. 495) over generations and across cultures.

## 8.4 Implications for Theory, Policy and Practice

### 8.4.1 Implications of the study for theory

The present study reveals new patterns of play-oriented teaching–learning practices that offer a change in Bangladesh's existing educational culture, particularly in terms of perceptions about play and learning, teaching–learning practices and the relationship between teachers and learners. These patterns entail reconceptualisation of dominant discourses of play-oriented learning approaches and contribute to new theorising of non-Western understandings of play-oriented EC curriculum approach.

Further, this study makes two major contributions to the literature. The first is the presentation of a comprehensive theoretical framework to conduct socio-cultural research in relation to learning and development. The second is the new model of learning tradition (that is, GLEPIC) that frames a different configuration of features of learning practices. The theoretical and analytical framework of my present study greatly relied on Rogoff's understandings of learning and development. The framework combines different models of learning traditions –ALI, GR and LOPI as offered by Rogoff and her colleagues. This has benefited my study with a sound conceptual, theoretical and analytical base. This framework may assist future investigations of learning patterns in divergent cultural communities. It emphasises that the three learning tradition prisms provide the base for understanding how learning occurs in different cultural contexts; however, the prevailing learning trends in a given community, as observed in this study, may be subject to a new framing. Findings of the present investigation led to the development of a new prism namely GLEPIC that possesses a different configuration of the features of learning traditions as a whole, enabling the intricate cultural practices in the given context to be addressed. This new model provides a new perspective of cultural organisation of play-oriented learning practices.

With reference to the educational culture in Bangladeshi context and different stakeholders' perceptions about play-oriented learning (as elaborated in Chapter 1 and 2) this study suggests to adapt an imported curriculum as per socio-cultural demands. It appeared that both the teachers and trainers faced challenges in terms of their skills, teaching-learning methods, existing facilities and cultural expectations about young children's learning. Parents appreciated this new curriculum approach as a part of school learning. However, they value rote-based learning. They still rely on the number their children obtain in the written examinations to judge the learning progress. Administering the implementation of this new curriculum is still challenging to the government officials. Hence, this study advocates for a tailored play-oriented curriculum, administrative initiatives and policies reforms to support its adaptation.

The findings and suggestions of this study stimulate our queries to go for an in-depth understanding about how learning occurs in a particular socio-cultural context. Ultimately, these findings will inform the future thinking of EC professionals and policymakers, both in Bangladesh and societies with a similar context, in adopting culturally viable educational policies, curriculum and teaching–learning approaches to better address the learning and development needs and rights of young children.

### 8.4.2 Implications of the study for policy and practice

Formal PPE and PPC are two new additions to Bangladesh's public education domain. The present study depicts the policies related to these two aspects. It explores Bangladesh's first play-oriented PPC and its implementation and influence in early years learning practices. It provides a profound understanding about the movement towards deeper understandings regarding the conceptualisation and contextualisation of play-oriented teaching–learning policies and practices, specific to the context of Bangladesh. The study's findings reveal that the PPC offers a shift in Bangladesh's teaching-learning practices. It has introduced a transformation from traditional rote-leaning to a play-oriented participatory approach of learning and development that recognises children's agency in the process of learning. However, the present study foregrounds the gap between the policy and practice. The findings indicate that this curriculum and related ECE policies appear to be overwhelmed. Some of the practical issues that require policy attention follow:

- Play-oriented teaching–learning is a participatory approach that is subject to adequate space, time and resources, and sometimes one-to-one interactions. However, the PPC

overlooks the classroom realities in rural Bangladesh. These public schools lack the required play space, materials/resources, time, funding, classroom assistance and infrastructure. To overcome these issues, the government should adopt policies to support funding, infrastructure development and supply of resources to aid children's play-oriented learning.

- Teachers are inundated with expectations to implement a prescribed daily curriculum within a timeframe of 2 ½ hours. Within this timeframe, a single teacher struggles to apply a play-oriented participatory teaching–learning approach, while sometimes dealing with around 50 children. This also makes them incapable of practicing free play/ child-centred play, as promoted by the PPC. Instead, they opt for a teacher-directed play approach. Thus, children's voices are sometimes suppressed. Adding provisions to extend class time and employ assistants or local volunteers to help the PPE teacher may reduce their struggle and provide scope to uphold children's agency.

- Provided with a very short PPE training (the 7-days of training observed in this study has since been extended to up to 15 days), teachers are to perform a foreign pedagogical approach like play-oriented leaning. Within this limited time, TTs are unable to provide the trainee teachers with the expected conceptual understandings and 'hands-on' experiences, while both theoretical knowledge and practical experiences are equally important for the implementation of a pedagogical concept such as play. As with primary school teachers, PPE teachers should also be provided with long-term (6–12 month) training to provide them adequate scope to understand and experience play-oriented pre-primary teaching. Professional development of both PPE teachers and TTs is a prerequisite for proper implementation of an imported curriculum approach.

- Though there are specific regulations for enrolling a maximum of 30 children per class, due to local community pressure schools are compelled to enrol more than that number, which sometimes exceeds 50. To address this reality, revision of regulations is necessary, such as to offer two shifts (morning and afternoon) for PPE classes in the same school.

- Policies are made to assign particular primary school teachers as PPE teachers in their respective primary schools. While I was conducting my fieldwork for this study the government Bangladesh started recruiting new PPE teachers. However, teaching the pre-primary class is not the only job they perform. They are also responsible for conducting Grade One to Five classes in the same primary schools. It does not allow

them to concentrate on organising and implementing their daily curriculum for the pre-primary class. Lack of adequate time also limits their scope to develop relationships with families and engage families in their children's learning and development. They rarely conduct formal meetings with parents or the prescribed mother meetings. Responsibilities of PPE teachers should be made specific to enable them to perform well.

- To cope with community demands, teachers have to compromise their expected teaching approaches. For instance, to comply with families' expectations, they arrange formal written exams for the young children during annual/terminal exams of the primary school. Adequate time and scope is required to develop relationships with families so the teachers can communicate to them the objectives of a play-oriented curriculum (such as the significance of assessing young children's learning and development in ways other than formal evaluation/tests). Above all, teachers themselves should realise the importance of this teaching–learning approach, and this can be supported by their professional development.

- Provisions are made to adopt non-indigenous play-oriented activities. For example, teachers are prescribed (in the teachers' guide) stories and games that are not common in the local culture. Again, most of the teachers were observed practicing only one or two specific games. Adding local games and stories (instead of imported ones) familiar to both teachers and families could make the PPC more culturally appropriate and practicable.

- Protocols are obligatory for the monitoring of PPE classes. However, the officials responsible for monitoring do not have any particular guidelines or format to conduct this monitoring task. Since they do this as part of the primary school monitoring task, they evaluate the pre-primary class based on criteria similar to the primary classes. However, by no means does this match with the requirements of a play-oriented curriculum, which is completely different from the primary curriculum. A particular guideline for monitoring the pre-primary class and regular feedback may assist the targeted implementation of the play-oriented curriculum.

Thus, data from this study suggest ECE policy revisions. Mitigating the gap between policy and practice can make the curriculum more feasible.

## 8.5 Limitations

The present exploration of play-oriented learning practices offers significant implications for both policy and practice in the ECE sector of Bangladesh. However, one of the limitations of this study is the absence of literature/research in the related field. No significant study has been conducted to investigate learning traditions, play-oriented PPC or the newly introduced PPE in the public sector of Bangladesh. Due to this, the present study was unable to compare or contrast its findings with research in a similar context. Nevertheless, as pioneering research, I believe this investigation provides the signposts for future research.

The present research has limitations in relation to research settings and participants. It focused only on public schools in three areas in rural Bangladesh. Those public schools and selected geographical areas do not necessarily represent the culture of the entirety of Bangladesh. Coincidentally, all the parent participants were female; in contrast, all government official participants (including monitoring officers, TTs and policymakers) were male. The male–female ratio was equal among the child participants. However, among teacher participants only one teacher was male. Moreover, while the teacher and government official participants were from middle-class backgrounds, all the participating families belonged to a low socio-economic background. Hence, perceptions of middle-class families (parents or young children) regarding play and learning are not reflected in this study. Some may consider this disparity of gender and social status of the participants as a weakness of this study, as it excludes the views of female government officials and male parents in Bangladesh's male-dominated society. In the given society mothers are considered as the primary caregiver of the young children while the fathers are mostly engaged in income generating activities. Thus the perceptions of these mothers, who have great influence in young children's learning and development, are valued by the community. On the other hand, in the public sector female's participation is not equal to their male counterparts; however, the number of female officials is increasing. Therefore, despite limitations this investigation is enriched with considerable variation of the participants to understand the ECE and cultural practices involving it. Again, the mentioned limitations of my study provide the ground for broader future research on an extended community.

Though due to limited samples data analysis might not lead to 'generalisation of ideas', this constructivist-interpretivist study uncovered ideas generated by individuals (government officials, teachers, teacher trainers, parents and young children) and institutions (home/school/TTC) that might be 'broadly applicable' (Suter, 2012, p. 353). As qualitative

research, it counts upon the individuals' construction of meanings that demonstrate 'wider resonance' (Mason, 2002, p. 8) about perceptions, values, beliefs, goals and practices in relation to play-oriented learning, instead of constructing the truth (Crotty, 1998).

## 8.6 Suggestions for Future Research

In this study I investigated the play-oriented early years learning practices in rural Bangladesh. The findings revealed that through the implementation of the play-oriented PPC, learning practice has moved away from traditional rote-based passive learning to adapt a new participatory learning approach. This has ultimately introduced a paradigm shift in the teaching–learning culture of Bangladesh. My exploration also led to a new learning tradition, namely GLEPIC. The outcomes of this study provide the base for future research in the related fields. Cross-cultural or cross-institutional comparative studies may add to the findings of this research.

Future research may expand both institutional and community settings, such as involving private schools and urban communities. Prior to the introduction of PPE in the public sector in 2011formal early years learning practices were centred in private schools/ kindergartens/ nurseries for decades. Urban communities with more civic amenities (such as electricity, transport, communication and infrastructure) and educational facilities (such as classrooms, playgrounds, play materials, intense monitoring and easy access to training) may present different learning patterns comparing to those of rural communities. In this study, the families belonged to lower socio-economic backgrounds. Research on educated middle-class families in the urban communities may uncover different community approaches to learning through play.

Future research may further include cross-cultural studies. Societies in other countries with socio-cultural, economic and educational contexts similar to those of Bangladesh may expand our understanding of the cultural nature of play-oriented learning across cultures. The comprehensive theoretical framework presented in this study may enable future research to develop in-depth understandings of curriculum approaches, such as play, and learning practices across cultures and time. In this regard, an ethnographic study with a generational approach (Rogoff et al., 2014) may offer more scope to future socio-cultural research. These extended and rigorous studies will also support weighing the feasibility and validity of the new transitional prism—GLEPIC—and assist it in obtaining a uniform framing.

## 8.7 Concluding Remarks

In this study I investigated an unexplored sector of ECE in Bangladesh and combined understandings, concepts, values, beliefs, goals and practices in relation to play-oriented teaching-learning, policy and culture. Different stakeholders of ECE (including policymakers, policy implementers, TTs, teachers, parents and young children) encountered challenges when Bangladesh's education sector added a new phase of teaching-learning by introducing a formal and organised PPE in the public sector and a curriculum that adopted an imported play-oriented pedagogical approach at odds with traditional rote-based learning. Thejourney throughout my research was full of challenges and strength. Unequal representation of gender and limited scope (in terms of geographical, institutional and community settings) minimise the generalisability of the findings. However, this study provides the signposts to stimulate further debate in relation to pedagogical concepts and to encourage research in cultural patterns of learning practices across cultures.

The focus of this study is limited to a nation; however, its implications are global. The findings of this study reveal how an imported play-oriented teaching–learning approach has been adapted in a non-traditional way, which ultimately demands the reconceptualisation of the notion of play as pedagogy. The cultural nature of learning practices, as influenced by this play approach, also foreground the arguments for a new theoretical approach—a new model—to address the unique patterns of learning traditions in the studied context. The strength of the study is its comprehensive theoretical framework that provides a specific socio-cultural lens to explore the implementation of the play-oriented PPC and the evolving pattern of learning practices. This framework may assist future socio-cultural research to investigate children's learning and development patterns. Further, the new model of GLEPIC offered by this study has the potential to address complex patterns of young children's learning and development in socio-cultural contexts similar to that of Bangladesh.

Findings of my present study unpack the tensions in conceptualising play-oriented activities and acknowledge the transition of leaning practices of the new learning model. However, these issues affirm that the implementation of an adopted and adapted play-oriented PPC has introduced a change in the educational culture of Bangladesh. The new play-oriented PPC has brought a paradigm shift in pedagogical approaches, the organisation of learning settings, the goals/means of teaching–learning, the teacher–children relationship, and to approaches of both teachers and parents towards the learning concepts and practices. Last but not least, it has

provided space for children's agency in the process of learning. These evolving patterns of learning practices may ultimately mark a uniform framing of the prevailing learning traditions and rigorous research within the studied culture and across cultures at the global level may lead towards achieving this goal.

**Details of Pre-Primary Education Training Program for 2012-2013**
(DPE, n.d. p. 20.)

| | |
|---|---|
| **Duration** | 6 days |
| **Tentative date** | December 2012-April 2013 |
| **Venue** | URC or Convenient Place at Upazila |
| **Trainees** | 10000 Teachers from 10000 [primary]Schools |
| **Trainers** | Assistant District Primary Education Officers (DPEOs), Upazila Education Officers (UEOs), Assistant Upazila Education Officers (AUEOs), Upazila Resource Centre (URC) Instructors URC & Asst. Instructors |
| **Total no. of trainees** | 10000 teachers |
| **No. of batches** | 335 (30 Per batch) |
| **Objectives** | - To introduce the pre-primary curriculum to the teacher<br>- To know concept of the area of children's early development<br>- To know the characteristics of the children age 5-6<br>- The responsibilities of types of activities and techniques in classes |
| **Contents** | - Pre-primary education<br>- Subject based discussion: national anthem<br>- Subject based discussion: exercise<br>- Subject based discussion: rhyme & song<br>- Subject based discussion: story<br>- Subject based discussion: arts & crafts<br>- Subject based discussion: Bengali reading & writing<br>- Subject based discussion: games<br>- Subject based discussion: mathematics<br>- Subject based discussion: environment & health<br>- Yearly lesson plan<br>- Parents meeting<br>- Children's evaluation<br>- Attachment |

**Enrolment in Pre-Primary Education (in GPS & RNGPS), 2010 & 2011**
(DPE, 2012, p. 34)

| Type | 2010 | | | 2011 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Boys** | **Girls** | **Total** | **Boys** | **Girls** | **Total** |
| **Government Primary School (GPS)** | 320,707 | 314,226 | 634,933 | 614,828 | 594,460 | 1,209,288 |
| **Registered Non-Government Primary School (RNGPS)** | 130,936 | 129,655 | 260,591 | 168,669 | 167,871 | 336,540 |
| **Total** | 451,643 | 442,881 | 895,524 | 783,497 | 762,331 | 1,545,828 |

**Enrolment, Repetition, Cycle completion and Dropout rates (in primary education sector in Bangladesh** (DPE, 2012, pp. 24, 36)

|  | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **(1) Net enrolment rate (%)** | 87.2 | 90.9 | 91.1 | 90.8 | 93.9 | 94.8 | 98.7 |
| **(2) Repetition rate (%)** | 10.5 | 11.2 | 11.6 | 11.3 | 12.1 | 12.6 | 11.1 |
| **(3) Cycle dropout rate (%)** | 47.2 | 50.5 | 50.5 | 49.3 | 45.1 | 39.8 | 29.7 |
| **(4) Cycle completion rate (%) [=100 – (3)]** | 52.8 | 49.5 | 49.5 | 50.7 | 54.9 | 60.2 | 70.3 |

**Administrative structure of Primary Education in Bangladesh**
(source: http://www.mopme.gov.bd; PEDP 3, 2012)

```
        ┌─────────────────────────────┐
        │ Ministry of Primary & Mass  │
        │     Education (MOPME)       │
        └─────────────────────────────┘
                      │
                      ▼
        ┌─────────────────────────────┐
        │  Directorate of Primary     │
        │     Education (DPE)         │
        └─────────────────────────────┘
                      │
                      ▼
```

**Divisional level (7 divisions):**

```
        ┌─────────────────────────────┐
        │   Divisional Primary        │
        │   Education Office          │
        │   (Divisional Primary       │
        └─────────────────────────────┘
                      │
```

**District level (64 districts):**

```
┌──────────────────────┐        ┌──────────────────────┐
│ District Primary     │        │  Primary (Teachers)  │
│ Education Office:     │───────▶│  Training Institute  │
│ (District Primary    │        │  (PTI): (PTI         │
│ Education            │        │  superintendent; PTI │
└──────────────────────┘        └──────────────────────┘
           │                               │
```

**Upazila level (500 Upazilas)**

```
┌──────────────────────┐        ┌──────────────────────┐
│ Upazila Education    │        │  Upazila Resource    │
│ Office (Upazila      │───────▶│  Centre (URC): URC   │
│ Primary Education    │        │  Instructor; Assistant│
│ Officer; Assistant   │        │  URC instructors     │
│ Upazila              │        └──────────────────────┘
└──────────────────────┘                   │
           │                               │
           └──────────┐         ┌──────────┘
                      ▼         ▼
              ┌─────────────────────────┐
              │     Primary school      │
              └─────────────────────────┘
```

