

*Final Report on
Children's Play Right Situation in
Dhaka City*



Submitted to



Save the Children

Study Conducted by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5
1. INTRODUCTION	7
1.2 OBJECTIVES	8
2. METHODOLOGY	8
2.1 STUDY AREA SELECTION	9
2.2 QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION.....	9
3. LITERATURE REVIEW:	10
4. LAWS & POLICIES ON CHILDREN’S RIGHT TO PLAY	11
4.1 CONVENTION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD	11
4.2 NATIONAL CHILDREN POLICY (2011)	12
4.3 EDUCATION POLICY 2010:	13
4.4 LAW ON "MEGA CITY, DIVISIONAL TOWN AND DISTRICT TOWN’S MUNICIPAL AREAS":	13
4.5 DHAKA METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT PLAN (DAP 2010):	14
4.6 REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT ACT (2010):	14
4.7 PRIVATE HOUSING PROJECT LAND DEVELOPMENT RULE (2004):	14
4.8 THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (CITY CORPORATION) ACT (ACT No. 60 OF 2009)	14
4.9 7TH FIVE YEAR PLAN.....	15
4.10 PERSPECTIVE PLAN OF BANGLADESH	15
5. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY	16
5.1 CHILDREN’S PERCEPTION AND REALIZATION OF ENTITLEMENTS ON “RIGHT TO PLAY”.....	16
5.2 HOW CHILDREN DEFINE AND PRACTICE PLAY	17
5.3 RESIDENTIAL AREA & CHILDREN’S REALIZATION OF THEIR RIGHT TO PLAY	19
5.4 OBSTACLE OF ACCESS TO PLAY	20
5.5 EXISTING FACILITIES IN SCHOOLS & COMMUNITIES AND CHILDREN’S REALIZATION & OBSTACLE	22
5.6 CHILDREN’S PERCEPTION ON EXISTING GENDER DIMENSIONS OF RIGHT TO PLAY SITUATION	24
5.7 CHILDREN’S SUGGESTION ON IMPROVING CHILD PLAY RIGHT.....	26
5.8 PARENT’S ATTITUDE (CHILDREN ARE FACING IN REALIZATION OF THEIR RIGHT TO PLAY) ...	27
5.9 PARENT’S PERCEPTION ON EXISTING GENDER DIMENSIONS OF RIGHT TO PLAY SITUATION..	27
5.10 PARENT’S SUGGESTIONS ON IMPROVING ACCESS TO CHILD PLAY RIGHT	28
5.11 PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHERS ON CHILDREN’S RIGHT TO PLAY.....	29
5.12 EXPERT’S OPINION ON CHILDREN’S RIGHT TO PLAY	30
6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	31
7. REFERENCES:	33

Tables:

Table 1: Quantitative Data Collection Area	9
Table 2: Reasons for boys and girls should have not same play rights	25
Table 3: Reasons for boys and girls should have same play rights	25

Figures:

Figure 1: Activities considered as play (Outdoor)	17
Figure 2: Activities considered as outdoor play (Boys and Girls)	18
Figure 3: Activities considered as play (In-door)	18
Figure 4: Activities considered as indoor play (Boys and Girls)	19
Figure 5: Gender wise respondents (Children)	19
Figure 7: How frequently children avail these facilities	21
Figure 8: Children who avail outdoor gaming facilities everyday	21
Figure 8: Opportunities in school to participate in sports	22
Figure 9: Availability of playground in the community/ residential area	22
Figure 11: Major obstacles for child's play rights.....	23
Figure 12: Major obstacles faced against the gender of respondents.....	24
Figure 13: Gender of the respondent and reasons behind thinking that Boys and Girls should not play the same game	25
Figure 14: Ways to improve children's play situation (Children's opinion)	26
Figure 15: People who can ensure the play-rights	26
Figure 15: Parents role in game selection.....	27
Figure 17: Reasons why parents consider boys and girls should have different sports facilities	28
Figure 18: How to improve children's play (parents)	28

List of Acronyms:

BKSP	Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protisthan
DAP	Detailed Area Plan (for Dhaka)
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FYP	Five Year Plan
GCC	Good Cause Campaign
KII	Key Informant Interview
LGRD&C	Local Government Rural Development and Cooperatives Ministry
LG	Local Government
MoWCA	Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
PEDP	Primary Education Development Programme
PPP	Public Private Partnership
RAJUK	Rajdhani Unnayan Katripokkha (Capital city Development Authority)
WHO	World Health Organization
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Save the Children is implementing the 'Good Cause Campaign' project (GCC) with the support of IKEA Foundation and technical support of Save the Children Sweden at Dhaka, Rajshahi and Satkhira district where one of the main focus is – promotion of children's 'right to play'. The project commissioned this study to understand the present situation of children's right to play in urban settings from both children and their parents' perspective and from policy direction point of view. The study followed both quantitative and qualitative data collection method. For quantitative data, 600 household (300 children, 300 parents) was surveyed at Dhaka City considering income gaps, gender, school going / drop out children, living in slums; and conducted KII and FGDs with children for qualitative data. The study also reviewed relevant laws and policies and made a recommendation to improve children's play rights situation at Dhaka City. The study commissioned in a context when Dhaka has been ranked the mostly populated city in the world (44,500 people per sq km) based on measurement of the density of "urban agglomerations" (UN's Demographic Yearbook & the Daily star; 12 May'2017). Everyday 1700 people added with Dhaka City (BBS & UNFPA, 2016).

Right to play barriers:

Non-availability of open space and playground, pressure of study, and lack of security are the major obstacles for the children to enjoy right to play in Dhaka. Those who consider lack of open space as an obstacle to play, 49% of them play video/ pc games and 17% play puzzle at home, which indicates lack of open space is motivating or compelling children to play electronic based games. 46.9% children cannot play outdoor games such as football and cricket due to excessive pressure of study followed by lack of open space (34%) and security concerns (12%) are the major obstacles in Dhaka. More than one quarter of the studied children mentioned of not having play facilities in their community and residential area.

Right to play and gender dimension:

Majority of children consider that there should not be any gender discrimination for children's play. On the other hand, more than half of the parents emphasize for separate sports facilities for boys and girls. Girls are more concerned than boys regarding security and they play less outdoor games compared to boys. Social norms and security are the major influencer for such mindset. Gender differences regarding choice of game is clearly visible - while 51% boys mentioned of playing football, only 23% girls mentioned of playing football. Similar findings is shown for cricket 19% boys and 9% girls consider cricket as favorite outdoor game. Girls prefer badminton, rope pulling, basketball, swing, swimming as preferred games. Interestingly 39% boys and same percent of girls mentioned of playing video games, but 16% boys and 6% girls prefers PC (computer) games as a recreational activity.

High influence of digital medium:

Children are spending more time in digital game in mobile and computer platform and less time in open air games. Interestingly, electronic based games are most popular in slums, around 50% children play video games at Kalyanpur slums which is 24% in Dhanmondi, 21% in Mirpur and 18% in Dhaka University area.

Residential area and play facilities:

Play facilities in residential area is a way to ensure children's play rights. There is no open space in most residential areas including slum. Residential areas where open fields are available, children are playing more outdoor games. Carrom is the highest popular indoor game where Chess is mentioned as the most played indoor game. This is notable that in Kallyanpur slum around 40% children play Carrom and 21% play Chess.

Improving the Scenario:

Children and their parents mainly mentioned about allocating secured open space or park in the neighborhood and play opportunities in the schools and residential building to ensure their right to play. Regarding improvement of play situation, 42% children mentioned of City Corporation Mayor's role, 9% mentioned of ward councilors, 8% government departments, 3% mentioned of Prime Minister but 16% couldn't respond as they are not aware of role of these stakeholders. All children in FGD in slum mentioned of Mayor's role as most significant. Many also mentioned of councilors.

Major Recommendation:

Lobby and advocacy with the Local Government Ministry, City Corporations, RAJUK and other authority so that they consider children's voice in - accessing more open spaces, developing new policy and effective implementation of the laws and policies. As too much pressure on education is the prime concern to avail children's right to play, many suggested to reduce syllabus and exams for primary level students. Implementation of laws and policy are important, particularly the DAP (Detail Area Plan of Dhaka), RAJUK and City Corporation's laws and policy should be strictly followed in allocating & maintaining open spaces at community, parks and building codes. The study team also recommends – there should be special measures by the government for slums and low income community children's play space and park; ensure children and community people in the 'management' of park and playgrounds; bring more innovations in utilizing the existing roads and explore more options for children's play place; large program/campaign by the government for awareness of mass people on importance of children's play; increase government investment for children's play; and there should be national network who will monitor the implementation status of existing laws and policies as well as advocate for children's right to play.

1. INTRODUCTION

Play and recreation are universal rights of all children, but not always straightforward to secure and safeguard. Despite the centrality of play to the health, well-being and development of children, it is rarely taken seriously by governments and other duty bearers. Children's right to play and recreation were first recognized as basic rights in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) adopted by the United Nations (UN) in 1989 (Article 31). In the Concluding Observations on the fifth periodic report of Bangladesh (2015) by Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Committee reminds the State party (Bangladesh) of children's right to rest, leisure and cultural activities and recommends that it allocate all necessary human, technical and financial resources to initiatives that promote and facilitate children's playtime.

Bangladesh rapidly becoming an urban country and is causing an increase migration rate risking the lives of more and more children. Today the country's urban population stands at 53 million – but by 2028 there will be 79.5 million people living in urban Bangladesh (Bangladesh Urban Health Survey 2013). Open space for children become 'exceptional' in urban areas of Bangladesh. Regardless of the policy guidance, in Bangladesh, children right to play and recreation situation is not satisfactory at all. There is a strong lack of awareness of the importance of play and recreations, still, play considered as luxury of life. The existing policy documents did not focus to emphasize girls' participation in play and sports equally, girls are restricted to participate in sport, and they kept indoors because of fears for their safety. Beside, resulting in the unplanned urbanization, most of the playgrounds of major cities have been grabbed by the influential groups. There's not any specific policy in enhancing the play and sports at the country; it is unfortunate that the 'Ministry of sports and youth' drafted the country's 'sports policy' in 1998 and after almost 20 years the sports policy yet not finalized. There is an urgent need to deconstruct myths about the play and to recognize the benefits of playing for children and young people - lack of recognition of the value of play; key stakeholders having a limited understanding of the developmental benefits of play.

Considering the above situation, Save the Children along with three national partner organizations - Association for Community Development-ACD, Breaking the Silence-BTS and INCIDIN Bangladesh is implementing the 'Good Cause Campaign' project (GCC) with the support of IKEA Foundation at Dhaka, Rajshahi and Satkhira where the main focus of the project is - "I Play, I learn and I am Safe" and with a mission of 'preventing unsafe migration and advance the rights of children on the move to protection, education and play". The project is aiming children will have more opportunity for safer play and sports for their development and protection, and government and private sector will priorities and invest more to make spaces for playgrounds, and sports facilities for children.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of the study is to understand the present context/scenario of children's right to play in urban settings from both children perspective and policy direction point of view.

The **specific objectives** of the study are:

- To understand children perception and realization of entitlements on their 'right to play' in Bangladesh considering gender and socio-economic perspective.
- To better understand children's play rights situation in an urbanization context of Dhaka City
- To get a policy analysis/direction of the government and private sector for improving children's play-rights in Bangladesh.

The following questions were addressed to relate the study objectives:

- What are the underlying factors/obstacles (i.e. time, space, security, equipment, parent's ignorance) children are facing in the realization of their right to play?
- What are the existing gender dimensions of the right to play situation, and if they promote the gender stereotype role in society?
- What are the perceptions by parents and teachers on the children's right to play? What are parent's perspectives about sending their children (boy and girls) at outside for play?
- When (time/frequency), where (i.e. school, home, field) and type of play nowadays children are engaging more?
- What are the policy framework and barriers to implementing the existing policy directions on increasing play space and open space by the relevant authority, i.e. LGRR&D Ministry, City Corporations, Sports Ministry, Bangladesh Shishu Academy, MoWCA, Town Planners Association, RAJUK, etc.
- How to mobilize the private sectors in increasing (by investing) the open space and playgrounds for children in urban areas?

2. METHODOLOGY

In the study, 'play' refer to outdoor play facility and 'children' refer to all income groups of children from the society as of demographic frequency. The study followed both quantitative and qualitative data collection. The following methods has been followed to complete this study:

- ✓ Review of all relevant documents including government's laws and strategies;
- ✓ Key informant interviews (KII) with key stakeholders;
- ✓ Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with children;
- ✓ Workshop with service providers; Perents and teachers
- ✓ questionnaires surveys (structured) with the children and parents;

For Quantitative data, 600 household (3 hundred children, 3 hundred parents) was surveyed at Dhaka City considering income gaps, gender, school going / drop out children, living in slums. Stratified sampling is used to select different socioeconomic groups - high income professionals, middle income, lower middle-income groups and low-income groups. Then cluster sampling is done to select one area for each group. Households were selected by systematic random sampling for the children and parents.

If any child or parents refuse to take part in study next HH was selected. Four areas were selected for the quantitative data collections in Dhaka City.

2.1 STUDY AREA SELECTION

Kallyanpur slum is selected low income area and this one of the oldest and largest slum and is situated surrounded by upper middle- middle-income residential areas . The slum consists of various thatched, tin-roofed kuchha house. Another area,

Dhanmondi is chosen as the area for high-income group professionals for generations where there are several top most renowned English medium schools are situated and there are several shopping malls nearby with commercial indoor games facilities, open park, lakeside open space where cultural activities are arranged. There are a few UN/Development partners and NGOs offices and several cultural centers in this area.