**National and international documents influencing PPE Policy initiatives in Bangladesh** (adapted from MOPME, 2008; NCTB, 2011)

**International Documents**

| EFA Declaration | Dakar-EFA Framework |
|---|---|

| UNCRC | ECEDAW | MDG (2000) |
|---|---|---|

**National Documents**
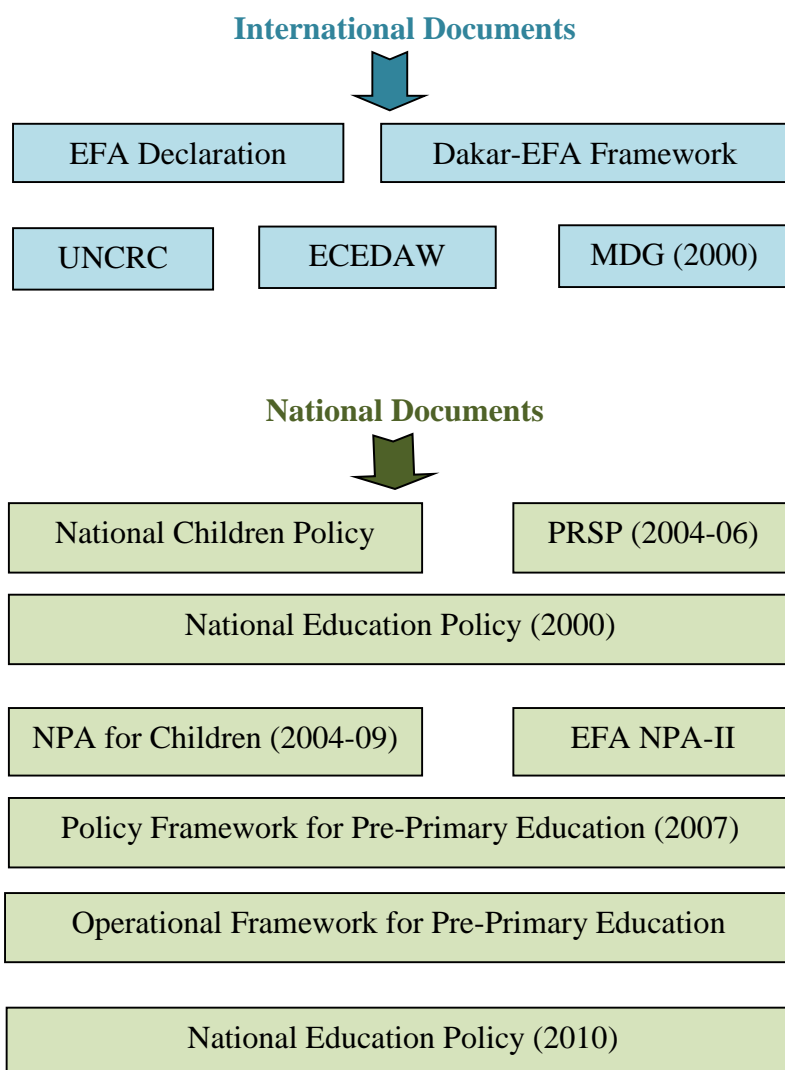
| National Children Policy | PRSP (2004-06) |
|---|---|

| National Education Policy (2000) |
|---|

| NPA for Children (2004-09) | EFA NPA-II |
|---|---|

| Policy Framework for Pre-Primary Education (2007) |
|---|

| Operational Framework for Pre-Primary Education |
|---|

| National Education Policy (2010) |
|---|

| EFA | : | Education For All |
|---|---|---|
| CRC | : | United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child |
| ECEDAW | : | Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women |
| MDG | : | Millennium Development Goal |
| PRSR | : | Poverty Reduction Strategic Paper |
| NPA | : | National Plan of Action |

**Explanatory statements for Teachers**

MONASH University

Date: _____

**Explanatory Statement: [Pre-primary class teachers]**

**Title:   An exploration of play in the Pre-Primary Curriculum in Bangladesh.**

| This information sheet is for you to keep |
|---|

My name is Nurun Nahar Chowdhury and I am conducting a research project with Dr Corine Rivalland and Dr Hilary Monk, lecturers in the Faculty of Education, towards a PhD at Monash University.  This means that I will be writing a thesis, which is the equivalent of a 300 page book.

You are invited to take part in this study.  Please read this Explanatory Statement in full before making a decision.

**Why were you chosen for this research**
Your school is chosen as research site as it represents the setting of this research. You are chosen for this research because you are teaching the pre-primary class in your school. You have potential to offer information about your understandings, perceptions, practices and experiences related to the new pre-primary curriculum. Your contact details will be provided by yourself on voluntary basis should you decide to participate in this study.

**The aim/purpose of the research**
I am conducting this research to investigate how the new pre-primary curriculum is supplementing/impeding the play based learning and development of young children in Bangladesh. Its objective is to understand the perspectives of teachers, parents and government officials about the role of play as early learning and development. It also intends to explore how young children involve themselves in play activities that supports their learning and development.

**Possible Benefits**
It is expected that this research will make a number of contributions to theory, policy and practice in the field of early childhood education. The findings of this study may inform academics in theorising play as a curriculum approach, early childhood educators and professionals in developing teaching strategies/approaches, and policy makers in reframing curriculum documents.

**What does the research involve**
The study involves an audio-recorded individual interview and a video-recorded observation of one of your classroom session. Any other information/documents (like photographs, written reports, or any artefacts) that you may provide in support of your information will be appreciated. Photographs of you

may be taken during the interview and classroom observation. During interview video recordings and photographs of the play event in your classroom will be presented to you to get your responses about the event.

It is expected that your audio-recorded interview, photographs and video recordings will assist the research through trustworthy representation of your responses. Photographs and video recordings of the observation will be used to get the actual scenario of the event of play in the contexts of school. These digitally recorded data (audio and visual) will be more authentic and assist the data analysis procedure.

**How much time will the research take**
Should you consent to participate, this study will expect the following time from you:

- Observation of a classroom session: No time will be demanded from you during this session as it will be a non-participant classroom video-observation. The only requirement is access to the classroom for the duration of a pre-primary classroom session (which is about two and half an hour).
- Individual interview: the classroom observation will be followed by a one hour interview at a given time.

During interview you would be asked about the following topics
1. the role of play in the new pre-primary curriculum
2. teaching practices and strategies used in pre-primary classrooms
3. the role of play in the education and development of young children
4. factors influencing play and play practices in the classroom
5. the impact of new play curriculum on teaching and learning

**Inconvenience/discomfort**
Minimum levels of inconvenience or discomfort are expected to be experienced if you decide to take part in this study. In the unlikely event that you feel discomforted please discontinue the interview or observation.

**Payment**
As a sign of appreciation of your participation in this research you will receive a small gift (such as a box of chocolates or a lunch box) to a value of AUD $10.00.

**You can withdraw from the research**
Being in this study is completely voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. Should you consent to participate, you may withdraw from further participation at any stage without any repercussions, but you will only be able to withdraw data prior to your approval of the interview transcript or video records.

**Confidentiality**
A number of steps will be taken to protect your privacy prior to publication of the results of this study. Pseudonyms will be used for all data that may have any identifying features (such as names of participant, school, institution and places). Any information will be aggregated and be totally de-identified for use. As well, you will be given the opportunity to read the individual transcript of your interview and see the video records so you can approve the information. Visual data (such as photographs and videos) that contain you might be used for professional developmental sessions in education and/or educational publications only if you consent so. However, if you consent to take your photographs and videos (and use those as data in this research) there is a possibility for you to be identified.

**Storage of data**

Data collected will be stored in accordance with Monash University regulations, kept on University premises, in a locked filing cabinet for 5 years.

**Use of data for other purposes**

The information you may provide (including audio-recorded interview, video recordings, photographs and documents) may be used in writing a report about this study and for publication (in a book, journal or conference), further professional development or any other research purposes. As mentioned above, various steps will be undertaken to protect your privacy. Besides, without your prior permission no such data in which you might be identified (for example, photographs and video recordings) will be used while reporting data or approaching for publications.

**Results**

If you would like to be informed of the aggregate research finding, please contact Nurun Nahar Chowdhury on ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

If you agree to participate in this study, please complete and return the attached informed consent. I will contact you shortly after receiving your consent to make arrangements for the interview at a mutually convenient time and place.

| If you would like to contact the researchers about any aspect of this study, please contact the Chief Investigator: | If you have a complaint concerning the manner in which this research (project number) is being conducted, please contact: |
|---|---|
| Dr Corine Rivalland<br>Lecturer, Faculty of Education<br>Monash University, Peninsula Campus<br>PO Box 527, Frankston<br>VIC 3199, Australia<br>Phone: +61 3 9904 4546; Fax: +61 3 9904 4027<br>Email:<br>Corine.Rivalland@education.monash.edu.au | 1. Executive Officer<br>Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC)<br>Building 3e  Room 111<br>Research Office<br>Monash University VIC 3800<br>Tel: +61 3 9905 2052<br>Fax: +61 3 9905 3831<br>Email: muhrec@monash.edu<br><br><br>2. Dr Akmal Hussain<br>Professor<br>Department of International Relations<br>University of Dhaka<br>Dhaka – 1201<br>Bangladesh<br>Phone: 88-01552361374/<br>88-02-9561920-73/Ext. 6544<br>Email:  akmalhussainir@yahoo.com |

Thank you.

(Signature.............)
Nurun Nahar Chowdhury

**Explanatory statements for Teachers (translated into Bengali language)**

তারিখঃ _____

# ব্যাখ্যামূলক বিবৃতি: [প্রাক প্রাথমিকশ্রেনীশিক্ষক]

## শিরোনাম: বাংলাদেশে প্রাক প্রাথমিক পাঠ্যক্রমের মধ্যে খেলা ভিত্তিক শিক্ষার অন্বেষণ।

### এই তথ্য শীট আপনার সংরক্ষনেরজন্য

আমার নাম নুরুন নাহার চৌধুরী এবং আমি চযউ-র জন্য মোনাশ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের শিক্ষা অনুষদ অন্তর্ভুক্তপ্রভাষক Dr Corine Rivalland এবং Dr Hilary Monk-এর সঙ্গেএকটি গবেষণা প্রকল্প পরিচালনা করছি। আমি একটি গবেষণামূলক প্রবন্ধ লিখবো যা একটি ৩০০ পৃষ্ঠার বইয়ের সমতুল্য।

আপনাকে এই গবেষণায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য আমন্ত্রণ জানানো হচ্ছে। অনুগ্রহ করে সিদ্ধান্ত নেওয়ার আগে এই পুরো ব্যাখ্যামূলক বিবৃতিটি পড়ুন।

### এই গবেষণার জন্য আপনাকে নির্বাচনের কারণ

এই গবেষণার জন্য আপনার স্কুলকে নির্বাচন করা হয়েছে কারণ এটি এই গবেষণার প্রকৃত নমুনা উপস্থাপন করে। আপনাকে এই গবেষণার জন্য নির্বাচন করা হয়েছে কারণ আপনি এই স্কুলের প্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেনীতে শিক্ষকতা করছেন। আপনি এই নতুন প্রাক-প্রাথমিক পাঠ্যক্রম বিষয়ক আপনার বোধ, দৃষ্টিভঙ্গি, কার্যক্রন এবং অভিজ্ঞতা সম্পর্কে গুরুত্বপূর্ণ তথ্য দিতে সক্ষম। আপনি এই গবেষণায় অংশগ্রহণ করলে আপনার যোগাযোগের বিবরণী স্বত: স্ফূর্ত অংশগ্রহণ হিসেবে প্রদান করবেন।

### গবেষণার লক্ষ্য/উদ্দেশ্য

নতুন প্রাক প্রাথমিক পাঠ্যক্রমকিভাবে বাংলাদেশের শিশুদের খেলারমাধ্যমে শিক্ষা এবং উন্নয়নকেপ্রতিস্থাপিত বা প্রতিরোধকরছে তা অনুসন্ধানের জন্য আমি এই গবেষণাটি পরিচালনা করছি। প্রথমিক শিক্ষা ও উন্নয়নহিসাবেখেলারভূমিকা সম্পর্কে শিক্ষক, মা বাবা এবং সরকারি কর্মকর্তাদের দৃষ্টিভঙ্গি বুঝতে পারা এই গবেষণারউদ্দেশ্য।শিশুদের নিজেদেরকে খেলার কার্যক্রমেজড়িত করে কিভাবে তাদের শিক্ষা ও উন্নয়নকে সমর্থন করে তা অন্বেষণও এই গবেষণার উদ্দেশ্য।

### সম্ভাব্য উপকারিতা

প্রাথমিক শিশু শিক্ষা ক্ষেত্রের তত্ত্ব, নীতি ও অনুশীলনে এই গবেষণার অবদান প্রত্যাশিত।এই অধ্যায়নের মাধ্যমে পাওয়া তথ্যের আলোকে খেলা একটি শিক্ষাতত্ত্ব হিসেবে বিবেচিত হতে পারে, শিক্ষকের প্রাথমিক শিক্ষাদানের কৌশলের উন্নয়ন হতে পারে এবং পাঠ্যক্রম পুণর্গঠন করা যেতে পারে।

### গবেষণা সংশ্লিষ্ট বিষয়

এই গবেষণায় রয়েছে একটি অডিওকৃত একক সাক্ষাতকার এবং একটি ভিডিওকৃতশ্রেনীকক্ষ পর্যবেক্ষন।আপনার তথ্যের সমর্থনে দেয়া যে কোন নথিপত্র(ছবি, নিতীমালা পত্র, শিল্পকর্ম)প্রশংসিত হবে। সাক্ষাতকারের সময় ও শ্রেনীকক্ষ পর্যবেক্ষনকালে আপনার ছবি নেয়া হতে পারে।

## গবেষণরসময়

আপনি গবেষণায় অংশগ্রহণ করলে, এই গবেষণার জন্য আপনার কাছে নিম্নোক্ত সময় প্রত্যাশিতঃ

- শ্রেনীকক্ষের অধিবেশন পর্যবেক্ষণঃ যেহেতু এসময় কোন অংশগ্রহণ ছাড়া শুধুমাত্র শ্রেনীকক্ষের ভিডিও-পর্যবেক্ষণ করা হবে সেহেতু আপনার কাছে কোন সময় চাওয়া হবেনা। একমাত্র দাবি থাকবে ক্লাস চলাকালীন সময়ে (যা ২ ঘন্টা ৩০ মিনিটব্যাপী হয়ে থাকে) সেখানে উপস্থিত থাকার অনুমতি।

- একক সাক্ষাতকারঃ শ্রেনীকক্ষ পর্যবেক্ষণ করার পরবর্তী এক ঘন্টা একক সাক্ষাতকার গ্রহণ করা হবে।

সাক্ষাতকার গ্রহণকালে আপনাকে নিম্নোক্ত প্রশ্নগুলো করা হবেঃ

১) প্রাক-প্রাইমারীর নতুন পাঠ্যক্রমে খেলার ভূমিকা কি?

২) প্রাক-প্রাইমারী শ্রেনীকক্ষে আপনার শিক্ষাদানের প্রক্রিয়াকে এতা কিভাবে উদ্বুদ্ধ করে?

৩) শিশুদের উন্নয়নে খেলার ব্যবহারকে আপনি কিভাবে বিবেচনা করেন?

৪) শ্রেনীকক্ষে খেলা এবং খেলার অভ্যাস সম্পর্কে আপনার দৃষ্টিভঙ্গিকে কোন কোন বিষয় প্রভাবিত করে?

৫) এই নতুন পাঠ্যক্রম বাস্তবায়নের ফলে প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা ও উন্নয়নের উপর কি কি প্রভাব উপলব্ধি করা যাচ্ছে?

## অসুবিধা

এই অধ্যায়নে অংশগ্রহণের ফলে আপনার কোন অসুবিধা হবেনা। যদি কোন কিছুতে আপনি অস্বাচ্ছন্দ বোধ করেন তাহলে আপনি সাক্ষাতকার ও পর্যবেক্ষণ থামিয়ে দিতে পারেন।

## অর্থপ্রদাণ

এই গবেষণায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য আপনার প্রতি কৃতজ্ঞতা প্রকাশে আপনাকে সামান্য উপহার দেয়া হবে (যেমন, এক বাক্স চকলেট বা দুপুরের খাবার)যার মূল্য অস্ট্রেলীয় ১০ ডলারের সমপরিমাণ।

## আপনি গবেষণা প্রত্যাহার করতে পারেন

এই গবেষণায় আপনি সম্পূর্ণ স্বাধীন এবং গবেষণায় অংশগ্রহণে আপনি বাধ্য নন। অংশগ্রহণে অনুমতি দেয়ার পর যে কোন মুহুর্তে কোন বিরুপ প্রতিক্রীয়া ছাড়াই আপনি অনুমতি প্রত্যাহার করতে পারেন, কিন্তু সাক্ষাতকার ও পর্যবেক্ষণের প্রতিলিপিঅনুমোদনেরপর প্রদত্য ডেটা প্রত্যাহার করা যাবেনা।

## গোপনীয়তা

গবেষণার ফলাফল প্রকাশের পূর্বে সর্বপ্রকারে আপনার গোপনীয়তা রক্ষা করা হবে। আপনার পরিচয় (অংশগ্রহণকারীর নাম, বিদ্যালয়, প্রতিষ্ঠান ও জায়গা) প্রকাশ পায় এমন সকল ডেটা তে ছদ্দনাম ব্যবহার করা হবে। সকল তথ্য ব্যবহারের জন্য একত্রিত ও ভিন্ন ভাবে শণাক্ত করা হবে। আপনার দেয়া তথ্যের প্রতিলিপি তৈরীর পর আপনার অনুমোদনের জন্য আপনাকে তা পড়ার সুযোগ দেয়া হবে। আপনার ছবি ও ভিডিও চিত্র শিক্ষা ও শিক্ষা সংক্রান্ত বৃত্তিমূলক উন্নয়ন অধিবেশনে ব্যবহার করা হতে পারে, শুধুমাত্র যদি আপনি অনুমতি প্রদান করেন।

## ডেটা সংরক্ষণ

সংগৃহীত ডেটা ৫ বছর পর্যন্ত মনাশ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের অধীনে বিশ্ববিদ্যাময়ের নিয়মানুযায়ী তালাবন্ধভাবে সংরক্ষিত থাকবে।

## অন্য কোন উদ্দেশ্যে ডেটার ব্যবহার

এই অধ্যায়নের রিপোর্ট একটি বই, পত্রিকা বা অধিবেশনে প্রকাশের জন্য উপস্থাপন করা হবে।

## ফলাফল

যদি আপনি গবেষণার প্রাপ্তি সম্পর্কে জানতে চান তাহলে নুরুন নাহার চৌধুরীর সাথে এই ই-মেইলে হহপযড়৩@ঙঁফবহঃ.সড়হধংয.বফঁ অথবা ৮৮-০১৫৫২৩৬২৭৫৭ নম্বরেযোগাযোগ করবেন। ২০১৩ সনের শুরু থেকে ৫ বছর পর্যন্ত এই সকল তথ্য জানা যাবে।

যদি আপনি এই গবেষণায় অংশগ্রহণ করতে রাজি থাকেন তাহলে দয়া করে অনুমতি পত্রটি পূরণ করে ফেরত দেবেন। আমি আপনার অনুমতি পাওয়ার পর আপনার সাথে যোগাযোগ করে উভয়ের জন্য সুবিধাজনক সময় সাক্ষাতকারেরও পর্যবেক্ষনেরব্যবস্থা করব।

| আপনি যদি এই গবেষণার কোন দৃষ্টিভঙ্গি সম্পর্কে গবেষকের সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ করতে চান, প্রধান অনুসন্ধাকারীর সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন: | যদি আপনার এই গবেষণার পরিচালনার প্রক্রীয়া সম্পর্কে কোন অভিযোগ থাকে তাহলে যোগাযোগ করুন: |
|---|---|
| Dr Corine Rivalland<br>Lecturer, Faculty of Education<br>Monash University<br>Peninsula Campus<br>PO Box 527, Frankston<br>VIC 3199, Australia<br><br>Phone: +61 3 9904 4546<br>Fax: +61 3 9904 4027<br><br>Email:<br>Corine.Rivalland@education.monash.edu.au | ১। Executive Officer<br>Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC)<br>Building 3e  Room 111<br>Research Office<br>Monash University<br>VIC 3800, Australia<br>Tel: +61 3 9905 2052<br>Fax: +61 3 9905 3831<br><br>Email: muhrec@monash.edu<br><br><br>২।Dr Akmal Hussain<br>Professor<br>Department of International Relations |

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ধন্যবাদ


(সাক্ষর . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .)

নুরুন্নাহার  চৌধুরী

Explanatory statement for Parents

**MONASH** University

Date: _____

# Explanatory Statement: [Parents]

**Title:   An exploration of play in the Pre-Primary Curriculum in Bangladesh.**

| **This information sheet is for you to keep** |
|:---:|

My name is Nurun Nahar Chowdhury and I am conducting a research project with Dr Corine Rivalland and Dr Hilary Monk, lecturers in the Faculty of Education, towards a PhD at Monash University.  This means that I will be writing a thesis, which is the equivalent of a 300 page book.

You are invited to take part in this study.  Please read this Explanatory Statement in full before making a decision.

**Why were you chosen for this research**
You are chosen for this research because your child is studying at the pre-primary class in a school that represents the setting of this research. You have potential to offer information about your understandings, perceptions and experiences about the pre-primary curriculum document and its implementation. Your contact details will be provided by yourself on voluntary basis should you decide to participate in this study.

**The aim/purpose of the research**
I am conducting this research to investigate how the new pre-primary curriculum is supplementing/impeding the play-based learning and development of young children in Bangladesh. Its objective is to understand the perspectives of teachers, parents and government officials about the role of play as early learning and development. It also intends to explore how young children involve themselves in play activities that supports their learning and development.

**Possible Benefits**
It is expected that this research will make a number of contributions to theory, policy and practice in the field of early childhood education. The findings of this study may inform academics in theorising play as a curriculum approach, early childhood educators and professionals in developing teaching strategies/approaches, and policy makers in reframing curriculum documents.

**What does the research involve**
The study involves an audio-recorded individual interview and a home visit. During home visit the play context and play activities (that may be going on at that time) will be observed and video-recorded. Any other information/documents (like photographs or any artefacts) that you may provide in support of your information will be appreciated. Photographs of you may be taken during the interview and home visit.

It is expected that your audio-recorded interview, photographs and video recordings will assist the research through trustworthy representation of your responses. Photographs and video recordings of the observation will be used to get the actual scenario of the event of play in the contexts of home. These digitally recorded data (audio and visual) will be more authentic and assist the data analysis procedure.

**How much time will the research take**
The study is expected to take about a one hour of your time during which I will conduct the interview and the observation of play activities in the home setting. The study involves:

- Individual interview: It will be a one hour interview at a given time at your house.
- Observation: During the time of interview at your house the ongoing play activities and existing play context will be observed. No additional time will be asked for the observation.

During the interview you would be asked about the following topics:
1) The role of play in the learning in your child's education
2) The implementation of the new play curriculum
3) Factors that may enhance or impede learning through play in Bangladesh
4) Your participation in your child's education

**Inconvenience/discomfort**
Minimum levels of inconvenience or discomfort are expected to be experienced if you decide to take part in this study. In the unlikely event that you feel discomforted please discontinue the interview or observation.

**Payment**
As a sign of appreciation of your participation in this research you will receive a small gift (such as grocery items or a lunch box) to a value of AUD $10.00.

**You can withdraw from the research**
Being in this study is completely voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. Should you consent to participate, you may withdraw from further participation at any stage without any repercussions, but you will only be able to withdraw data prior to your approval of the interview transcript and video records.

**Confidentiality**
A number of steps will be taken to protect your privacy prior to publication of the results of this study. Pseudonyms will be used for all data that may have any identifying features (such as names of participant, school, institution and places). Any information will be aggregated and be totally de-identified for use. As well, you will be given the opportunity to read the individual transcript of your interview and see the video records so you can approve the information. Visual data (such as photographs and videos) that contain you might be used for professional developmental sessions in education and/or educational publications only if you consent so. However, if you consent to take your photographs and videos (and use those as data in this research) there is a possibility for you to be identified.

**Storage of data**
Data collected will be stored in accordance with Monash University regulations, kept on University premises, in a locked filing cabinet for 5 years.

**Use of data for other purposes**
The information you may provide (including audio-recorded interview, video recordings, photographs and documents) may be used in writing a report about this study and for publication (in a book, journal

or conference), further professional development or any other research purposes. As mentioned above, various steps will be undertaken to protect your privacy. Besides, without your prior permission no such data in which you might be identified (for example, photographs and video recordings) will be used while reporting data or approaching for publications.


**Results**

If you would like to be informed of the aggregate research finding, please contact Nurun Nahar Chowdhury on ███████████████████████████████████

If you agree to participate in this study, please complete and return the attached informed consent. I will contact you shortly after receiving your consent to make arrangements for the interview at a mutually convenient time and place.

| If you would like to contact the researchers about any aspect of this study, please contact the Chief Investigator: | If you have a complaint concerning the manner in which this research (project number) is being conducted, please contact: |
|---|---|
| Dr Corine Rivalland<br>Lecturer, Faculty of Education<br>Monash University, Peninsula Campus<br>PO Box 527, Frankston<br>VIC 3199, Australia<br>Phone: +61 3 9904 4546; Fax: +61 3 9904 4027<br><br>Email:<br>Corine.Rivalland@education.monash.edu.au | 1. Executive Officer<br>Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC)<br>Building 3e  Room 111<br>Research Office<br>Monash University VIC 3800<br>Tel: +61 3 9905 2052<br>Fax: +61 3 9905 3831<br>Email: muhrec@monash.edu<br><br><br>2. Dr Akmal Hussain<br>Professor<br>Department of International Relations<br>University of Dhaka<br>Dhaka – 1201<br>Bangladesh<br>Phone: 88-01552361374/ 88-02-9561920-73/Ext. 6544<br>Email:  akmalhussainir@yahoo.com |


Thank you.


(Signature..............)
Nurun Nahar Chowdhury

**MONASH** University

তারিখঃ  _____

# ব্যাখ্যামূলক বিবৃতি: [পিতা-মাতা]

## শিরোনাম: বাংলাদেশে প্রাক প্রাথমিক পাঠ্যক্রমের মধ্যে খেলা ভিত্তিক শিক্ষার অন্বেষণ।

## এই তথ্য শীট আপনারসংরক্ষনের জন্য

আমার নাম নুরুন নাহার চৌধুরী এবংআমি PhD-র জন্য মোনাশ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের শিক্ষা অনুষদ অন্তর্ভুক্তপ্রভাষক Dr Corine Rivalland এবং Dr Hilary Monk–এর সঙ্গেএকটি গবেষণা প্রকল্প পরিচালনা করছি। আমি একটি গবেষণামূলক প্রবন্ধ লিখবোযা একটি ৩০০ পৃষ্ঠার বইয়ের সমতুল্য।

আপনাকে এই গবেষণায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য আমন্ত্রণ জানানো হচ্ছে। অনুগ্রহ করে সিদ্ধান্ত নেওয়ার আগে এই পুরো ব্যাখ্যামূলক বিবৃতিটি  পড়ুন।

### এই গবেষণার জন্য আপনাকে নির্বাচনের কারণ

আপনাকে এই গবেষণার জন্য নির্বাচণ করা হয়েছে কারণ আপনার শিশু যে স্কুলের প্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেনীতে পড়াশোনা করছে সেই স্কুল এই গবেষণার প্রকৃত নমুনা উপস্থাপন করে। আপনি এই প্রাক-প্রাথমিক শিক্ষার পাঠ্যক্রমের নথিপত্র এবং তার বাস্তবায়ন সম্পর্কেআপনার বোধ, দৃষ্টিভঙ্গি এবং অভিজ্ঞতা উপস্থাপন করতে পারবেন। আপনি এই গবেষণায় অংশগ্রহণ করলে আপনার যোগাযোগের বিবরণী স্বত: স্ফূর্ত অংশগ্রহণ হিসেবে প্রদান করবেন।

### গবেষণার লক্ষ্য/উদ্দেশ্য

নতুন প্রাক প্রাথমিক পাঠ্যক্রমকিভাবে বাংলাদেশের শিশুদের খেলারমাধ্যমে শিক্ষা এবং উন্নয়নকেপ্রতিস্থাপিত বা প্রতিরোধকরছে তা অনুসন্ধানের জন্য আমি এই গবেষণাটি পরিচালনা করছি। প্রথমিক শিক্ষা ও উন্নয়নহিসাবেখেলারভূমিকা সম্পর্কে শিক্ষক, মা বাবা এবং সরকারি কর্মকর্তাদের দৃষ্টিভঙ্গি বুঝতে পারা এই গবেষণারউদ্দেশ্য।শিশুদের নিজেদেরকে খেলার কার্যক্রমেজড়িত করে কিভাবে তাদের শিক্ষা ও উন্নয়নকে সমর্থন করে তা অন্বেষণও এই গবেষণার উদ্দেশ্য।

### সম্ভাব্য উপকারিতা

প্রাথমিক শিশু শিক্ষা ক্ষেত্রের তত্ত্ব, নীতি ও অনুশীলনে এই গবেষণার অবদান প্রত্যাশিত।এই অধ্যায়নের মাধ্যমে পাওয়া তথ্যের আলোকে খেলা একটি শিক্ষাতত্ত্ব হিসেবে বিবেচিত হতে পারে, শিক্ষকের প্রাথমিক শিক্ষাদানের কৌশলের উন্নয়ন হতে পারে এবং পাঠ্যক্রম পুণর্গঠন করা যেতে পারে।

## গবেষণা সংশ্লিষ্ট বিষয়

এই গবেষণায় রয়েছে একটি একক সাক্ষাতকারের অডিও এবং একটি গৃহ পরিদর্শন। গৃহ পরিদর্শকালীন উপস্থিত খেলার দৃশ্য ও কার্যক্রম পর্যবেক্ষণ ও ভিডিও করা হবে। আপনার তথ্যের সমর্থনে দেয়া যে কোন নথিপত্র (ছবি, নিতীমালা পত্র, শিল্পকর্ম) প্রশংসিত হবে। সাক্ষাতকারের সময় ও গৃহ পরিদর্শনের সময় আপনার ছবি নেয়া হতে পারে।

## গবেষণরসময়

সাক্ষাতকার গ্রহণ ও পর্যবেক্ষণে আপনার কাছে এক ঘন্টা সময় প্রত্যাশিত। এই গবেষণায় রয়েছেঃ

- একক সাক্ষাতকারঃ আপনার বাড়িতে এক ঘন্টা আপনার একক সাক্ষাৎকার নেয়া হবে।

- পর্যবেক্ষণঃ সাক্ষাতকার গ্রহণকালে উপস্থিত খেলার কার্যক্রম ও প্রাদুর্ভূত খেলার দৃশ্য পর্যবেক্ষণ করা হবে। তার জন্য কোন অতিরিক্ত সময় নেয়া হবেনা।

সাক্ষাতকার গ্রহণকালে আপনাকে নিম্নোক্ত প্রশ্নগুলো করা হবেঃ

১) শিশুদের খেলার মাধ্যমে শিক্ষা ও উন্নয়নকে আপনি কেমন মনে করেন?

২) আপনার শিশুর স্কুলের শ্রেনীকক্ষে এই নতুন খেলা-ভিত্তিক শিক্ষা ও শিক্ষাদান প্রক্রিয়া আপনার কেমন লাগে?

৩) আর্থ-সামাজিক ও সাংস্কৃতিক উপাদানগুলো শিশুর এই নতুন খেলা ভিত্তিক শিক্ষা ও উন্নয়নে বাধা দিচ্ছে না সহায়তা

করছে?

৪) স্কুলে এবং বাড়িতে খেলার মাধ্যমে আপনার শিশুর শিক্ষা ও উন্নয়নে আপনি কিভাবে অংশগ্রহণ করেন?