Mirpur area has selected as it is a large and long area of the middle-income group, there are zoo, botanical garden, cricket stadium and indoor games stadium, open fields in government quarters but in the private residential areas, there is no open space and field.

Dhaka University residential area is the central location of Dhaka City which consist of available open spaces and adjacent to Ramna park, Sowrawardy Uddyan, Shishu park, Sishu Academy and it has own playing field, swimming pool and gymnasium. There are open spaces in all the sections of the residential area of Dhaka University. While Mirpur falls into Dhaka North City Corporation area, Dhaka University residential area falls into Dhaka South Dhaka North City Corporation area. Thus, the study covered both parts of Dhaka City Corporation areas.

Table 1: Quantitative Data Collection Area

Area	Socio-economic Background	Children No. of interviews (Boys & Girls) (8-14 years old)	Parents No. of interviews (Fathers & Mothers) Age: 8-14 Years
Kallyanpur Slum	Lower Income & Vulnerable Group	100	100
Dhanmondi Residential area	High Income Professional Groups	100	100
Dhaka University Residential Area	Upper Middle – Middle Income Professional Group	50	50
Mirpur Residential Area	Upper Middle – Middle-income groups	50	50
Total		300	300
Grand Total		600	

2.2 QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION

For qualitative study, focus groups discussions (FGDs), key informant interview (KII), workshops were conducted. FGDs were done with children and parents. Two workshops were done with various stakeholders, one including parents, teachers,

another including high officials from corporate/private sector, urban planners, NGO representatives. KII was conducted with high officials from Ministry of Youth & Sports, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Bangladesh Shishu Academy, Urban planners from RAJUK and official from City Corporation regarding government's policies and challenges of implementation of policies. KII was also conducted with high officials from private sectors investment on their CSR contribution for children's play right.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW:

The existing literature provides strong evidence that playing is central to children's physical, psychological and social well-being. It can provide opportunities for independent learning and building confidence, resilience, self-esteem and self-efficacy (Lester and Russell 2008; NICE 2010; Coalter and Taylor 2001). Whilst play can bring families closer together, strengthening parent-child relationships (Gardner and Ward 2000), playing away from adult supervision is equally important, allowing children to acquire independent mobility, explore the world on their own terms and create their own identities (Armitage 2004).

AHMED and KHAN (2008) paper titled 'Child's play and recreation in Dhaka City, Bangladesh' attempted to take into account children's views and perceptions about their playing spaces, as a result of a study of playgrounds, parks and amusement parks in Dhaka City. The study found that 'play and recreation facilities' provided by the authorities cater for only a fraction of the children in Dhaka City. Girls are almost totally excluded from using these facilities, while boys from high-income families and street children seldom use them. The main reasons for their inaccessibility to most children in Dhaka City are lack of security, poor maintenance and inadequate play facilities and accessories. It is recommended that further studies are undertaken on the existing provision of play spaces for children in order to understand better the impact of such spaces on their wellbeing. Numerous studies in the minority world point to the growing institutionalization of children's time and space, and an associated reduction in children's independent access to public space (Rissotto and Tonucci 2002, Thomas and Hocking 2003, Kytta 2004, Karsten and Van Vliet 2006, Kinoshita 2008). This is evident in the decline in playing outdoors and an increase in adult supervision, although this is not a uniform pattern (Karsten 2005, Van Gils et al. 2009). Children's ability to find time and space for play is affected by a range of social, cultural, economic and political factors. These include gender, socio-economic status and disability.

Provision wider consideration of children's rights to ensure that the social and physical environment can support children's ability to play. Children's capacity to play will have an impact on their health, well-being and development (Burghardt 2005, McEwen 2007). Stuart Lester and Wendy Russell 'a study noted that Children's needs for space and time to play are often misunderstood or ignored in broad development policy, plans and practice; this could have high costs for children (Bartlett 1999, Chawla 2002b, Churchman 2003). The persistent absence of play may disrupt emotion-regulation systems, which in turn will diminish children's physical, social and cognitive competence (Pellis and Pellis 2006). In countries around the world, sport, recreation

and play are improving health – both mind and body. They are teaching important life lessons about respect, leadership and cooperation. They are promoting equality for all and bridging divides between people.

The UN General Assembly has designated 2005 as the International Year of Sport and Physical Education at the United Nations, and unveiled plans for a year-long push to highlight the power of sport to bridge cultural and ethnic divides and improve people's lives. The WHO in their Global Guidelines for Physical Activity for Health mentions play first, when describing what activities count as physical activity for the 5-18 years old. Challenging playgrounds are an evident answer to the physical inactivity of today's children. They encourage self-chosen, voluntary physical activity. They are among the activities that children themselves mention as their favourite pastime.

Brooker, Liz and Woodhead, Martin eds. (2013) consider that play is also contested because individuals, communities and governments have such different notions of the value and importance of play for children. Numerous lines of research enquiry provide insight into the early origins of playful behavior, and its crucial function in the infant's first relationships with parents, siblings and others. Research also draws attention to young children's extraordinary cognitive and social understanding, most clearly revealed within imaginative play.

In Bangladesh, children's play right and the obstacles to ensure it also highlighted in several newspaper reports. According to the national daily, Prothom Alo reported that only 1 in 4 youth in Bangladesh play at leisure. The survey shows that 24.4 percent play at leisure and 23.8 percent watch games/matches on TV and they spent 1 hours 33 minutes and 1 hour 41 minutes respectively. Traditional thought is conformed in the study that games/play is boy's arena as 46.8% boys and 2.1% girls play, similar finding is seen regarding watching play/games on TV.

Though children's play right is acknowledged globally and there are some studies to highlight the importance of the issue, in Bangladesh, this issue was somehow missed in the academic discussions and research though children's right as such is highlighted as a crucial issue, children's play right was ignored which is so much important in physical, psychological and social development of a child.

4. LAWS & POLICIES ON CHILDREN'S RIGHT TO PLAY

All relevant laws and policies were reviewed in the report and the following section presents highlighted issues related to children's play right including open space and playgrounds.

4.1 CONVENTION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Children's play is first and foremost a matter of human rights. According to United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989), all children and young people have the right to play and have an intrinsic need to play. Play provides

opportunities for children and young people to be free to choose what they do, and to challenge themselves, take risks and enjoy freedoms.dd

Article 31 of the CRC refers to the child's right to leisure, play, recreation, culture and the arts. Whilst some of the concepts are problematic, it is clear that the right encompasses a wide range of activity. In particular, play has been defined by the play work profession as behavior which is "freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated i.e. performed for no external goal or reward' (PlayEducation, 1982).

Convention of the Rights of the Child: Article 31 states:

- State Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.
- State Parties shall respect and promote the rights of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.