## অসুবিধা

এই অধ্যায়নে অংশগ্রহণের ফলে আপনার কোন অসুবিধা হবেনা। যদি কোন কিছুতে আপনি অস্বাচ্ছন্দ বোধ করেন তাহলে আপনি সাক্ষাতকার ও পর্যবেক্ষণথামিয়ে দিতে পারেন।

## অর্থপ্রদাণ

এই গবেষণায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য আপনার প্রতি কৃতজ্ঞতা প্রকাশে আপনাকে সামান্য উপহার দেয়া হবে (যেমন, মুদি দোকানের জিনিস বা দুপুরের খাবার) যার মূল্য অস্ট্রেলীয় ১০ ডলারের সমপরিমাণ।

## আপনি গবেষণা প্রত্যাহার করতে পারেন

এই গবেষণায় আপনি সম্পূর্ণ স্বাধীন এবং গবেষণায় অংশগ্রহণে আপনি বাধ্য নন। অংশগ্রহণে অনুমতি দেয়ার পর যে কোন মূহুর্তে কোন বিরূপ প্রতিক্রীয়া ছাড়াই আপনি অনুমতি প্রত্যাহার করতে পারেন, কিন্তু সাক্ষাতকার ও পর্যবেক্ষণের প্রতিলিপিঅনুমোদনেরপর প্রদত্য ডেটা প্রত্যাহার করা যাবেনা।

## গোপনীয়তা

গবেষণার ফলাফল প্রকাশের পূর্বে সর্বপ্রকারে আপনার গোপনীয়তা রক্ষা করা হবে। আপনার পরিচয় (অংশগ্রহণকারীর নাম, বিদ্যালয়, প্রতিষ্ঠান ও জায়গা) প্রকাশ পায় এমন সকল ডেটা তে ছদ্মনাম ব্যবহার করা হবে। সকল তথ্য ব্যবহারের জন্য একত্রিত ও ভিন্ন ভাবে শণাক্ত করা হবে। আপনার দেয়া তথ্যর প্রতিলিপি তৈরীর পর আপনার অনুমোদনের জন্য আপনাকে তা পড়ার সুযোগ দেয়া হবে। আপনার ছবি শিক্ষা ও শিক্ষা সংক্রান্ত বৃত্তিমূলক উন্নয়ন অধিবেশনে ব্যবহার করা হতে পারে, শুধুমাত্র যদি আপনি অনুমতি প্রদান করেন।

## ডেটা সংরক্ষণ

সংগৃহীত ডেটা ৫ বছর পর্যন্ত মনাশ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের অধীনে বিশ্ববিদ্যাময়ের নিয়মানুযায়ী তালাবদ্ধভাবে সংরক্ষিত থাকবে।

## অন্য কোন উদ্দেশ্যে ডেটার ব্যবহার

এই অধ্যায়নের রিপোর্ট একটি বই, পত্রিকা বা অধিবেশনে প্রকাশের জন্য উপস্থাপন করা হবে।

## ফলাফল

যদি আপনি গবেষণার প্রাপ্তি সম্পর্কে জানতে চান তাহলে নুরুন নাহার চৌধুরীর সাথে এই ই-মেইলে nncho3@student.monash.edu অথবা ৮৮-০১৫৫২৩৬২৭৫৭ নম্বরেযোগাযোগ করবেন। ২০১৩ সনের শুরু থেকে ৫ বছর পর্যন্ত এই সকল তথ্য জানা যাবে।

যদি আপনি এই গবেষণায় অংশগ্রহণ করতে রাজি থাকেন তাহলে দয়া করে অনুমতি পত্রটি পূরণ করে ফেরত দেবেন। আমি আপনার অনুমতি পাওয়ার পর আপনার সাথে যোগাযোগ করে উভয়ের জন্য সুবিধাজনক সময় ও জায়গায় সাক্ষাতকার ও পর্যবেক্ষণের ব্যবস্থা করব।

| আপনি যদি এই গবেষণার কোন দৃষ্টিভঙ্গি সম্পর্কে গবেষকের সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ করতে চান, প্রধান অনুসন্ধাকারীর সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন: | যদি আপনার এই গবেষণার পরিচালনার প্রক্রীয়া সম্পর্কে কোন অভিযোগ থাকে তাহলে যোগাযোগ করুন: |
|---|---|
| Dr Corine Rivalland<br>Lecturer, Faculty of Education<br>Monash University<br>Peninsula Campus<br>PO Box 527, Frankston<br>VIC 3199, Australia<br><br>Phone: +61 3 9904 4546<br>Fax: +61 3 9904 4027<br><br>Email:<br>Corine.Rivalland@education.monash.edu.au | ১। Executive Officer<br>Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC)<br>Building 3e  Room 111<br>Research Office<br>Monash University<br>VIC 3800, Australia<br>Tel: +61 3 9905 2052<br>Fax: +61 3 9905 3831<br><br>Email: muhrec@monash.edu |

|  | ২।Dr Akmal Hussain<br>Professor<br>Department of International Relations<br>University of Dhaka<br>Dhaka – 1201, Bangladesh<br><br>Phone: 88-01552361374/ 88-02-9561920-73/Ext. 6544<br><br>Email: akmalhussainir@yahoo.com |
|---|---|

ধন্যবাদ

(সাক্ষর . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . )

নুরুন্নাহার চৌধুরী

**Explanatory statement for Government Officials**

MONASH University

Date: _____


## Explanatory Statement: [Government officials]

**Title:   An exploration of play in the Pre-Primary Curriculum in Bangladesh.**

| This information sheet is for you to keep |
| :---: |

My name is Nurun Nahar Chowdhury and I am conducting a research project with Dr Corine Rivalland and Dr Hilary Monk, lecturers in the Faculty of Education, towards a PhD at Monash University.  This means that I will be writing a thesis, which is the equivalent of a 300 page book.

You are invited to take part in this study.  Please read this Explanatory Statement in full before making a decision.

**Why were you chosen for this research**
You are chosen for this research because as the government official you are playing a vital role in the implementation of the new pre-primary curriculum in Bangladesh. You have potential to offer information about your understandings, perceptions and experiences about the curriculum document and its implementation. Your contact details will be provided by yourself on voluntary basis should you decide to participate in this study.

**The aim/purpose of the research**
I am conducting this research to investigate how the new pre-primary curriculum is supplementing/impeding the play-based learning in young children education in Bangladesh. Its objective is to understand the perspectives of teachers, parents and government officials about the role of play in early childhood education. It also intends to explore how young children involve themselves in play activities that supports their learning and development.

**Possible Benefits**
It is expected that this research will make a number of contributions to theory, policy and practice in the field of early childhood education. The findings of this study may inform academics in theorising play as a curriculum approach, early childhood educators and professionals in developing teaching strategies/approaches, and policy makers in reframing curriculum documents.

**What does the research involve**
The study involves an individual interview (for about one hour) that will be audio-recorded for the purpose of transcription. Any other information/documents (like photographs, journal, policy paper or

any artefacts) that you may provide in support of your information will be appreciated. Photographs of you may be taken during the interview.

It is expected that your audio-recorded interview and photographs will assist the research through trustworthy representation of your responses. These digitally recorded data (audio and visual) will be more authentic and assist the data analysis procedure.

**How much time will the research take**
To conduct the individual interview the study expects to take no more than one hour of your time at a given time.  We would like to hear your views on the following topics.

1) The role of play in the new pre-primary curriculum
2) The expectations of  teachers  and classroom practices as underscore in the new curriculum document
3) The influence of social cultural, historical, educational, institutional and economic factors on the implementation of a play curriculum

**Inconvenience/discomfort**
Minimum levels of inconvenience or discomfort are expected to be experienced if you decide to take part in this study. In the unlikely event that you feel discomforted please discontinue the interview.

**Payment**
As a sign of appreciation of your participation in this research you will receive a small gift (such as a box of chocolate) to a value of AUD $10.00.

**You can withdraw from the research**
Being in this study is completely voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. Should you consent to participate, you may withdraw from further participation at any stage without any repercussions, but you will only be able to withdraw data prior to your approval of the interview transcript.

**Confidentiality**
A number of steps will be taken to protect your privacy prior to publication of the results of this study. Pseudonyms will be used for all data that may have any identifying features (such as names of participant, schools, institutions and places). Any information will be aggregated and be totally de-identified for use. As well, you will be given the opportunity to read the individual transcript of your interview so you can approve the information.

Photographs that contain you might be used for professional developmental sessions in education and/or educational publications only if you consent so. However, if you consent to take your photographs (and use those as data in this research) there is a possibility for you to be identified.

**Storage of data**
Data collected will be stored in accordance with Monash University regulations, kept on University premises, in a locked filing cabinet for 5 years.

**Use of data for other purposes**
The information you may provide (including audio-recorded interview, documents and photographs) may be used in writing a report about this study and for publication (in a book, journal or conference), further professional development or any other research purposes. As mentioned above, various steps will be undertaken to protect your privacy. Besides, without your prior permission no such data in which you might be identified (for example, photographs) will be used while reporting data or approaching for publications.

**Results**

If you would like to be informed of the aggregate research finding, please contact Nurun Nahar Chowdhury on ███████████████████████████████████

If you agree to participate in this study, please complete and return the attached informed consent. I will contact you shortly after receiving your consent to make arrangements for the interview at a mutually convenient time and place.

| If you would like to contact the researchers about any aspect of this study, please contact the Chief Investigator: | If you have a complaint concerning the manner in which this research (project number) is being conducted, please contact: |
|---|---|
| Dr Corine Rivalland<br>Lecturer, Faculty of Education<br>Monash University, Peninsula Campus<br>PO Box 527, Frankston<br>VIC 3199, Australia<br>Phone: +61 3 9904 4546; Fax: +61 3 9904 4027<br><br>Email:<br>Corine.Rivalland@education.monash.edu.au | 1. Executive Officer<br>Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC)<br>Building 3e  Room 111<br>Research Office<br>Monash University VIC 3800<br>Tel: +61 3 9905 2052     Fax: +61 3 9905 3831<br>Email: muhrec@monash.edu<br><br><br>2. Dr Akmal Hussain<br>Professor<br>Department of International Relations<br>University of Dhaka<br>Dhaka – 1201<br>Bangladesh<br>Phone: 88-01552361374/ 88-02-9561920-73/Ext. 6544<br>Email: akmalhussainir@yahoo.com |

Thank you.


(Signature..............)
Nurun Nahar Chowdhury

**Explanatory statement for Government Officials (translated into Bengali language)**

![Monash University logo]

তারিখঃ _____

## ব্যাখ্যামূলক বিবৃতি: [সরকারি কর্মচারি]

## শিরোনাম: বাংলাদেশে প্রাক প্রাথমিক পাঠ্যক্রমের মধ্যে খেলা ভিত্তিক শিক্ষার অন্বেষণ।

**এই তথ্য শীট আপনার সংরক্ষনেরজন্য**

আমার নাম নুরুন নাহার চৌধুরী এবং আমি PhD-র জন্য মোনাশ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের শিক্ষা অনুষদ অন্তর্ভুক্তপ্রভাষক Dr Corine Rivalland এবং Dr Hilary Monk–এর সঙ্গেএকটি গবেষণা প্রকল্প পরিচালনা করছি। আমি একটি গবেষণামূলক প্রবন্ধ লিখবো যা একটি ৩০০ পৃষ্ঠার বইয়ের সমতুল্য।

আপনাকে এই গবেষণায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য আমন্ত্রণ জানানো হচ্ছে। অনুগ্রহ করে সিদ্ধান্ত নেওয়ার আগে এই পুরো ব্যাখ্যামূলক বিবৃতিটি পড়ুন।

### এই গবেষণার জন্য আপনাকে নির্বাচনের কারণ

আপনাকে এই গবেষণার জন্য নির্বাচণ করা হয়েছে কারণ সরকারি কর্মকর্তা হিসাবে বাংলাদেশের একটি নতুন প্রাক প্রাথমিক পাঠ্যক্রমের রূপায়নে আপনি অতীব গুরুত্বপূর্ণ ভূমিকা পালন করছেন।পাঠ্যক্রমের নথি এবং তার বাস্তবায়ন সম্পর্কে আপনার উপলব্ধি, অনুভূতি এবং অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পর্কে তথ্য আপনি দিতে পারবেন। আপনি এই গবেষণায় অংশগ্রহণ করলে আপনার যোগাযোগের বিবরণী স্বত: স্ফূর্ত অংশগ্রহণ হিসেবে প্রদান করবেন।

### গবেষণার লক্ষ্য/উদ্দেশ্য

নতুন প্রাক প্রাথমিক পাঠ্যক্রমকিভাবে বাংলাদেশের শিশুদের খেলারমাধ্যমে শিক্ষা এবং উন্নয়নকেপ্রতিস্থাপিত বা প্রতিরোধকরছে তা অনুসন্ধানের জন্য আমি এই গবেষণাটি পরিচালনা করছি। প্রথমিক শিক্ষা ও উন্নয়নহিসাবেখেলারভূমিকা সম্পর্কে শিক্ষক, মা বাবা এবং সরকারি কর্মকর্তাদের দৃষ্টিভঙ্গি বুঝতে পারা এই গবেষণারউদ্দেশ্য।শিশুরা নিজেদেরকে খেলার কার্যক্রমেজড়িত করে কিভাবে তাদের শিক্ষা ও উন্নয়নকে সমর্থন করে তা অন্বেষণও এই গবেষণার উদ্দেশ্য।

### সম্ভাব্য উপকারিতা

প্রাথমিক শিশু শিক্ষা ক্ষেত্রের তত্ত্ব, নীতি ও অনুশীলনে এই গবেষণার অবদান প্রত্যাশিত।এই অধ্যায়নের মাধ্যমে পাওয়া তথ্যর আলোকে খেলা একটি শিক্ষাতত্ত্ব হিসেবে বিবেচিত হতে পারে, শিক্ষকের প্রাথমিক শিক্ষাদানের কৌশলের উন্নয়ন হতে পারে এবং পাঠ্যক্রম পুণর্গঠন করা যেতে পারে।

### গবেষণা সংশ্লিষ্ট বিষয়

এই গবেষণায় সংশ্লিষ্ট একটি স্বতন্ত্রসাক্ষাতকার (এক ঘন্টার) যা প্রতিলিপি তৈরী করার জন্য রেকর্ড করা হবে। আপনার তথ্যের সমর্থনে দেয়া যে কোন নথিপত্র (ছবি, নিতীমালা পত্র, শিল্পকর্ম) প্রশংসিত হবে। সাক্ষাতকারের সময় আপনার ছবি নেয়া হতে পারে।

## গবেষণর সময়

এই অধ্যায়ণে জন্য স্বতন্ত্রসাক্ষাতকার পরিচালনা করতে এক ঘন্টার বেশী সময় প্রয়োজন হবে না।

সাক্ষাতকার গ্রহণকালে আপনাকে নিম্নোক্ত প্রশ্নগুলো করা হবেঃ

১) শিশুর উন্নয়ন ও শিক্ষা ক্ষেত্রে খেলাকে আপনি কেমন মনে করেন?

২) বর্তমান প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা নিতীমালা এবং খেলার মাধ্যমে শিশুর শিক্ষা ও উন্নয়নের নতুন পাঠ্যক্রমকে আপনি কিভাবে

বিবেচনা করেন?

৩) শিক্ষক ও তাদের শ্রেনীকক্ষের কার্যক্রম সম্পর্কে আপনার প্রত্যাশা কি?

৪) শিশুর শিক্ষার উপর ঐতিহাসিক, শিক্ষা সংক্রান্ত, প্রাতিষ্ঠানিক এবং অর্থনৈতিক প্রভাব সম্পর্কে আপনার বিবেচনা কি?

## অসুবিধা

এই অধ্যায়নে অংশগ্রহণের ফলে আপনার কোন অসুবিধা হবেনা। যদি কোন কিছুতে আপনি অস্বাচ্ছন্দ বোধ করেন তাহলে আপনি সাক্ষাতকার থামিয়ে দিতে পারেন।

## অর্থপ্রদাণ

এই গবেষণায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য আপনার প্রতি কৃতজ্ঞতা প্রকাশে আপনাকে সামান্য উপহার দেয়া হবে (যেমন, এক বাক্সচকলেট) যার মূল্য অস্ট্রেলীয় ১০ ডলারের সমপরিমাণ।

## আপনি গবেষণা প্রত্যাহার করতে পারেন

এই গবেষণায় আপনি সম্পূর্ণ স্বাধীন এবং গবেষণায় অংশগ্রহণে আপনি বাধ্য নন। অংশগ্রহণে অনুমতি দেয়ার পর যে কোন মুহূর্তে কোন বিরূপ প্রতিক্রীয়া ছাড়াই আপনি অনুমতি প্রত্যাহার করতে পারেন, কিন্তু সাক্ষাতকার প্রতিলিপিঅনুমোদনের পর প্রদত্য ডেটা প্রত্যাহার করা যাবেনা।

## গোপনীয়তা

গবেষণার ফলাফল প্রকাশের পূর্বে সর্বপ্রকারে আপনার গোপনীয়তা রক্ষা করা হবে। আপনার পরিচয় (অংশগ্রহণকারীর নাম, বিদ্যালয়, প্রতিষ্ঠান ও জায়গা) প্রকাশ পায় এমন সকল ডেটা তে ছদ্দনাম ব্যবহার করা হবে। সকল তথ্য ব্যবহারের জন্য একত্রিত ও ভিন্ন ভাবে শণাক্ত করা হবে। আপনার দেয়া তথ্যের প্রতিলিপি তৈরীর পর আপনার অনুমোদনের জন্য আপনাকে তা পড়ার সুযোগ দেয়া হবে। আপনার ছবি শিক্ষা ও শিক্ষা সংক্রান্ত বৃত্তিমূলক উন্নয়ন অধিবেশনে ব্যবহার করা হতে পারে, শুধুমাত্র যদি আপনি অনুমতি প্রদান করেন।

## ডেটা সংরক্ষণ

সংগৃহীত ডেটা ৫ বছর পর্যন্ত মনাশ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের অধীনে বিশ্ববিদ্যাময়ের নিয়মানুযায়ী তালাবদ্ধভাবে সংরক্ষিত থাকবে।

## অন্য কোন উদ্দেশ্যে ডেটার ব্যবহার

এই অধ্যায়নের রিপোর্ট একটি বই, পত্রিকা বা অধিবেশনে প্রকাশের জন্য উপস্থাপন করা হবে।

**ফলাফল**

যদি আপনি গবেষণার প্রাপ্তি সম্পর্কে জানতে চান তাহলে নুরুন নাহার চৌধুরীর সাথে এই ই-মেইলে nncho3@student.monash.edu অথবা ৮৮-০১৫৫২৩৬২৭৫৭ নম্বরেযোগাযোগ করবেন। ২০১৩ সনের শুরু থেকে ৫ বছর পর্যন্ত এই সকল তথ্য জানা যাবে।

যদি আপনি এই গবেষণায় অংশগ্রহণ করতে রাজি থাকেন তাহলে দয়া করে অনুমতি পত্রটি পূরণ করে ফেরত দেবেন। আমি আপনার অনুমতি পাওার পর আপনার সাথে যোগাযোগ করে উভয়ের জন্য সুবিধাজনক সময় ও জায়গায় সাক্ষাতকারের ব্যবস্থা করব।

| আপনি যদি এই গবেষণার কোন দৃষ্টিভঙ্গি সম্পর্কে গবেষকের সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ করতে চান, প্রধান অনুসন্ধাকারীর সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন: | যদি আপনার এই গবেষণার পরিচালনার প্রক্রীয়া সম্পর্কে কোন অভিযোগ থাকে তাহলে যোগাযোগ করুন: |
|---|---|
| Dr Corine Rivalland<br>Lecturer, Faculty of Education<br>Monash University<br>Peninsula Campus<br>PO Box 527, Frankston<br>VIC 3199, Australia<br><br>Phone: +61 3 9904 4546<br>Fax: +61 3 9904 4027<br><br>Email:<br>Corine.Rivalland@education.monash.edu.au | ১। Executive Officer<br>Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC)<br>Building 3e  Room 111<br>Research Office<br>Monash University<br>VIC 3800, Australia<br>Tel: +61 3 9905 2052<br>Fax: +61 3 9905 3831<br><br>Email: muhrec@monash.edu<br><br><br>২।Dr Akmal Hussain<br>Professor<br>Department of International Relations<br>University of Dhaka<br>Dhaka – 1201, Bangladesh<br><br>Phone: 88-01552361374/ 88-02-9561920-73/Ext. 6544<br><br>Email: akmalhussainir@yahoo.com |

ধন্যবাদ

(সাক্ষর...................)