In 2014, on 14 May High Court instructed government's relevant authorities ¹to take necessary steps in saving and protecting all playfields, parks, the High Court Bench also suggested instructing all DCs, Finance secretary, LG secretary among others to take steps and also to submit report with 10 days of implementation of such activities. This Writ was done on behalf of Environment and Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh in 2013 April. Due to poor management, illegal establishments BAPA and another Environmental organization did a Writ in 2004². In that year, High Courts circulated a rule to Dhaka City Corporation, and other Cities, Division, district and municipality areas to take actions to protect play fields, open space, parks and gardens and natural water bodies. Still in several districts and municipalities encroachment happened. Even in Dhaka University playing fields are sometimes occupied with construction materials.

4.2 NATIONAL CHILDREN POLICY (2011)

Section 6 of National Children Policy titling "Recreation, sports and cultural programs for Children" states the following parts concerning child sport facilities and rights.

- Measures shall be taken to ensure quality recreational, sport and cultural activity for the children. Each educational institution shall have playground, sports equipment. There shall be children park and sports center area wise. The town planning shall include compulsory play-ground for the children. Arrangements shall be made to have recreational facilities in disaster shelters during disaster and afterwards for the children. (Section 6.6.1)

¹ (Kaler Kontho, 1/3/2018)

² Ibid.

- Ample opportunities shall be ensured for the children cultivating different areas of performing arts like child affable movies, drama, paintings etc. to grow and have a clear understanding of the life and ideals. (Section 6.6.2)
- Each school shall have recreational programs wherein the idea of a library shall be inculcated. The disabled children shall have appropriate recreational facilities. (Section 6.6.3)

The National Children Policy 2001 captures the importance of area wise children's park and sports center and ensuring sports equipment in educational institutes and also highlights recreational needs for disabled children. The Policy clearly mentions children's rights in play and recreation at school and beyond. This also includes concern of disabled children. Thus if the policy is implemented children's play right at community and institutional level will be ensured.

4.3 EDUCATION POLICY 2010:

Bangladesh Education Policy 2010 recommends taking necessary steps to create facilities of playground, sports, games and physical exercises in all educational institutions for the healthy growth of the physical and mental qualities of the learners. Regardless the Policy mentioned that - A playground will be regarded as an indispensable condition for the registration of a new school" (Chapter 18, clause 3); and "Indigenous games will be introduced especially in the primary and secondary schools" (Chapter 18, clause 5). There's a separate chapter on 'sports and education – chapter 19', where mentioned that 'sports education must be given an important place in our national education system and it is necessary to take practical steps'. These guidance are reflecting major intervention required for all the educational set up. The education policy emphasizes more on the infrastructure development, but to ensure children's play right provisions of access to playgrounds, indoor games need to be specified and implemented.

4.4 LAW ON "MEGA CITY, DIVISIONAL TOWN AND DISTRICT TOWN'S MUNICIPAL AREAS":

In 2000, a law passed in Parliament with the long title "Mega city, Divisional Town and District Town's municipal areas including country's all the municipal areas' playground, open space, park and natural water reservoir Conservation Act, 2000".³ The Act basically imposes requirement of mandatory approval for changing existing land use of playgrounds, open spaces, parks and natural water bodies, and has provision for punishment of up to five years of jail term or a fine of maximum Tk. 50,000 for violation of enacted rules. The law, however, does not mention any minimum area requirement for playgrounds. Even if we abide by the law, we shall have as many playgrounds in the cities as there are now. Will this meet minimum criterion of public health? We all know it will not. Article 5 of the Law mention that – "Without consulting the provisions of this Act, places identified as playgrounds, open spaces, parks, and natural reservoirs cannot be changed or used in other ways, or cannot be rented, leased or transferred for any similar use."

³ Act No. 36 of 2000, it also called as Open Space Act, 2000
(http://bdlaws.minlaw.gov.bd/bangla_pdf_part.php?id=847&vol=33&search=2000)

4.5 DHAKA METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT PLAN (DAP 2010):

Detail Area Plan for Dhaka Metropolitan Development Plan (DAP 2010) was passed under the Town Improvement Act, E. B Act XIII, 1953. Surprisingly, there is no reference in the DAP regarding minimum quantity or quality guidelines for playgrounds with reference to, say, number of people, density or geographical boundaries (blocks/wards/thanas).

4.6 REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT ACT (2010):

Real Estate Development and Management Act 2010 (Law 48 of 2010), mentions for some important common facilities i.e. for lift, stair, generator room etc. which does not mandate play facilities for children within the high-rise compound/building by housing companies. So provision of open space for play remains optional in high rising building. Since playgrounds are not profit-yielding facilities, the outcome of such options within the plots varies on the Real Estate companies.

4.7 PRIVATE HOUSING PROJECT LAND DEVELOPMENT RULE (2004):

The Private Housing Project Land Development Rule provides space standards for playgrounds and parks with respect to the size of the population living on that privately developed land. The standard (under Rule 9(3) and 10(3)) states that minimum of 0.2 acres of land must be allocated for playgrounds and parks for 1,000 residents. To what extent private housing are following it varies and subject to another study.

4.8 THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (CITY CORPORATION) ACT (ACT NO. 60 OF 2009)

Section 24 of this act states –

- Corporation has the right to build and maintain park in the city for public benefit and recreation. Park will run according to corporation's law.
- For every park corporation will make and implement development plans.

There is provision for open space and parks for citizens but no specification about park for the children specifically in the Local Government (City Corporation) Act though in general park is mentioned.

As of Gazette of the City Corporation (additional) on 15 October 2009 the 'Minsistry of Local government, Rural Development and Cooperative' includes urban planning (section 16) as City Corporation's jurisdiction. The following section highlights city corporations' responsibility in regard to open space, parks and development of residential areas-

- Section 16.3 clearly mentions that when a land development will take place beside diving land in plots city corporation will also make arrangements for open space, roads and drainage systems.
- Section 24. 3. Corporations will run parks and open space according to rules and was able to build and maintain parks for the leisure of mass people in the city corporation.

- Section 24.4. for every public parks city corporation will take actions for project planning and implementation on the development of the parks.
- Section 24.5. City corporation will keep open space for the convenience of mass people and cover the open space with grass, will build fence and boundary around the open space and will take action for improving the situation/condition of the open space.
- Section 26.9. City corporation with government's prior approval can take necessary actions on security and health safety issues in arranging fair, exhibition, festivals for mass population in public places of city.
- 8th Tafsil, Dhara 122(2) mentions that city corporation will supervise, use and control of people's behaviour in park, open space, public gardens and can charge fees for consumption of these facilities.

The rules mentions more of City corporation's rights than obligations to give people access to open space and some rules have restrictions on access without permission As City corporation has right, it can implement strict rules of peoples behaviour in these public spaces to ensure security of children particularly girls to ensure their playrights in the parks and open space.

4.9 7TH FIVE YEAR PLAN

7th Five Year Plan emphasize on active participation in games, sports and recreational activities will be highly encouraged by developing and extending playgrounds at the Upazila level (Chapter 13 "Role of sports, culture and religion in human resource development"). Efforts will be made to strengthen sports and physical education programme at the school stage, right from the primary level and gradually develop and systematize them up to the College and University levels. Targets for 7th FYP includes sports facilities at macro levels including establishing sports institutions at districts levels ad large scale sports facilities such as stadium and swimming pools at Zila level and sports infrastructure facilities at upazilas and also both in rural urban level which is a very positive and direly needed policy, thus advocacy and lobbying for completion of such projects is needed from all levels. Targets for 7th FYP for games and sports: ⁴

- Development of regional sports institutions with proper facilities.
- Establish Sports Schools under BKSP in all the districts.
- Establish sports-related infrastructure in all the Upazilas and Zilas.
- Establish indoor stadium and swimming pools in Divisional and National level.
- Develop facilities for Football and Cricket as well as other sports in Rural level.

4.10 PERSPECTIVE PLAN OF BANGLADESH

Perspective plan also noted that nurturing a society envisaging middle-income status requires actions in the areas of health, housing, labour and social security, gender and development, youth and culture, sports and recreation, sustainable communities, and

⁴ Ibid, p 602

social services.⁵ Thus, public-private partnership in Children's play right can be prospective area to explore. As this will be burdensome for government Perspective plan emphasizes the role of private sector and collaboration for achieving Bangladesh middle income status in 2021. Private sectors and corporate sector can contribute to children's play facilities under CSR or through a consortium. Government can invite or provision private sector to include a plan on their CSR on Children's play right.

Local Government Act 2009 has given the mandate to the City Corporations and Paurashavas to prepare Master Plan for their jurisdiction areas. However, as those master plans prepared so far are physical/engineering in nature with weak link with the national development plan like Five Year Plan also seriously hampers the implementation of such plans⁶.

- At Present, all the City Corporation areas have their Master Plan. Among these, RAJUK has covered 4 city corporations within its jurisdiction area.
- Besides, 3 tier (Structure Plan, Urban Area Plan and Ward Action Plan), Master Plans of 242 Paurashavas, have been prepared by the Technical assistance of LGED and 14 Upazila Master Plans have been prepared by the National level planning organization UDD.
- Recently, LGED has started preparing Action Area Plans for Narayanganj and Gazipur City Corporation areas with the intention of immediate project implementation.

Policies and Rules clearly defined roles of City Corporations and Rajuk and District Administration regarding maintenance of parks, open space. The town planning shall include a compulsory playground for the children".

5. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

5.1 CHILDREN'S PERCEPTION AND REALIZATION OF ENTITLEMENTS ON "RIGHT TO PLAY"

All children in the study irrespective of their socio-economic background, school type, and residential areas understand that Children have universal right to Play. Among outdoor games, football and cricket are most favorite outdoor games for children.

42% boys and 34% girls play Caram, and 22% boys and 18% girls play Ludu. 11% boys and 18% girls prefer to play Chess. 15% boys and 9% girls like to play all of these games⁷ at sometimes. 39% boys and same percent of girls mentioned of playing video games, 16% boys and 6% girls prefers PC games as a recreational activity. 16%

⁵ GoB (2012), *Perspective Plan of Bangladesh 2010-2021*, p.13, available at:

http://bangladesh.gov.bd/sites/default/files/files/bangladesh.gov.bd/page/6dca6a2a_9857_4656_bce6_139584b7f160/Perpective-Plan-of-Bangladesh.pdf

⁶ Ibid, p. 529

⁷ List of the games is provided in the Annex.

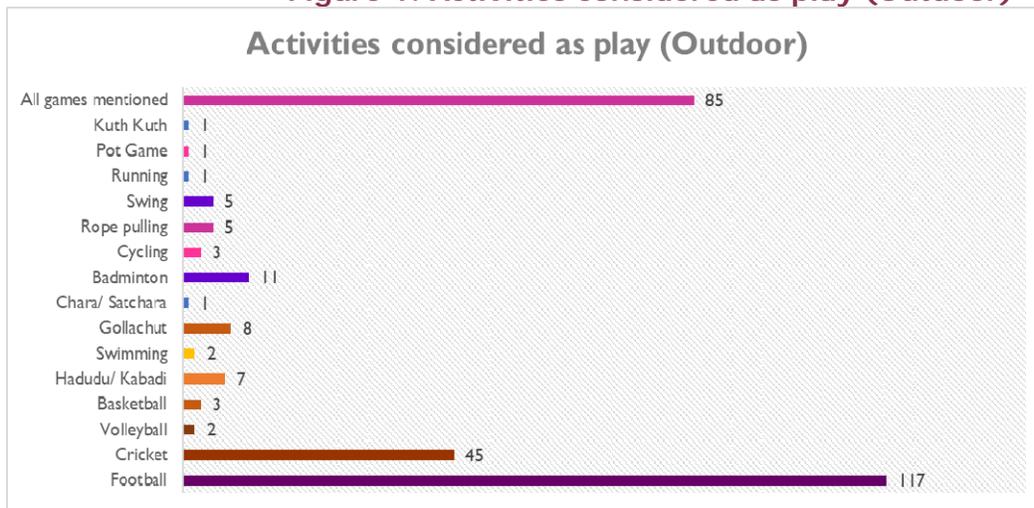
boys and 9% girls play puzzle. 13% boys and 33% girls watch movies and drama on electronic devices.

Gender differences regarding choice of game is clearly shown in this table while 51% boys mentioned of playing football, while 23% girls mentioned of playing football. Similar findings is shown for cricket 19% boys and 9% girls consider cricket as favorite outdoor game. Girls prefer badminton, rope pulling, basketball, swing, swimming as preferred outdoor games.

5.2 HOW CHILDREN DEFINE AND PRACTICE PLAY

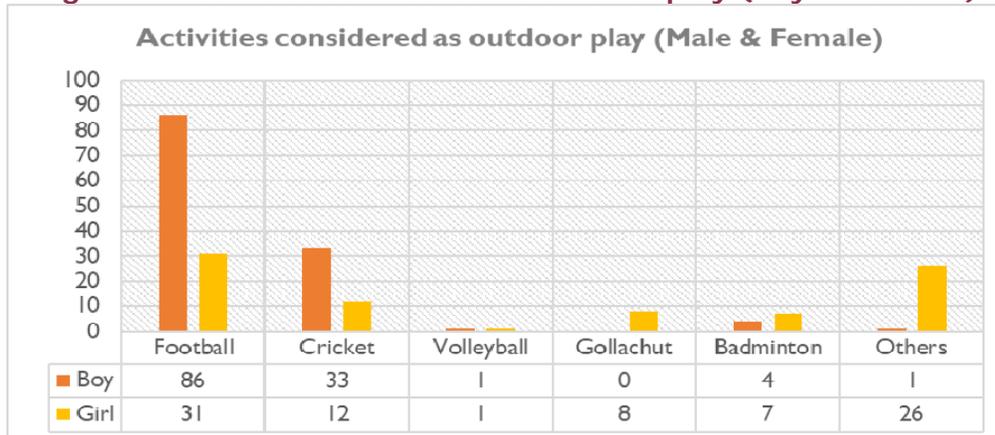
Children’s access to play and perception of popularity of play is changing as most children do not play and even do not know names of some indigenous outdoors games such as *Hadudu*, *Gollachhut*, *Kabadi* etc. Football and cricket are the most popular outdoor games and Volleyball, Basketball, Handball are becoming popular in Dhaka. Electronic based games are alarmingly on rise.