নুরুন্নাহার চৌধুরী

**Explanatory statement for Young Children**

**MONASH University**

Date: _____

**Explanatory Statement: [Parents of the child participants]**

**Title:   An exploration of play in the Pre-Primary Curriculum in Bangladesh.**

| This information sheet is for you to keep |
| :---: |

My name is Nurun Nahar Chowdhury and I am conducting a research project with Dr Corine Rivalland and Dr Hilary Monk, lecturers in the Faculty of Education, towards a PhD at Monash University.  This means that I will be writing a thesis, which is the equivalent of a 300 page book.

Your child is invited to take part in this study.  Please read this Explanatory Statement in full before making a decision.

**Why were you chosen for this research**
Your child is chosen for this research because of two reasons. Firstly, s/he is studying at the pre-primary class in a school that represents the setting of this research. Secondly, you have consented to participate in this research as a parent participant. Your child has potential to offer information about her/his play practices and experiences. Your contact details will be provided by yourself on voluntary basis should you decide your child to participate in this study.

**The aim/purpose of the research**
I am conducting this research to investigate how the new pre-primary curriculum is supplementing/impeding the play based learning and development of young children in Bangladesh. Its objective is to understand the perspectives of teachers, parents and government officials about the role of play as early learning and development. It also intends to explore how young children involve themselves in play activities that supports their learning and development.

**Possible Benefits**
It is expected that this research will make a number of contributions to theory, policy and practice in the field of early childhood education. The findings of this study may inform academics in theorising play as a curriculum approach, early childhood educators and

professionals in developing teaching strategies/approaches, and policy makers in reframing curriculum documents.

## What does the research involve

The study involves a five to ten minutes long informal conversation with your child at home in your presence. The play context and your child's play activities (that may be going on at that time at your house) will be observed (as a non-participatory observation) and video-recorded. This observation is part of your participation in this study (as stated in the Explanatory Statement for Parents). Besides, any other information/documents (like photographs or artefacts) that you may provide in support of information related to your child's play will be appreciated. Photographs of your child may also be taken during the casual conversation and observation.

It is expected that your child's audio-recorded interview, photographs and video recordings will assist the research through trustworthy representation of his/her responses. Photographs and video recordings of the observation will be used to get the actual scenario of the event of play in the contexts of home. These digitally recorded data (audio and visual) will be more authentic and assist the data analysis procedure.

## How much time will the research take

The study expects your child's involvement for about five to ten minutes for the casual conversation. The observation will take place for about one hour. The study involves:
- There will be a five to ten minutes informal conversation with your child (in your presence) at a given time at your house.
- During your engagement in this study the play context and play activities at your house will be observed (and video-recorded) for one hour (see the Explanatory Statement for Parents) which may include the presence of your child.

During the informal conversation your child may be asked the following questions:
1) With what do you play at home and at school?
2) What do you like to plat best?
3) Do you play during class time?
4) With whom do you play at home and at school?

## Inconvenience/discomfort

Minimum levels of inconvenience or discomfort are expected to be experienced if you decide your child to take part in this study. In the unlikely event that your child feel discomforted please discontinue the conversation or observation.

## Payment

As a sign of appreciation of your child's participation in this research s/he will receive a small gift (which will be learning materials like stationary items or story books) to a value of AUD $10.00.

## Withdrawal from the research

Being in this study is completely voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation of your child. Should you consent to allow your child to participate, s/he may be withdrawn from further participation at any stage without any repercussions, but you will only

be able to withdraw data prior to your approval of the transcript of casual conversation and video records.

**Confidentiality**

A number of steps will be taken to protect your child's privacy prior to publication of the results of this study. Pseudonyms will be used for all data that may have any identifying features (such as names of child, school, institution and places). Any information will be aggregated and be totally de-identified for use. As well, you will be given the opportunity to read the transcript of your child's casual conversation and see the video records so you can approve the information. Visual data (such as photographs and videos) that contain your child might be used for professional developmental sessions in education and/or educational publications only if you consent so. However, if you consent to take your child's photographs and videos (and use those as data in this research) there is a possibility for him/her to be identified.

**Storage of data**

Data collected will be stored in accordance with Monash University regulations, kept on University premises, in a locked filing cabinet for 5 years.

**Use of data for other purposes**

The information your child may provide (including audio-recorded interview, video recordings, photographs and documents) may be used in writing a report about this study and for publication (in a book, journal or conference), further professional development or any other research purposes. As mentioned above, various steps will be undertaken to protect your child's privacy. Besides, without your prior permission no such data in which your child might be identified (for example, photographs and video recordings) will be used while reporting data or approaching for publications.

**Results**

If you would like to be informed of the aggregate research finding, please contact Nurun Nahar Chowdhury on⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛. The findings are accessible for 5 years, from early 2013.

If you agree to participate in this study, please complete and return the attached informed consent. I will contact you shortly after receiving your consent to make arrangements for the interview at a mutually convenient time and place.

| If you would like to contact the researchers about any aspect of this study, please contact the Chief Investigator: | If you have a complaint concerning the manner in which this research (project number) is being conducted, please contact: |
|---|---|
| Dr Corine Rivalland<br>Lecturer, Faculty of Education<br>Monash University, Peninsula Campus<br>PO Box 527, Frankston<br>VIC 3199, Australia<br>Phone: +61 3 9904 4546; Fax: +61 3 9904 | 1. Executive Officer<br>Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC)<br>Building 3e  Room 111<br>Research Office<br>Monash University VIC 3800<br>Tel: +61 3 9905 2052   Fax: +61 3 9905 3831<br>Email: muhrec@monash.edu |

| | |
|---|---|
| 4027<br><br>Email:<br>Corine.Rivalland@education.monash.edu.au | 2. Dr Akmal Hussain<br>Professor<br>Department of International Relations<br>University of Dhaka<br>Dhaka – 1201<br>Bangladesh<br>Phone: 88-01552361374/ 88-02-9561920-73/Ext. 6544<br>Email:  akmalhussainir@yahoo.com |

Thank you.


(Signature..............)
Nurun Nahar Chowdhury

**Explanatory statement for young children (translated into Bengali language)**

MONASH University

তারিখঃ _____

## ব্যাখ্যামূলক বিবৃতি: [অংশগ্রহণকারী শিশুর পিতা-মাতা]

## শিরোনাম: বাংলাদেশে প্রাক প্রাথমিক পাঠ্যক্রমের মধ্যে খেলা ভিত্তিক শিক্ষার অন্বেষণ।

| এই তথ্য শীট আপনার সংরক্ষনেরজন্য |
| --- |

আমার নাম নুরুন নাহার চৌধুরী এবংআমি PhD-র জন্য মোনাশ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের শিক্ষা অনুষদ অন্তর্ভুক্তপ্রভাষক Dr Corine Rivalland এবং Dr Hillary Monk-এর সঙ্গেএকটি গবেষণা প্রকল্প পরিচালনা করছি। আমি একটি গবেষণামূলক প্রবন্ধ লিখেবোযা একটি ৩০০ পৃষ্ঠার বইয়ের সমতুল্য।

এই গবেষণায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য আপনার শিশুকেআমন্ত্রণ জানানো হচ্ছে। অনুগ্রহ করে সিদ্ধান্ত নেওয়ার আগে এই পুরো ব্যাখ্যামূলক বিবৃতিটিপড়ুন।

### এই গবেষণার জন্য আপনাকে নির্বাচনের কারণ

এই গবেষণায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য আপনার শিশুকে নির্বাচনের দুটি কারণ রয়েছে। প্রথমত, আপনার শিশু যে স্কুলের প্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেনীতে পড়াশোনা করছে তা এই গবেষণার প্রকৃত নমুনা উপস্থাপন করে। দ্বিতীয়ত, এই গবেষণায় আপনিপিতা/মাতাহিসেবে অংশগ্রহণের জন্য আপনার অনুমতি দিয়েছেন। আপনার শিশু তার খেলার কার্যক্রম এবং অভিজ্ঞতা সম্পর্কে গুরুত্বপূর্ণ তথ্য দিতে পারবে। আপনার শিশু এই গবেষণায় অংশগ্রহণ করলে আপনার যোগাযোগের বিবরণী আপনি স্বত: স্ফূর্ত অংশগ্রহণ হিসেবে প্রদান করবেন।

### গবেষণার লক্ষ্য/উদ্দেশ্য

নতুন প্রাক প্রাথমিক পাঠ্যক্রমকিভাবে বাংলাদেশের শিশুদের খেলারমাধ্যমে শিক্ষা এবং উন্নয়নকেপ্রতিস্থাপিত বা প্রতিরোধকরছে তা অনুসন্ধানের জন্য আমি এই গবেষণাটি পরিচালনা করছি। প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা ও উন্নয়নহিসাবেখেলারভূমিকা সম্পর্কে শিক্ষক, মা বাবা এবং সরকারি কর্মকর্তাদের দৃষ্টিভঙ্গি বুঝতে পারা এই গবেষণারউদ্দেশ্য।শিশুদের নিজেদেরকে খেলার কার্যক্রমেজড়িত করে কিভাবে তাদের শিক্ষা ও উন্নয়নকে সমর্থন করে তা অন্বেষণও এই গবেষণার উদ্দেশ্য।

### সম্ভাব্য উপকারিতা

প্রাথমিক শিশু শিক্ষা ক্ষেত্রের তত্ত্ব, নীতি ও অনুশীলনে এই গবেষণার অবদান প্রত্যাশিত।এই অধ্যায়নের মাধ্যমে পাওয়া তথ্যের আলোকে খেলা একটি শিক্ষাতত্ত্ব হিসেবে বিবেচিত হতে পারে, শিক্ষকের প্রাথমিক শিক্ষাদানের কৌশলের উন্নয়ন হতে পারে এবং পাঠ্যক্রম পুণর্গঠন করা যেতে পারে।

## গবেষণা সংশ্লিষ্ট বিষয়

এই অধ্যায়নে রয়েছে আপনার সামনে আপনার শিশুর সাথে ৫ থেকে ১০ মিনিটকালের একটি কথোপকথন। খেলার দৃশ্য ও আপনার বাচ্চার খেলার কার্যক্রম (ওই মুহূর্তে আপনার বাড়িতে অনুষ্ঠিত) পর্যবেক্ষণ ও ভিডিও করা হবে। এই পর্যবেক্ষণ এই অধ্যায়নে আপনার অংশগ্রহণের একটি অংশ (আপনার সাক্ষাতকারের ব্যাখ্যামূলক বিবৃতিতে উল্লেখিত)। এছাড়া, আপনার তথ্যর সমর্থনে দেয়া যে কোন নথিপত্র(ছবি, নিতীমালা পত্র, শিল্পকর্ম)প্রশংসিত হবে। এই সাময়িক কথোপকথন ও পর্যবেক্ষণের সময়ে আপনার শিশুর ছবি নেয়া হতে পারে।

## গবেষণর সময়

এই অধ্যায়নের সাধারন কথোপকথনে ৫ থেকে ১০ মিনিট আপনার শিশুর অংশগ্রহণ প্রত্যাশিত। পুরো পর্যবেক্ষনের জন্য এক ঘন্টা সময় নেয়া হবে। এই অধ্যায়নে রয়েছেঃ

- আপনার বাড়িতে আপনার দেয়া এক ঘন্টা সময়ের ৫ থেকে ১০ মিনিট আপনার শিশুর সাথে কথা বলা হবে (আপনার উপস্থিতিতে)।

- আপনার বাড়িতে আপনার সাক্ষাতকার চলাকালীন এক ঘন্টা সময়ে খেলার দৃশ্য ও খেলার কার্যক্রম পর্যবেক্ষণ করা হবে, তখন আপনার শিশুও উপস্থিত থাকবে।

আপনার শিশুর সাথে কথা বলার সময়ে তাকে নিম্নোক্ত প্রশ্নগুলো করা হবেঃ

১) স্কুলে বা বাড়িতে কি ধরনের খেলার কার্যক্রমে সে অংশগ্রহণ করে থাকে?

২) স্কুলের শ্রেনীকক্ষে খেলতে তার ভাল লাগে?

৩) খেলার কি ভাল লাগে এবং কি খারাপ লাগে?

৪) খেলার সাথী হিসেবে শিক্ষক, মা-বাবা, আত্বীয়সজন নাকি সনবয়সীদের সাথে খেলতে ভাল লাগে?

## অসুবিধা

এই অধ্যায়নে অংশগ্রহণের ফলে আপনার শিশুর কোন অসুবিধা হবেনা। যদি কোন কিছুতে আপনার শিশু অস্বাচ্ছন্দ বোধ করে তাহলে আপনি সাক্ষাতকার/পর্যবেক্ষণথামিয়ে দিতে পারেন।

## অর্থপ্রদাণ

এই গবেষণায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য কৃতজ্ঞতা প্রকাশে আপনার শিশুকে সামান্য উপহার দেয়া হবে (যেমন, শিক্ষার কাজে ব্যবহৃত স্টেশনারী জিনিস বা গল্পের বই)যার মূল্য অস্ট্রেলীয় ১০ ডলারের সমপরিমাণ।

## আপনি গবেষণা প্রত্যাহার করতে পারেন

এই গবেষণায় আপনার শিশু সম্পূর্ণ স্বাধীন এবং গবেষণায় অংশগ্রহণে আপনার শিশু বাধ্য নন। অংশগ্রহণে অনুমতি দেয়ার পর যে কোন মুহূর্তে কোন বিরূপ প্রতিক্রীয়া ছাড়াই আপনি অনুমতি প্রত্যাহার করতে পারেন, কিন্তু কথোপকথন ও পর্যবেক্ষণের প্রতিলিপিঅনুমোদনের পর প্রদত্য ডেটা প্রত্যাহার করা যাবেনা।

## গোপনীয়তা

গবেষণার ফলাফল প্রকাশের পূর্বে সর্বপ্রকারে আপনার শিশুর গোপনীয়তা রক্ষা করা হবে। আপনার শিশুর পরিচয় (অংশগ্রহণকারীর নাম, বিদ্যালয়, প্রতিষ্ঠান ও জায়গা) প্রকাশ পায় এমন সকল ডেটা তে ছদ্মনাম ব্যবহার করা হবে। সকল তথ্য ব্যবহারের জন্য একত্রিত ও ভিন্ন ভাবে শণাক্ত করা হবে। আপনার শিশুরদেয়া তথ্যের প্রতিলিপি তৈরীর পর আপনার অনুমোদনের জন্য আপনাকে তা পড়ার সুযোগ দেয়া হবে। আপনার শিশুর ছবি ও ভিডিও চিত্র শিক্ষা

ও শিক্ষা সংক্রান্ত বৃত্তিমূলক উন্নয়ন অধিবেশনে ব্যবহার করা হতে পারে, শুধুমাত্র যদি আপনি অনুমতি প্রদান করেন।

## ডেটা সংরক্ষণ

সংগৃহীত ডেটা ৫ বছর পর্যন্ত মনাশ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের অধীনে বিশ্ববিদ্যাময়ের নিয়মানুযায়ী তালাবদ্ধভাবে সংরক্ষিত থাকবে।

## অন্য কোন উদ্দেশ্যে ডেটার ব্যবহার

এই অধ্যায়নের রিপোর্ট একটি বই, পত্রিকা বা অধিবেশনে প্রকাশের জন্য উপস্থাপন করা হবে।

## ফলাফল

যদি আপনি গবেষণার প্রাপ্তি সম্পর্কে জানতে চান তাহলে নুরুন নাহার চৌধুরীর সাথে এই ই-মেইলে nncho3@student.monash.edu অথবা ৮৮-০১৫৫২৩৬২৭৫৭ নম্বরেযোগাযোগ করবেন। ২০১৩ সনের শুরু থেকে ৫ বছর পর্যন্ত এই সকল তথ্য জানা যাবে।

যদি আপনি এই গবেষণায় আপনার শিশুর অংশগ্রহণে রাজি থাকেন তাহলে দয়া করে অনুমতি পত্রটি পূরণ করে ফেরত দেবেন। আমি আপনার অনুমতি পাওয়ার পর আপনার সাথে যোগাযোগ করে উভয়ের জন্য সুবিধাজনক সময় ও জায়গায় সাক্ষাতকারেরও পর্যবেক্ষনেরব্যবস্থা করব।

| আপনি যদি এই গবেষণার কোন দৃষ্টিভঙ্গি সম্পর্কে গবেষকের সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ করতে চান, প্রধান অনুসন্ধাকারীর সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন: | যদি আপনার এই গবেষণার পরিচালনার প্রক্রীয়া সম্পর্কে কোন অভিযোগ থাকে তাহলে যোগাযোগ করুন: |
|---|---|
| Dr Corine Rivalland<br>Lecturer, Faculty of Education<br>Monash University<br>Peninsula Campus<br>PO Box 527, Frankston<br>VIC 3199, Australia<br><br>Phone: +61 3 9904 4546<br>Fax: +61 3 9904 4027<br><br>Email:<br>Corine.Rivalland@education.monash.edu.au | ১| Executive Officer<br>Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC)<br>Building 3e  Room 111<br>Research Office<br>Monash University<br>VIC 3800, Australia<br>Tel: +61 3 9905 2052<br>Fax: +61 3 9905 3831<br><br>Email: muhrec@monash.edu<br><br>২|Dr Akmal Hussain<br>Professor<br>Department of International Relations<br>University of Dhaka<br>Dhaka – 1201, Bangladesh |

| | Phone: 88-01552361374/ 88-02-9561920-73/Ext. 6544 Email: [akmalhussainir@yahoo.com](mailto:akmalhussainir@yahoo.com) |
|---|---|

ধন্যবাদ

(সাক্ষর...................)