Figure 1: Activities considered as play (Outdoor)



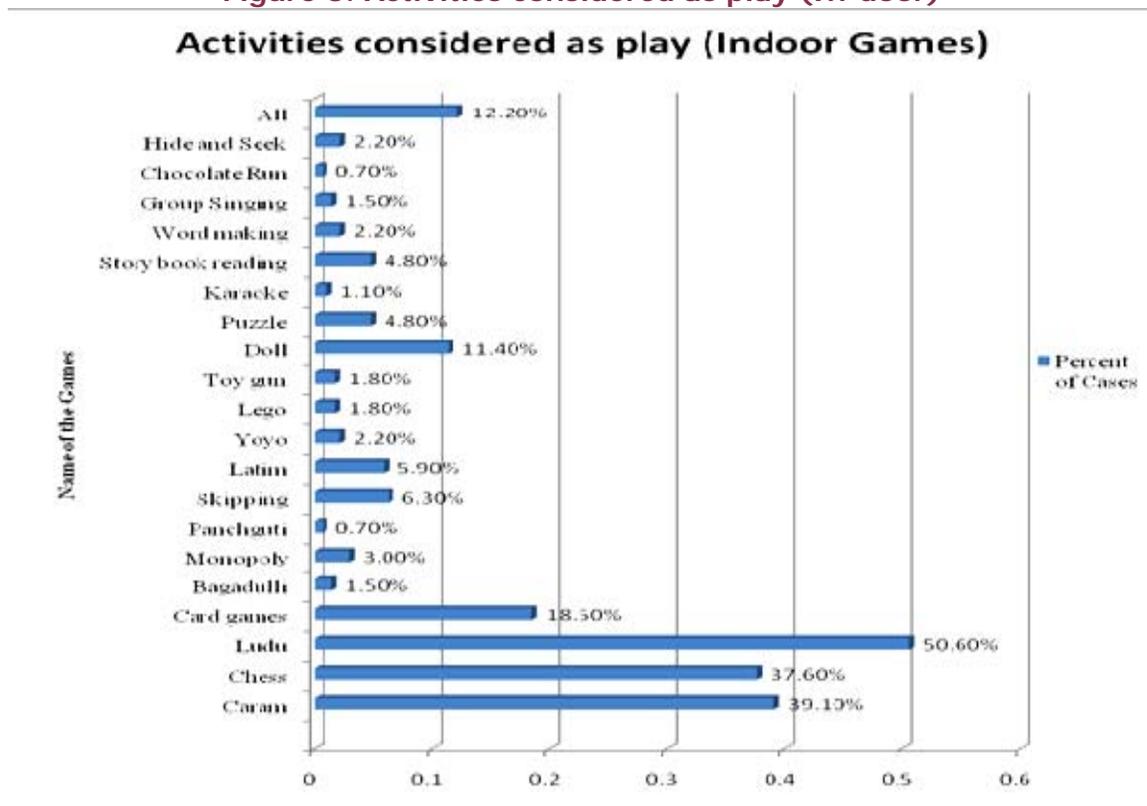
There is a general tendency among the children that they consider all the playful activities as games and 28% respondents informed that they would like to play all/various games. However, among them, majority prefers football (39%) as their primary choice of games followed by cricket (15%).

Figure 2: Activities considered as outdoor play (Boys and Girls)



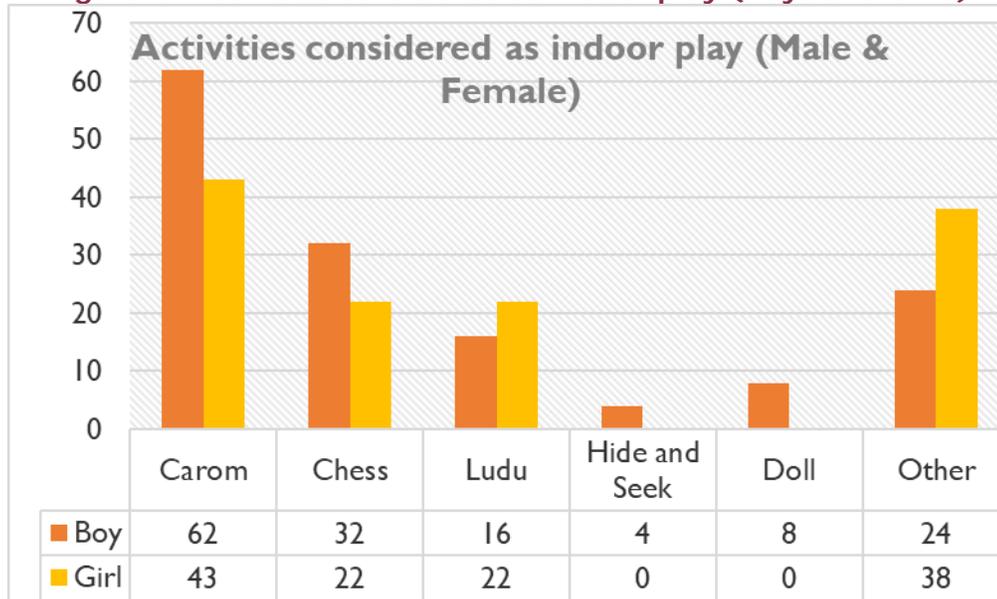
Gender differences regarding choice of game is clearly shown in this table while 51% boys and 23% girls mentioned of playing football. Similar findings are shown for cricket 19% boys and 9% girls consider cricket as favorite outdoor game. Girls prefer Badminton, rope pulling, basketball, swing, swimming as preferred games.

Figure 3: Activities considered as play (In-door)



In indoor games, among the respondents (children), the majority prefers Ludu (51%), carom (39%) as their primary choice of games which is followed by chess (38%).

Figure 4: Activities considered as indoor play (Boys and Girls)



42% boys and 34% girls play carom, and 22% boys and 18% girls play chess. 11% boys and 18% girls prefer to play ludu. 15% boys and 9% girls like to play all of these games at sometimes.

5.3 RESIDENTIAL AREA & CHILDREN'S REALIZATION OF THEIR RIGHT TO PLAY

Figure 5: Gender wise respondents (Children)

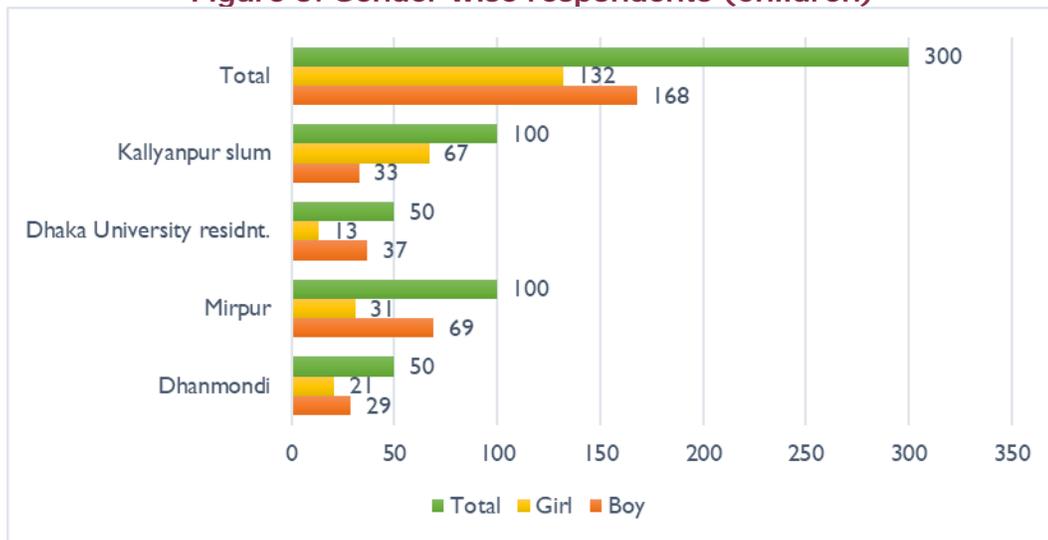


Table 1: Access to outdoor games (residence wise)

Residential Area	Football	Cricket	Volleyball	Basket	Others	Total
Dhanmondi	32	1	1	2	14	50
Mirpur	32	23	0	1	44	100

Dhaka University Residential Area	31	4	1	0	14	50
Kallyanpur Slum	22	17	0	0	61	100
Total	117	45	2	3	143	300

Accessibility of children to playing football is high in all residential areas, though highest in Dhanamondi and Dhaka University residential areas and lowest in Kalyan pur slum. During the focus group discussions, it came out that Dhaka university residential area has open fields for children's playing and children of Dhanmondi go to rented places to play. There is no football ground in Kallyanpur slum area, though children play in the adjacent open places.

Table 2: Access to in-door games (Residence wise)

Residential Area	Carom	Chess	Ludu	Card	Others	Total
Dhanmondi	27	4	1	0	9	50
Mirpur	26	14	20	0	13	100
Dhaka University Residential Area	12	15	5	4	15	50
Kallyanpur Slum	40	21	12	0	4	100
Total	105	54	38	3	29	300

Caram is the highest popular indoor game in all areas except Dhaka University area where chess is mentioned as the most played indoor game. This is notable that in Kallyanpur slum around 40% children play carom and 21% play chess.

Table 3: Access to electronic based games (Residence wise)

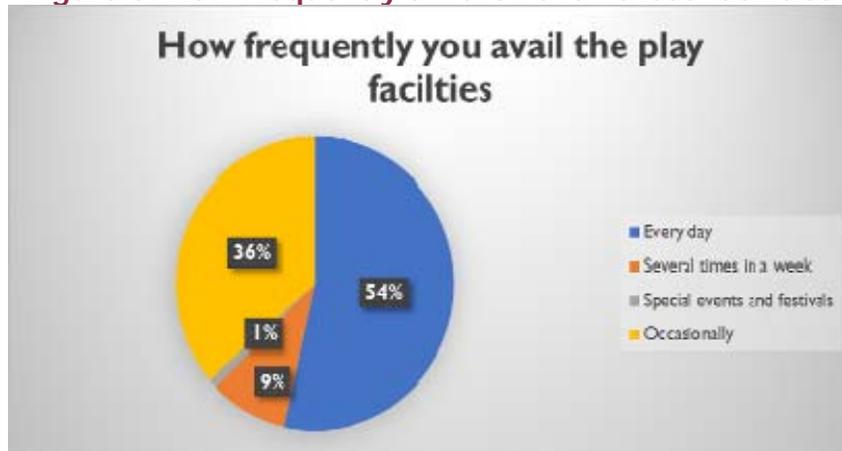
Residential Area	Video Games	PC Games	Movies/ Drama	Puzzle	Others	Total
Dhanmondi	12	8	1	6	23	50
Mirpur	21	8	25	13	33	100
Dhaka University Residential Area	9	10	4	7	20	50
Kallyanpur Slum	52	3	22	5	18	100
Total	94	29	52	31	94	300

Interestingly, electronic based games are most popular in Kallyanpur slum, around 50% children play video games which is 12% in Dhanmondi, 21% in Mirpur and 9% in Dhaka University area. This could be due to lack of open space and parent's engagement with their occupational/ income activities for long duration. In the FGD, it appeared that parents in Kallyanpur slum are engaged in driving, garment jobs, domestic help, who can not accompany their children and oversee children's playing habit and children watch and play video games in a group with hired devices from locality.

5.4 OBSTACLE OF ACCESS TO PLAY

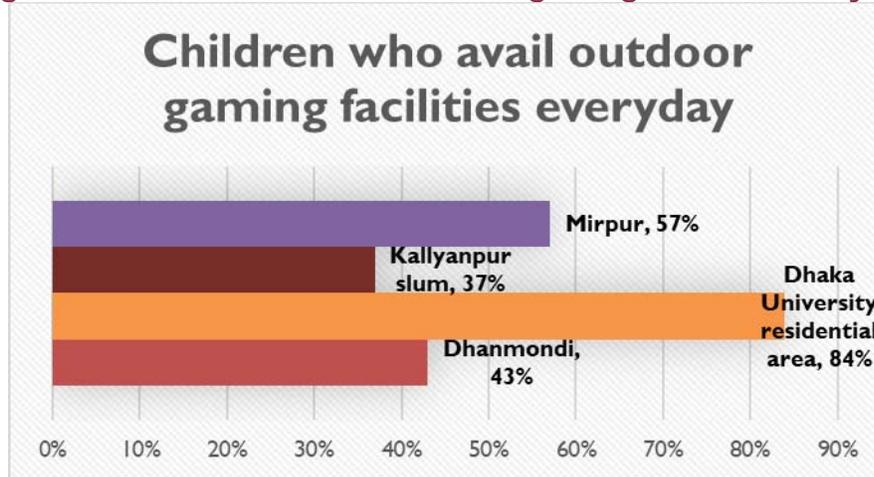
Regarding frequency of availing play facilities only 54% children mentioned of availing play facilities everyday, this is particularly for the outdoor games.

Figure 6: How frequently children avail these facilities



However, among the children who play regularly, 43% live in Dhanmondi, 57% live in Mirpur, 84% live in Dhaka University residential area, 37% live in Kallyanpur slum areas in the community sports facilities. This clearly shows the availability of open space facilitates children’s outdoor games as Dhaka University residential area has the highest open space, followed by Mirpur. Though Kallyanpur slum has no formal proper space but children seem to play in the streets and any kind of open area in neighborhood.