নুরুন্নাহার চৌধুরী

**Consent form for Teachers**

**Title: An exploration of play in the Pre-Primary Curriculum in Bangladesh.**

| NOTE: This consent form will remain with the Monash University researchers for their records |
|---|

I understand I have been asked to take part in the Monash University research project specified above. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the Explanatory Statement, which I keep for my records.

| I understand that: | YES | NO |
|---|---|---|
| ▪ I will be asked to be interviewed by the researcher | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ unless I otherwise inform the researcher before the interview I agree to allow the interview to be audio-taped | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ the researcher will conduct non-participant observations of one of my pre-primary class sessions | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ unless I otherwise inform the researcher before the observation I agree to allow the observation to be video-taped | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ I agree to allow the researcher to take my photographs during interview | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ I agree to make myself available for a further interview if required | ☐ | ☐ |

**and**

I understand that my participation is voluntary, that I can choose not to participate in part or all of the project, and that I can withdraw at any stage of the project without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way;

**and**

I understand that any data that the researcher extracts from the interview, video-recorded observation and my photographs for use in reports or published findings will not, under any circumstances, contain names or identifying characteristics without my signed consent below;

**and**

I understand that I will be given a transcript of data of interview and a copy of the video record concerning me for my approval before it is included in the write up of the research;

**and**

I understand that I may ask at any time prior to my giving final consent for my data to be withdrawn from the project;

**and**

I understand that no information I have provided that could lead to the identification of any other individual will be disclosed in any reports on the project, or to any other party;

**and**

I understand that data from the audio-recorded interview, video-recorded observation and photographs (containing me) will be kept in secure storage and accessible to the research team.  I also understand that these data will be destroyed after a 5 year period unless I consent to it being used in future research;

**and**

I understand that my personal data from the audio-recorded interview, photographs and video recordings may be used in writing a report and for publication (in a book, journal or conference), further professional development or any other research purposes;

**and**

| I do/do not give permission | YES | NO |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ▪ to be identified by name | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ to be identified by a pseudonym | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ to use my photographs in the reports or publications from the project | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ to use my videos in the reports or publications from the project | ☐ | ☐ |

**Participant's name: _____**


**Signature: _____**          **Date: _____**

# সম্মতি পত্র (প্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেনী শিক্ষক)

## শিরোনাম: বাংলাদেশে প্রাক প্রাথমিক পাঠ্যক্রমের মধ্যে খেলা ভিত্তিক শিক্ষার অন্বেষণ।

| নোট: এই অনুমতি পত্রটি মোনাশ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের গবেষকের কাছে স্মারক হিসাবে থাকবে। |
|---|

আমি বুঝেছি যে আমাকে মোনাশ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের উপরে উল্লেখিত গবেষণা প্রকল্পে অংশগ্রহন করতে জিজ্ঞাসা করা হয়েছে। আমাকে প্রকল্পটি ব্যাখ্যা করা হয়েছে এবং আমি ব্যাখ্যামূলক বিবৃতিটি পড়েছি, যা আমার কাছে স্মারক হিসাবে থাকবে।

| আমি বুঝেছি যেঃ | হ্যাঁ | না |
|---|---|---|
| ▪ আমি গবেষককে সাক্ষাতকার গ্রহণের জন্য সম্মতি প্রদান করছি। | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ আমি সাক্ষাতকার শুরু হওয়ার পূর্বে প্রশ্নোত্তর পর্বটি অডিও রেকর্ড করার সম্মতি প্রদান করছি। | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ আমি গবেষককে আমার প্রাক-প্রাথমিক শ্রেনী চলাকালীন পর্যবেক্ষনের সম্মতি প্রদান করছি। | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ আমি পর্যবেক্ষন শুরু করার পূর্বে পর্যবেক্ষন পর্বটি ভিডিও রেকর্ড করার সম্মতি প্রদান করছি। | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ সাক্ষাতকারগ্রহণের সময় গবেষককে আমার ছবি তোলার অনুমতি প্রদান করছি। | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ প্রয়োজনে ভবিষ্যতে আবারো প্রশ্নোত্তরের জন্য আমি সম্মতি প্রদান করছি। | ☐ | ☐ |

এবং,

আমি বুঝেছি যে, আমার অংশগ্রহণ স্বেচ্ছানির্ভর, আমি চাইলে আংশিক বা সম্পূর্ণরূপে অংশগ্রহণ নাও করতে পারি এবং গবেষনার যে কোন পর্যায়ে আমি চাইলে এটি পরিত্যাগ করতে পারি যার জন্য কোনরূপ শাস্তিমূলক বা অসুবিধাজনক ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করা হবে না।

এবং,

আমি বুঝেছি যে, এই সাক্ষাতকার এবং ভিডিওকৃত পর্যবেক্ষণ থেকে প্রাপ্ত তথ্য ও আমার ছবি, যা কিনা রিপোর্ট বা মুদ্রণে ব্যবহার করা হবে তাতে আমার নাম বা চিহ্নিত করা যায় এমন কোন বিষয় কোন অবস্থাতেই আমার দেয়া নিম্নোক্ত অনুমোদন ছাড়া অন্তর্ভুক্ত করা হবে না।

এবং,

আমি বুঝেছি যে, গবেষনার লেখনীতে অন্তর্ভুক্ত করার পূর্বে আমার সাক্ষাতকারের একটি লিখিত বিবরনী ও ভিডিওকৃত পর্যবেক্ষণের একটি কপি অনুমোদনের জন্য আমাকে দেয়া হবে।

এবং,

আমি বুঝেছি যে, চূড়ান্ত অনুমোদন দেয়ার পূর্ব পর্যন্ত আমার দেয়া তথ্য আমি প্রত্যাহার করতে পারি।

এবং,

আমি বুঝেছি যে, আমার দেয়া কোন তথ্য, যা কিনা অন্য ব্যক্তিকে চিহ্নিত করতে পারে তা গবেষনার কোন রিপোর্টে বা অন্য কোন পক্ষের নিকট প্রকাশ করা হবেনা।

এবং,

আমি বুঝেছি যে, অডিও রেকর্ড করা সাক্ষাতকার, ভিডিওকৃত পর্যবেক্ষণ থেকে নেয়া ডেটা ও ছবি (আমাকে ধারণকৃত) একটি নিরাপদ স্থানে সংরক্ষণ করা হবে এবং গবেষক দল তা ব্যবহার করতে পারবে। আমি আরও বুঝেছি যে, এইসব তথ্য আমি ভবিষ্যত গবেষনায় ব্যবহারের জন্য অনুমতি না দিলে, ৫ বছর অতিক্রান্ত হওয়া সাপেক্ষে ধ্বংস করা হবে।

এবং,

আমি আমাকে নিজের নামে/অজ্ঞাতনামা হিসেবে চিহ্নিত করার অনুমতি দিলাম/দিলাম না, অথবা আমি বুঝেছি যে আমি এই গবেষনায় সকল রিপোর্ট বা প্রকাশনায় সর্বদা ছদ্মনামে উল্লিখিত থাকব,এবংআমিআমার ভিডিওওছবি এই গবেষনার রিপোর্টে বা প্রকাশনায় ব্যবহারের জন্য অনুমতি দিলাম/দিলাম না।




**অংশগ্রহনকারীর নাম:**_____

**স্বাক্ষর:** _____  **তারিখ:** _____

**Consent Form for Parents**

**Title: An exploration of play in the Pre-Primary Curriculum in Bangladesh.**

| NOTE: This consent form will remain with the Monash University researchers for their records |
| :---: |

I understand I have been asked to take part in the Monash University research project specified above.  I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the Explanatory Statement, which I keep for my records.

| I understand that: | YES | NO |
| :--- | :---: | :---: |
| ▪  I will be asked to be interviewed by the researcher | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪  unless I otherwise inform the researcher before the interview I agree to allow the interview to be audio-taped | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪  I allow the researcher to observe  play activities  that may happen during the one hour interview time | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪  unless I otherwise inform the researcher before the observation I agree to allow the observation to be video-taped | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪  I agree to allow the researcher to take my photographs during interview | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪  I agree to make myself available for a further interview if required | ☐ | ☐ |

**and**
I understand that my participation is voluntary, that I can choose not to participate in part or all of the project, and that I can withdraw at any stage of the project without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way;

**and**
I understand that any data that the researcher extracts from the interview, video-recorded observation and my photographs for use in reports or published findings will not, under any circumstances, contain names or identifying characteristics without my signed consent below;

**and**
I understand that I will be given a transcript of data of interview and a copy of the video record concerning me for my approval before it is included in the write up of the research;

**and**

I understand that I may ask at any time prior to my giving final consent for my data to be withdrawn from the project;

**and**

I understand that no information I have provided that could lead to the identification of any other individual will be disclosed in any reports on the project, or to any other party;

**and**

I understand that data from the audio-recorded interview, video-recorded observation and photographs (containing me) will be kept in secure storage and accessible to the research team. I also understand that these data will be destroyed after a 5 year period unless I consent to it being used in future research;

**and**

I understand that my personal data from the audio-recorded interview, photographs and video recordings may be used in writing a report and for publication (in a book, journal or conference), further professional development or any other research purposes;

**and**

| I do/do not give permission | YES | NO |
|---|---|---|
| ▪ to be identified by name | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ to be identified by a pseudonym | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ to use my photographs in the reports or publications from the project | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ to use my videos in the reports or publications from the project | ☐ | ☐ |

**Participant's name: _____**

**Signature: _____Date: _____**

# সম্মতি পত্র (পিতা-মাতা)

## শিরোনাম: বাংলাদেশে প্রাক প্রাথমিক পাঠ্যক্রমের মধ্যে খেলা ভিত্তিক শিক্ষার অন্বেষণ।

**নোট: এই অনুমতি পত্রটি মোনাশ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের গবেষকের কাছে স্মারক হিসাবে থাকবে।**

আমি বুঝেছি যে আমাকে মোনাশ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের উপরে উল্লেখিত গবেষণা প্রকল্পে অংশগ্রহন করতে জিজ্ঞাসা করা হয়েছে। আমাকে প্রকল্পটি ব্যাখ্যা করা হয়েছে এবং আমি ব্যাখ্যামূলক বিবৃতিটি পড়েছি, যা আমার কাছে স্মারক হিসাবে থাকবে।

| আমি বুঝেছি যেঃ | হ্যাঁ | না |
|---|---|---|
| ▪ আমি গবেষককে সাক্ষাতকার গ্রহণের জন্য সম্মতি প্রদান করছি। | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ আমি সাক্ষাতকার শুরু হওয়ার পূর্বে প্রশ্নোত্তর পর্বটি অডিও রেকর্ড করার সম্মতি প্রদান করছি। | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ আমি গবেষককে পর্যবেক্ষনের জন্য (আমার বাড়িতে আমার সাক্ষাতকার গ্রহণের সময়ে খেলার প্রসঙ্গে) সম্মতি প্রদান করছি। | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ আমি পর্যবেক্ষন শুরু করার পূর্বে পর্যবেক্ষন পর্বটি ভিডিও রেকর্ড করার সম্মতি প্রদান করছি। | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ সাক্ষাতকারগ্রহণেরসময়ওপর্যবেক্ষনের সময় গবেষককে আমার ছবি তোলার অনুমতি প্রদান করছি। | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ প্রয়োজনে ভবিষ্যতে আবারো প্রশ্নোত্তরের জন্য আমি সম্মতি প্রদান করছি। | ☐ | ☐ |

এবং,

আমি বুঝেছি যে, আমার অংশগ্রহণ স্বেচ্ছানির্ভর, আমি চাইলে আংশিক বা সম্পূর্ণরূপে অংশগ্রহণ নাও করতে পারি এবং গবেষনার যে কোন পর্যায়ে আমি চাইলে এটি পরিত্যাগ করতে পারি যার জন্য কোনরূপ শাস্তিমূলক বা অসুবিধাজনক ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করা হবে না।

এবং,

আমি বুঝেছি যে, এই সাক্ষাতকার এবং ভিডিওকৃত পর্যবেক্ষণ থেকে প্রাপ্ত তথ্য ও আমার ছবি, যা কিনা রিপোর্ট বা মুদ্রণে ব্যবহার করা হবে তাতে আমার নাম বা চিহ্নিত করা যায় এমন কোন বিষয় কোন অবস্থাতেই আমার দেয়া নিম্নোক্ত অনুমোদন ছাড়া অন্তর্ভুক্ত করা হবে না।

এবং,

আমি বুঝেছি যে, গবেষনার লেখনীতে অন্তর্ভুক্ত করার পূর্বে আমার সাক্ষাতকারের এখটি লিখিত বিবরনী ও ভিডিওকৃত পর্যবেক্ষণের একটি কপি অনুমোদনের জন্য আমাকে দেয়া হবে।

এবং,

আমি বুঝেছি যে, চূড়ান্ত অনুমোদন দেয়ার পূর্ব পর্যন্ত আমার দেয়া তথ্য আমি প্রত্যাহার করতে পারি।

এবং,

আমি বুঝেছি যে, আমার দেয়া কোন তথ্য, যা কিনা অন্য ব্যক্তিকে চিহ্নিত করতে পারে তা গেবেষনার কোন রিপোর্টে বা অন্য কোন পক্ষের নিকট প্রকাশ করা হবেনা।

এবং,

আমি বুঝেছি যে, অডিও রেকর্ড করা সাক্ষাতকারও ভিডিওকৃত পর্যবেক্ষণ থেকে নেয়া ডেটা ও ছবি (আমাকে ধারণকৃত) একটি নিরাপদ স্থানে সংরক্ষণ করা হবে এবং গবেষক দল তা ব্যবহার করতে পারবে। আমি আরও বুঝেছি যে, এইসব তথ্য আমি ভবিষ্যত গবেষনায় ব্যবহারের জন্য অনুমতি না দিলে, ৫ বছর অতিক্রান্ত হওয়া সাপেক্ষে ধ্বংস করা হবে।

এবং,

আমি আমাকে নিজের নামে/অজ্ঞাতনামা হিসেবে চিহ্নিত করার অনুমতি দিলাম/দিলাম না, অথবা আমি বুঝেছি যে, আমি এই গবেষনার সকল রিপোর্ট বা প্রকাশনায় সর্বদা ছদ্মনামে উল্লেখিত থাকব,এবংআমিআমার ছবি এই গবেষনার রিপোর্টে বা প্রকাশনায় ব্যবহারের জন্য অনুমতি দিলাম/দিলাম না।


**অংশগ্রহনকারীর নাম:** _____


**স্বাক্ষর:** _____ **তারিখ:** _____

**Consent Form for Government Officials**

**Title: An exploration of play in the Pre-Primary Curriculum in Bangladesh.**

> **NOTE: This consent form will remain with the Monash University researchers for their records**

I understand I have been asked to take part in the Monash University research project specified above. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the Explanatory Statement, which I keep for my records.

| I understand that: | YES | NO |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ▪ I will be asked to be interviewed by the researcher | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ unless I otherwise inform the researcher before the interview I agree to allow the interview to be audio-taped | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ I agree to allow the researcher to take my photographs during interview | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ I agree to make myself available for a further interview if required | ☐ | ☐ |

**and**

I understand that my participation is voluntary, that I can choose not to participate in part or all of the project, and that I can withdraw at any stage of the project without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way;

**and**

I understand that any data that the researcher extracts from the interview and my photographs for use in reports or published findings will not, under any circumstances, contain names or identifying characteristics without my signed consent below;

**and**

I understand that I will be given a transcript of data concerning me for my approval before it is included in the write up of the research;

**and**

I understand that I may ask at any time prior to my giving final consent for my data to be withdrawn from the project;

**and**

I understand that no information I have provided that could lead to the identification of any other individual will be disclosed in any reports on the project, or to any other party;

**and**

I understand that my personal data from the audio-recorded interview and photographs will be kept in secure storage and accessible to the research team. I also understand that these data will be destroyed after a 5 year period unless I consent to it being used in future research;

**and**

I understand that my personal data from the audio-recorded interview and photographs may be used in writing a report and for publication (in a book, journal or conference), further professional development or any other research purposes;

**and**

| I do/do not give permission | YES | NO |
|---|---|---|
| ▪ to be identified by name | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ to be identified by a pseudonym | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ to use my photographs in the reports or publications from the project | ☐ | ☐ |

**Participant's name:** _____

**Signature:** _____    **Date:** _____

# সম্মতি পত্র (সরকারি কর্মচারি)

## শিরোনাম: বাংলাদেশে প্রাক প্রাথমিক পাঠ্যক্রমের মধ্যে খেলা ভিত্তিক শিক্ষার অন্বেষণ।

**নোট: এই অনুমতি পত্রটি মোনাশ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের গবেষকের কাছে স্মারক হিসাবে থাকবে।**

আমি বুঝেছিযে আমাকে মোনাশ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের উপরে উল্লেখিত গবেষণা প্রকল্পে অংশগ্রহন করতে জিজ্ঞাসা করা হয়েছে। আমাকে প্রকল্পটি ব্যাখ্যা করা হয়েছে এবং আমি ব্যাখ্যামূকল বিবৃতিটি পড়েছি, যা আমার কাছে স্মারক হিসাবে থাকবে।

| আমি বুঝেছি যেঃ | হ্যাঁ | না |
|---|---|---|
| ▪ আমি গবেষককে সাক্ষাতকার গ্রহণের জন্য সম্মতি প্রদান করছি। | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ আমি সাক্ষাতকার শুরু হওয়ার পূর্বে প্রশ্নোত্তর পর্বটি অডিও রেকর্ড করার সম্মতি প্রদাণ করছি। | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ সাক্ষাতকারগ্রহণের সময় গবেষককে আমার ছবি তোলার অনুমতি প্রদান করছি। | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ প্রয়োজনে ভবিষ্যতে আবারো প্রশ্নোত্তরের জন্য আমি সম্মতি প্রদান করছি। | ☐ | ☐ |

এবং,

আমি বুঝেছি যে, আমার অংশগ্রহণ স্বেচ্ছানির্ভর, আমি চাইলে আংশিক বা সম্পূর্ণরূপে অংশগ্রহণ নাও করতে পারি এবং গবেষনার যে কোন পর্যায়ে আমি চাইলে এটি পরিত্যাগ করতে পারি যার জন্য কোনরূপ শাস্তিমূলক বা অসুবিধাজনক ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করা হবে না।

এবং,

আমি বুঝেছি যে, এই সাক্ষাতকার থেকে প্রাপ্ত তথ্য ও আমার ছবি, যা কিনা রিপোর্ট বা মুদ্রণে ব্যবহার করা হবে তাতে আমার নাম বা চিহ্নিত করা যায় এমন কোন বিষয় কোন অবস্থাতেই আমার দেয়া নিম্নোক্ত অনুমোদন ছাড়া অন্তর্ভুক্ত করা হবে না।

এবং,

আমি বুঝেছি যে, গবেষনার লেখনীতে অন্তর্ভুক্ত করার পূর্বে আমার সাক্ষাতকারের একটি লিখিত বিবরনী অনুমোদনের জন্য আমাকে দেয়া হবে।

এবং,

আমি বুঝেছি যে, চূড়ান্ত অনুমোদন দেয়ার পূর্ব পর্যন্ত আমার দেয়া তথ্য আমি প্রত্যাহার করতে পারি।

এবং,

আমি বুঝেছি যে, আমার দেয়া কোন তথ্য, যা কিনা অন্য ব্যক্তিকে চিহ্নিত করতে পারে তা গবেষনার কোন রিপোর্টে বা অন্য কোন পক্ষের নিকট প্রকাশ করা হবেনা।

এবং,

আমি বুঝেছি যে, অডিও রেকর্ড করা সাক্ষাতকার থেকে নেয়া ডেটা ও ছবি (আমাকে ধারণকৃত) একটি নিরাপদ স্থানে সংরক্ষণ করা হবে এবং গবেষক দল তা ব্যবহার করতে পারবে। আমি আরও বুঝেছি যে, এইসব তথ্য আমি ভবিষ্যত গবেষনায় ব্যবহারের জন্য অনুমতি না দিলে, ৫ বছর অতিক্রান্ত হওয়া সাপেক্ষে ধ্বংস করা হবে।

এবং,

আমি আমাকে নিজের নামে/অজ্ঞাতনামা হিসেবে চিহ্নিত করার অনুমতি দিলাম/দিলাম না, অথবা আমি বুঝেছি যে, আমি এই গবেষনার সকল রিপোর্ট বা প্রকাশনায় সর্বদা ছদ্মনামে উল্লেখিত থাকব,এবংআমিআমার ছবি এই গবেষনার রিপোর্টে বা প্রকাশনায় ব্যবহারের জন্য অনুমতি দিলাম/দিলাম না।

**অংশগ্রহনকারীর নাম:** _____

**স্বাক্ষর:** _____   **তারিখ:** _____

**Consent Form for Young Children**

# Consent Form (Parents of the child participants)

## Title: An exploration of play in the Pre-Primary Curriculum in Bangladesh.

| **NOTE: This consent form will remain with the Monash University researchers for their records** |
|:---:|

I understand my child has been asked to take part in the Monash University research project specified above. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the Explanatory Statement, which I keep for my records.

| I understand that: | YES | NO |
|---|:---:|:---:|
| ▪ My child will be asked for a casual conversation by the researcher | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ unless I otherwise inform the researcher before the casual conversation I agree to allow the casual conversation to be audio-taped | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ I will observe any episodes of play that thee child is involved in during the one hour interview | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ unless I otherwise inform the researcher before the observation I agree to allow the observation to be video-taped | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ I agree to allow the researcher to take photographs of my child during casual conversation and observation | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ I agree to make my child available for a further casual conversation if required | ☐ | ☐ |

**and**

I understand that my child's participation is voluntary, that s/he can choose not to participate in part or all of the project, and that s/he can withdraw at any stage of the project without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way;

**and**

I understand that any data that the researcher extracts from the casual conversation, video-recorded observation and photographs for use in reports or published findings will not, under any circumstances, contain names or identifying characteristics without my signed consent below;

**and**

I understand that I will be given a transcript of data of casual conversation and a copy of the video record concerning my child for my approval before it is included in the write up of the research;

**and**

I understand that I may ask at any time prior to my giving final consent for my child's data to be withdrawn from the project;

**and**

I understand that no information derived from the casual conversation or observation of my child that could lead to the identification of any other individual will be disclosed in any reports on the project, or to any other party;

**and**

I understand that data from the audio-recorded casual conversation, video-recorded observation and photographs (containing my chid) will be kept in secure storage and accessible to the research team. I also understand that these data will be destroyed after a 5 year period unless I consent to it being used in future research;

**and**

I understand that my child's personal data from the audio-recorded interview, photographs and video recordings may be used in writing a report and for publication (in a book, journal or conference), further professional development or any other research purposes;

**and**

| I do/do not give permission for my child | YES | NO |
|---|---|---|
| ▪ to be identified by name | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ to be identified by a pseudonym | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ to use my child's photographs in the reports or publications from the project | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ to use my child's videos in the reports or publications from the project | ☐ | ☐ |

**Participant's name:** _____


**Signature:** _____    **Date:** _____

## সম্মতি পত্র (অংশগ্রহণকারী শিশুর পিতা-মাতা)

## শিরোনাম: বাংলাদেশে প্রাক প্রাথমিক পাঠ্যক্রমের মধ্যে খেলা ভিত্তিক শিক্ষার অন্বেষণ।

**নোট: এই অনুমতি পত্রটি মোনাশ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের গবেষকের কাছে স্মারক হিসাবে থাকবে।**

আমি বুঝলাম আমার শিশুকে মোনাশ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের উপরে উল্লেখিত গবেষণা প্রকল্পে অংশগ্রহন করতে জিজ্ঞাসা করা হয়েছে। আমাকে প্রকল্পটি ব্যাখ্যা করা হয়েছে এবং আমি ব্যাখ্যামূকল বিবৃতিটি পড়েছি, যা আমার কাছে স্মারক হিসাবে থাকবে।

| আমি বুঝেছি যেঃ | হ্যাঁ | না |
|---|---|---|
| ▪ আমি গবেষককে আমার শিশুর সঙ্গে সা**ধারণ**কথোপকথনের জন্য সম্মতি প্রদাণ করছি। | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ আমি কথোপকথনের শুরু হওয়ার পূর্বে সা**ধারণ**কথোপকথন অডিও রেকর্ড করার সম্মতি প্রদাণ করছি। | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ আমি গবেষককে আমার শিশুকে পর্যবেক্ষনের জন্য (আমার বাড়িতে আমার উপস্থিতিতে খেলা ও খেলার কার্যক্রম প্রসঙ্গে) সম্মতি প্রদাণ করছি। | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ আমি পর্যবেক্ষন শুরু করার পূর্বে পর্যবেক্ষন পর্বটি ভিডিও রেকর্ড করার সম্মতি প্রদাণ করছি। | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ **সাধারণ** কথোপকথন ও পর্যবেক্ষনের সময় গবেষককে আমার শিশুর ছবি তোলার অনুমতি প্রদাণ করছি। | ☐ | ☐ |
| ▪ প্রয়োজনে ভবিষ্যতে আবারো আমার শিশুর সঙ্গে সাময়িক কথোপকথনের জন্য আমি সম্মতি প্রদাণ করছি। | ☐ | ☐ |

এবং,

আমি বুঝেছি যে, আমার শিশুরঅংশগ্রহণ স্বেচ্ছানির্ভর, আমি চাইলে আমার শিশুআংশিক বা সম্পূর্ণরূপে অংশগ্রহণ নাও করতে পারি এবং গবেষনার যে কোন পর্যায়ে আমি চাইলে এটি পরিত্যাগ করতে পারে যার জন্য কোনরূপ শাস্তিমূলক বা অসুবিধাজনক ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করা হবে না।

এবং,

আমি বুঝেছি যে, এই সাধারণ কথোপকথন এবং ভিডিওকৃত পর্যবেক্ষণ থেকে প্রাপ্ত তথ্য ও আমার শিশুর ছবি, যা কিনা রিপোর্ট বা মুদ্রণে ব্যবহার করা হবে তাতে আমার শিশুর নাম বা চিহ্নিত করা যায় এমন কোন বিষয় কোন অবস্থাতেই আমার দেয়া নিম্নোক্ত অনুমোদন ছাড়া অন্তর্ভুক্ত করা হবে না।

এবং,

আমি বুঝেছি যে, গবেষনার লেখনীতে অন্তর্ভুক্ত করার পূর্বে আমার শিশুর সাধারণ কথোপকথনের একটি লিখিত বিবরনী ও ভিডিওকৃত পর্যবেক্ষণের একটি কপি আমার অনুমোদনের জন্য আমাকে দেয়া হবে।

এবং,

আমি বুঝেছি যে, চূড়ান্ত অনুমোদন দেয়ার পূর্ব পর্যন্ত আমার শিশুর তথ্য আমি প্রত্যাহার করতে পারি।

এবং,

আমি বুঝেছি যে, এই সাধারণ কথোপকথন ও পর্যবেক্ষন থেকে প্রাপ্ত কোন তথ্য, যা কিনা অন্য ব্যক্তিকে চিহ্নিত করতে পারে তা গেবষনার কোন রিপোর্টে বা অন্য কোন পক্ষের নিকট প্রকাশ করা হবেনা।

এবং,

আমি বুঝেছি যে, অডিও রেকর্ড করা সাধারণ কথোপকথনও ভিডিওকৃত পর্যবেক্ষণ থেকে নেয়া ডেটা ও ছবি (আমার শিশুকে ধারণকৃত) একটি নিরাপদ স্থানে সংরক্ষণ করা হবে এবং গবেষক দল তা ব্যবহার করতে পারবে। আমি আরও বুঝেছি যে, এইসব তথ্য আমি ভবিষ্যত গবেষনায় ব্যবহারের জন্য অনুমতি না দিলে, ৫ বছর অতিক্রান্ত হওয়া সাপেক্ষে ধ্বংস করা হবে।

এবং,

আমি আমার শিশুকে তার নিজের নামে/অজ্ঞাতনামা হিসেবে চিহ্নিত করার অনুমতি দিলাম/দিলাম না, অথবা আমি বুঝেছি যে আমার শিশু এই গবেষনার সকল রিপোর্ট বা প্রকাশনায় সর্বদা ছদ্মনামে উল্লেখিত থাকবে,এবংআমিআমার শিশুরভিডিওওছবি এই গবেষনার রিপোর্টে বা প্রকাশনায় ব্যবহারের জন্য অনুমতি দিলাম/দিলাম না।


**অংশগ্রহনকারী শিশুর নাম:** _____

**অংশগ্রহনকারী শিশুর পিতা/মাতার নাম:** _____

**স্বাক্ষর:** _____    **তারিখ:** _____

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**MUHERC's approval letter**

# MONASH University

**Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC)**
Research Office

## Human Ethics Certificate of Approval

| | |
|---|---|
| **Date:** | **4 March 2013** |
| **Project Number:** | **CF12/3216 - 2012001599** |
| **Project Title:** | **An exploration of play in the pre-primary curriculum in Bangladesh** |
| **Chief Investigator:** | **Dr Corine Rivalland** |
| **Approved:** | **From: 4 March 2013      To: 4 March 2018** |

**Terms of approval**

1. The Chief investigator is responsible for ensuring that permission letters are obtained, if relevant, and a copy forwarded to MUHREC before any data collection can occur at the specified organisation. **Failure to provide permission letters to MUHREC before data collection commences is in breach of the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research and the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research.**
2. Approval is only valid whilst you hold a position at Monash University.
3. It is the responsibility of the Chief Investigator to ensure that all investigators are aware of the terms of approval and to ensure the project is conducted as approved by MUHREC.
4. You should notify MUHREC immediately of any serious or unexpected adverse effects on participants or unforeseen events affecting the ethical acceptability of the project.
5. The Explanatory Statement must be on Monash University letterhead and the Monash University complaints clause must contain your project number.
6. **Amendments to the approved project (including changes in personnel):** Requires the submission of a Request for Amendment form to MUHREC and must not begin without written approval from MUHREC. Substantial variations may require a new application.
7. **Future correspondence:** Please quote the project number and project title above in any further correspondence.
8. **Annual reports:** Continued approval of this project is dependent on the submission of an Annual Report. This is determined by the date of your letter of approval.
9. **Final report:** A Final Report should be provided at the conclusion of the project. MUHREC should be notified if the project is discontinued before the expected date of completion.
10. **Monitoring:** Projects may be subject to an audit or any other form of monitoring by MUHREC at any time.
11. **Retention and storage of data:** The Chief Investigator is responsible for the storage and retention of original data pertaining to a project for a minimum period of five years.

Professor Ben Canny
Chair, MUHREC

**Permission letter from the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE)**

**Director General**
Directorate of Primary Education
Section 2, Mirpur, Dhaka 1216
Phone: 8057877. Fax: 8016499
Web: www.dpe.gov.bd

**Permission Letter**

Ref: Permission for colleting data for the "Play oriented pre school curriculum in Bangladesh: A socio cultural and byssi to policies, practices and challenges."

Date: 13.06.2013

Narun Nahar Chowdhary
Building no. 6. Faculty of Education
Monansh University, VIC-3800
Australia.

Dear Nurun Nahar Chowdhury

Thank you for your request to conduct above mentioned research. I have read and under stood the explanatory statement regarding the research and hereby give permission for this research to be conducted.

Yours sincerely,

Signature:

Shyamal Kanti Ghosh
Director General
Directorate of Primary Education, Bangladesh.
Telephone no: +88-02-8057877
Emil No: ghoshsk506@yahoo.com

**Studied regions, communities, institutions and persons (pseudonyms):**

| Regions | Community | School | Family | Teacher | Parent | Child |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **A. Bay-region (Mirsharai: South-east part)** | Sea-shore village | Sea-shore school | Sea-shore family | Abid | Amena | Atika |
| | Road-side village | Road-side school | Road-side family | Sohana | Rokeya | Kakoli |
| **B. Lake-region (Narsingdi Sadar: Central part)** | River-bank village | River-bank school | River-bank family | Maksuda | Shorifa | Jamal |
| | Handloom village | Handloom school | Handloom family | Gulshan | Sufia | Mina |
| **C. Mainland-region (Delduar: Central-north part)** | Corner-temple village | Corner-temple school | Corner-temple family | Kabita | Protima | Champa |
| | South Mill village | South Mill school | South Mill family | Mohsina | Kulsum | Asif |

**Studied Teacher Training Centres (TTCs):**

| No. | TTC (pseudonyms) | Location | Trainers/government officials |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Rohitpur TTC | A PTI in a district headquarter | Ahsan (Tangail) Habib (Narshingdi) |
| 2. | Modhugasi TTC | An institution in an upazilla headquarter | Raihan (Mirsharai) Selim (Mirsharai) |
| 3. | Ambarkhan TTC | Arranged in a community hall in the Capital city | Riaz (PPT trainer & policy implementer) |
| 4. | | | Faijul (policy maker) |

**Configuration of seven features determining play-oriented early learning patterns in three prisms of learning tradition and in the ECE context of Bangladesh**

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Synopsis of pattern of practices of Community organisation of learning:</td></tr>
<tr><td>ALI:</td><td>Bureaucratically controlled instruction in segregated setting (Rogoff, 2014).</td></tr>
<tr><td>GR:</td><td>Learners are not segregated from valued cultural activities; they get the opportunity to come across those. However, they do not contribute rather imitate those as modelled by experts (Rogoff et al. 2007).</td></tr>
<tr><td>LOPI:</td><td>Learner is incorporated and contributing to family/community endeavors (Rogoff, 2014).</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><td>Bangladesh's early learning context (home, classroom & TTC) (ALI+GR+LOPI)</td><td>Learners are integrated into a range of structured/non-structured (either adult/expert or child/learner dominated) play-oriented activities in which they observe, participate (sometimes they imitate) with/without adults'/experts' instructions and contribute in everyday life both at home, in classroom and TTC.</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Synopsis of pattern of practices of motives:</td></tr>
<tr><td>ALI:</td><td>On the learners' part, [seeking extrinsic] rewards and [avoiding possible] threats works as motives, while on experts' part motive is to instruct and sort learners (Rogoff, 2014, p. 76).</td></tr>
<tr><td>GR:</td><td>Though motive is not specified in this prism as a separate feature, it appears that learners' motive is to attain accuracy in a particular skill enabling them to perform/enter a valued cultural activity. For experts, the motive is to design and model the task and instruct learners (Rogoff et al. 2007).</td></tr>
<tr><td>LOPI:</td><td>Learners' motive is the eagerness to contribute and belong; experts' motive is to accomplish endeavour and to guide (Rogoff, 2014, p. 73).</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><td>Bangladesh's early learning context (home, classroom & TTC) (ALI/GR/LOPI)</td><td>Rewards, threats, praising, promises, incentives, affection and opportunities to be engaged in 'fun' or valued cultural activities motivate children/learners learning at school, home and TTC. At home parents' motive is to guide children's activities to accomplish those while at school and TTC teachers'/trainers motive is to instruct the learners.</td></tr>
</table>

| Synopsis of pattern of practices of Social organisation of endeavours: | |
|---|---|
| **ALI:** | Unilateral. Expert controls learner's pace, attention, motivation. Expert 'transmits' information, divides labor. Not collaborating in endeavor. Learner does as told (Rogoff, 2014). |
| **GR:** | Learner has access to view valued endeavour, reproduces it out of context. Unilateral control, with fixed roles. Experts design & manage tasks, model mature performance; learners observe, imitate, and rehearse model (Rogoff et al. 2007). |
| **LOPI:** | Collaborative, flexible ensemble, fluidly coordinating and blending ideas, agendas, and pace. All engage, anyone may take the initiative (Rogoff, 2014). |

| Bangladesh's early learning context (home, classroom & TTC) (LOPI+ALI) | Collaborative and flexible aggregation with minimised hierarchy. Learners do as being directed. Experts control learners' pace, attention, motivation and agency while directly involved in learning though play. Learners exercise extended agency with reverse hierarchy in learner-directed/free play. In free play, particularly at home, initiative, ideas, agendas, pace, roles, rules and motivations are determined by children. |
|---|---|

| Synopsis of pattern of practices of goal of learning: | |
|---|---|
| **ALI:** | Transmission and receipt of isolated information and skills. For certification, as prerequisite for inclusion in society (Rogoff, 2014, p. 76). |
| **GR:** | For learners: to enter valued activity and extrinsic motivators. For experts: to instruct learners (Rogoff et al. 2007). |
| **LOPI:** | To transform participation, learn consideration and responsibility along with information and skills, to contribute and belong in the community (Rogoff, 2014, p. 73). |

| Bangladesh's early learning context (home, classroom & TTC) (ALI+GR+LOPI) | Learning goals involve: learning isolated information and skills as prerequisite for social inclusion; integration into valued cultural activities to enable to transform participation; and learning social and cultural responsibilities and skills required for community belongingness. |
|---|---|

| Synopsis of pattern of practices of means of learning: | |
|---|---|
| ALI: | In this tradition learning occurs by means of "[r]eceiving lessons, exercises, tests, out of the context of productive activity" (Rogoff, 2014, p. 76). |
| GR: | In this tradition means of learning involves lessons and exercises, out of mature context. Here, relation of steps to overall process may not be known to the learner (Rogoff et al. 2007). |
| LOPI: | It asserts learning by means of learners' wide, keen attention and contribution (current or anticipated) to events as guided by communitywide expectations and people as well (Rogoff, 2014). |

| Bangladesh's early learning context (home, classroom & TTC) (ALI+GR+LOPI) | Learning occurs both by traditional means like lessons and exercises (to achieve skills like reading, writing and memorising) sometime out of mature context without knowing the whole process, and play-oriented interactive means which involves wide and keen attention and contribution as guided by experts (community members/teachers). |
|---|---|

| Synopsis of pattern of practices of communication: | |
|---|---|
| ALI: | In this tradition communication is mostly word-based instead of shared endeavours. It engages a limited range of formats in which explanations occurs out of context and often through quiz questions with known answers (Rogoff, 2014). |
| GR: | In this tradition communication occurs through words and activities which take place through modelling and mimicking/rehearsals/performances (Rogoff et al. 2007). Experts model a particular activity and children attain the skill in their attempts to repeat accurately. To ensure accurate imitation they go through rehearsal, memorization and performance. |
| LOPI: | In this tradition construction of knowledge is supported by both verbal (with judicious use of speech as conversations or narratives) and non-verbal (body language, expressions) means of communication by the experts (Paradise & Rogoff, 2009). "Communication is based on: coordination through shared reference in collective endeavors, using nonverbal (and verbal) conversation. Narratives and dramatizations." (Rogoff, 2014, p. 73). |

| Bangladesh's early learning context (home, classroom & TTC) (ALI+GR+LOPI) | During communication (between children/learners themselves or with adults/experts) play-oriented activities classroom and TTC practices involve characteristics of all the three prisms – ALI, GR and LOPI while family practices combine LOPI and GR practices. |
|---|---|

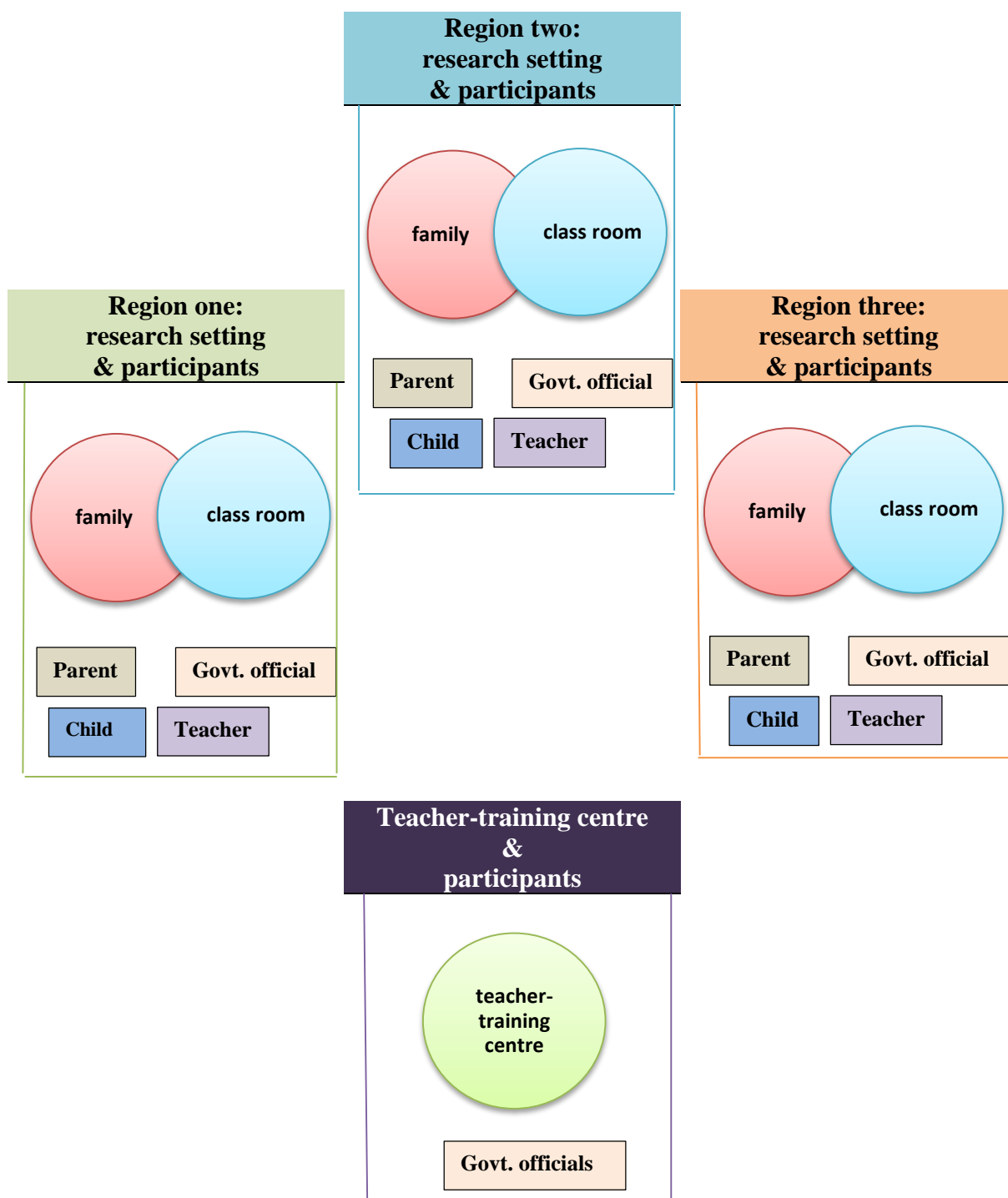| Synopsis of pattern of practices of assessment: | |
|---|---|
| ALI: | To sort and test learners. Separate from learning. Feedback comes from extrinsic rewards/ threats and ranking (Rogoff, 2014, p. 76). |
| GR: | To support learning and text receipt of text. Feedback: ongoing correction and acceptance of performance (Rogoff et al. 2007). |
| LOPI: | Appraises both the learner's mastery and the supports that are provided. In order to aid learner's contributions, during the endeavour. Feedback from adequacy of contribution (and its acceptance or correction) (Rogoff, 2014, p. 73). |

| Bangladesh's early learning context (home, classroom & TTC) (ALI+GR+LOPI) | In the family context LOPI dominates the assessment practices while in TTC it is a combination of LOPI and GR. Assessment practices in the classroom combine all ALI, GR and LOPI trends that involve formal tests in the classroom, ongoing correction and acceptance of performance and sometimes to aid learner's contributions, during shared endeavour. |
|---|---|

**Summary of research context**

**Region two:
research setting
& participants**

family

class room

Parent

Govt. official

Child

Teacher

**Region one:
research setting
& participants**

family

class room

Parent

Govt. official

Child

Teacher

**Region three:
research setting
& participants**

family

class room

Parent

Govt. official

Child

Teacher

**Teacher-training centre
&
participants**

teacher-
training
centre

Govt. officials

**Summary of the study (research approach, design, methods and analysis)**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Philosophical overview** | Constructivist-interpretivist |
| **Research approach** | Qualitative inquiry & case study approach |
| **Research questions** | How does the introduction of the play-oriented PPC inform the cultural nature of learning practices in the ECE context of Bangladesh? |

<div>

a) What are the social organisations of adults' and young children's participation in play-oriented learning activities in different settings (including home, classroom and teacher-training centre)?

b) What are parents' expectations from such learning endeavours and how do they assess their children's achievement of those learning goals?

c) What motivates young children in play-oriented learning and how do they experience it?

d) How do government officials (who develop/implement policies) interpret this play-oriented curriculum and communicate it to the teachers?

e) How do teachers perceive and implement this curriculum approach as a teaching-learning strategy and integrate themselves and young learners in such practices?

</div>

| | |
|---|---|
| **Context/setting** | Classroom context      Family context      Teacher-training context |
| **Sampling** | Purposeful sampling |
| **Participants** | 1. teachers          4. government officials (who<br>2. pre-primary children             develop/implement/monitor<br>3. parents             PPC) |
| | |
| **Methods & data** | 1. observation (video & still images)     3. documents & artefacts<br>2. interview             4. field-note |
| | |
| **Analysis** | **Unites:**          **Tools:**<br>1. Classroom practice     Seven features of Rogoff's prism of<br>2. Family practice     culturally organised learning tradition<br>3. Teacher-training       1. Community organisation of learning<br>   practice       2. Motivation  of learning<br>             3. Social organisation of endeavours<br>             4. Goal of learning<br>             5. Learning by means of<br>             6. Communication<br>             7. Assessment: |

**Examples of imported games included in the ECE curriculum in Bangladesh**
**(DPE, 2010)**

| Games (group activities) | Rules |
|---|---|
| **Game 1:** *Playing like a train* | Children will stand in a row keeping the hands on the shoulders of the person in the front; they will sing the song 'rail gari zhik zhik …', act like train, move around and stop in the imagined station; each child will become the engine in front of the train by rotation. |
| **Game 2:** *Making a pair* | All the children will stand in lines in pairs except one. The single person will join any pair and the child in front of the pair will run and join another pair. The process will continue and each child should get the chance to shift place. |
| **Game 3:** *Can you tell?* | Children will stand in a circle; one will be the team leader and start the game through counting 1, 2, 3 & 4; during play every one will clap twice at a time but will not speak during clapping; in between clapping the leader will ask names of flowers/ fruits/ fishes/ food/ colour/ words/ letters/ etc. and each child will tell one name of the asked subject. |
| **Game 4:** *Let's make shapes* | One circle, one triangle and one square and one straight line will be drawn in the ground; children will be asked to enter the circle/triangle/square or stand in a straight line; children will be asked to hold each other's hand and make the circle/triangle/square or straight line. |
| **Game 5:** *Let's find out* | The children will stand in a circle and find out the colours around them as asked by the teacher. |
| **Game 6:** *Let's play ball* | Children will stand in a circle; one child will through a ball to person in front of him/her; second child will through it to another child in front of his/her; in every turn one child will get the ball from one fixed person and through it to one fixed person; the game will continue with two balls at a time for a fixed period. |

## An example of data analysis

**Related feature of learning tradition:** Social organisation of endeavours.

**Issue of concern:** To what extent children exercise their agency during play-oriented learning?

**Context:** Classroom context.

| Sources | Data |
|---|---|
| **Observation(s) & field-note(s)** | **As observed in all the studied classrooms:**<br><br>Though play practices in the classroom were mostly interactive and collaborative the teachers did not always pay attention to children's choices.<br><br>Children rarely possessed the scope to select an activity of their own choice.<br><br>Teachers usually follow their prescribed daily lesson plan. |
| **Image(s)** | <br><br>**Image 1**: The teacher in South Mill School explains to the children how to play a game with the ball. The children are following the teacher's directions. |
| **Interview excerpt(s)** | *'I like to play with ball. I tell her [teacher] that. But she asks to draw flowers'* (Asif, child, South Mill family).<br><br>*'You know, only one teacher is assigned for this class. The number of student is high. And, we have some learning targets. So it is not always possible for me to let them play as per their own choices. Again, sometimes it makes chaos if they are allowed to play as they like. But I try my bests to cope with their interests'* (Mohsina, teacher, South Mill School). |

| Document(s)/ artefact(s) |  |
|---|---|
| | **Image 26:** Prescribed daily lesson plan (in Bangla) followed by Sohana, the teacher in Road-Side School. See the translation below: |

**Daily Lesson Plan for the pre-primary class**

| Daily lesson plan | | | | | | | | Date: 10/07/2013 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A) Create a safe environment in the class | | | | | | | B) Develop emotion in the class | | | | | |
| Class | Subject | Lesson | Learning outcome & capability | Learning strategy | Assessment strategy | Material | Time | Intelligence | | | | |
| Baby [pre-primary] | Bangla literacy | Making words using letters | Will be able to identify letters in words | Using cards & pictures | Oral Written | Cards Pictures Textbook | | | | | | |
| Do | Environment | Surrounding things | What we have around us | Using pictures | Oral | Textbook | | | | | | |
| Do | Maths | Addition using numbers | Will be able to do addition using pictures | Using pictures Counting orally | Writing on board Writing in notebooks | Pictures Textbook | | | | | | |
| Do | Guided play | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Signature of the principal | | | | | | | Signature of the class teacher | | | | | |

| Finding(s) | **During play-oriented learning in the classroom context children's voices were sometimes suppressed.** |
|---|---|

**An example of semi-structured questions used for interviewing the parent participants**

| **Semi-structured questions for parents** |
| --- |

1. Good morning/afternoon. Please introduce yourself.
2. Please tell me about your child who is attending the pre-primary class.
3. Do you know about the new Pre-Primary Curriculum (PPC)? (If yes, then what do you know about it? Please explain.)
4. How did you learnt at school during your childhood?
5. How your child is learning at school now?
6. Which way you consider better for learning of young children?
7. Do you think this is a good or bad idea to use play as a teaching–learning tool? (If yes/no, then why? Please elaborate.)
8. What are your expectations from the school about your child's learning and development?
9. Do you think the teachers can fulfil those expectations through the play-oriented curriculum?
10. How can they make it better?
11. How do you communicate with the school/teachers about your child's learning and development?
12. What do you want your child to learn at home in everyday life?
13. Do you play with your child at home? (If yes/no, then what role do you have?)
14. How do you participate in her learning process at home?
15. How do you communicate with him/her during play-based learning?
16. How do you motivate him/her learning?
17. How do you assess his/her learning and development through play at home?

# References

**Reference**

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