Figure 7: Children who avail outdoor gaming facilities everyday

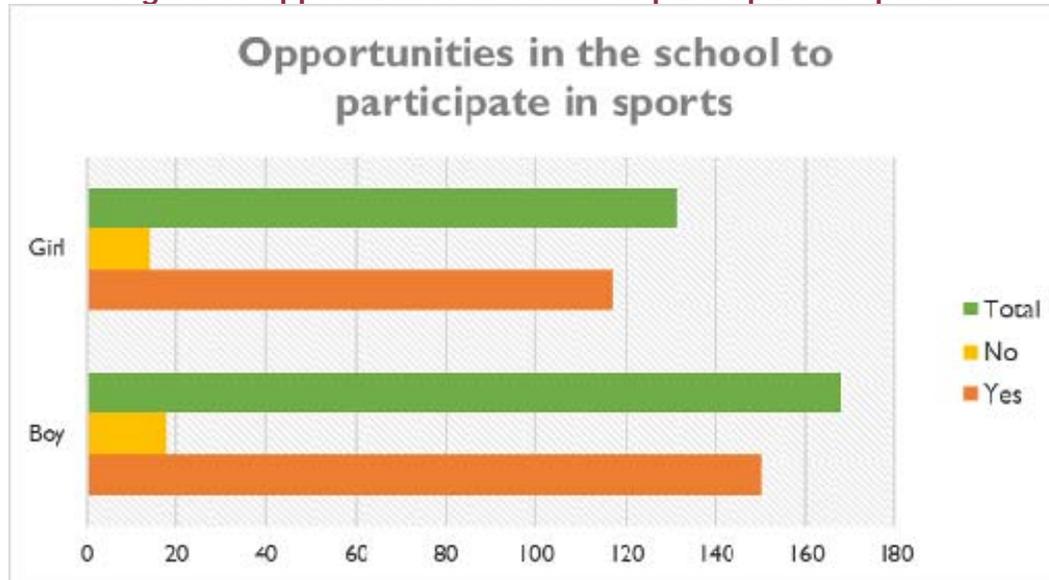


Those who consider lack of open space as an obstacle to outdoor games play, 49% of them play video/ pc games and also 17% play puzzle, and 34% watch movies and dramas. Which indicates lack of open space is motivating or compelling children to play electronic based games. 46.9% children cannot play outdoor games such as football and cricket due to excessive pressure of study. Interestingly in FGD, children mentioned on an average they spend 2 hours on electronic based games daily.

5.5 EXISTING FACILITIES IN SCHOOLS & COMMUNITIES AND CHILDREN'S REALIZATION & OBSTACLE

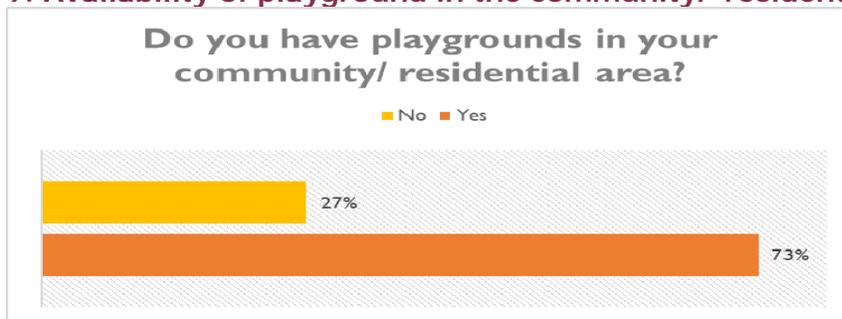
11% children mentioned that they have no opportunities in school to participate in games. 89% children mentioned of having opportunity to play in school which is basically the one hour games time once in a week which hardly incorporates the games children want to play such as cricket, football, swimming, and many indoor games. More than one quarter of the studied children mentioned of not having play facilities in their community and residential area.

Figure 8: Opportunities in school to participate in sports



Different schools have different levels of play facilities particularly for outdoor games, though policies provision play facilities at all levels of schools. In the FGD students mentioned of accessibility to play at school during games and it appears that most English Medium schools do not have field and children play mostly Volleyball, Basketball, Handball. While Bengali medium schools and government schools have playfields and children mentioned of playing football.

Figure 9: Availability of playground in the community/ residential area

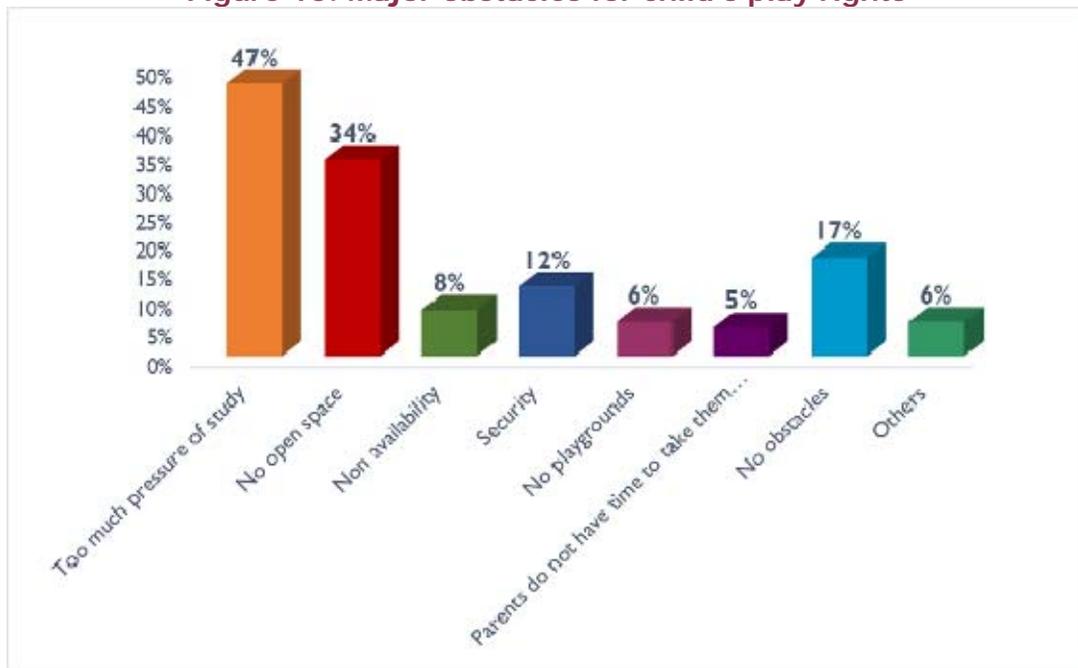


A teacher said that "Almost every time we saw that different fair has been arranged at different fields, like Kalabagan field, but if these fairs would have been arranged at Bangabandhu Convention Center or places like that then children would get chance to

play at these fields. Government should monitor the protection of field. Appropriate action by government is more crucial than steps from other sectors.

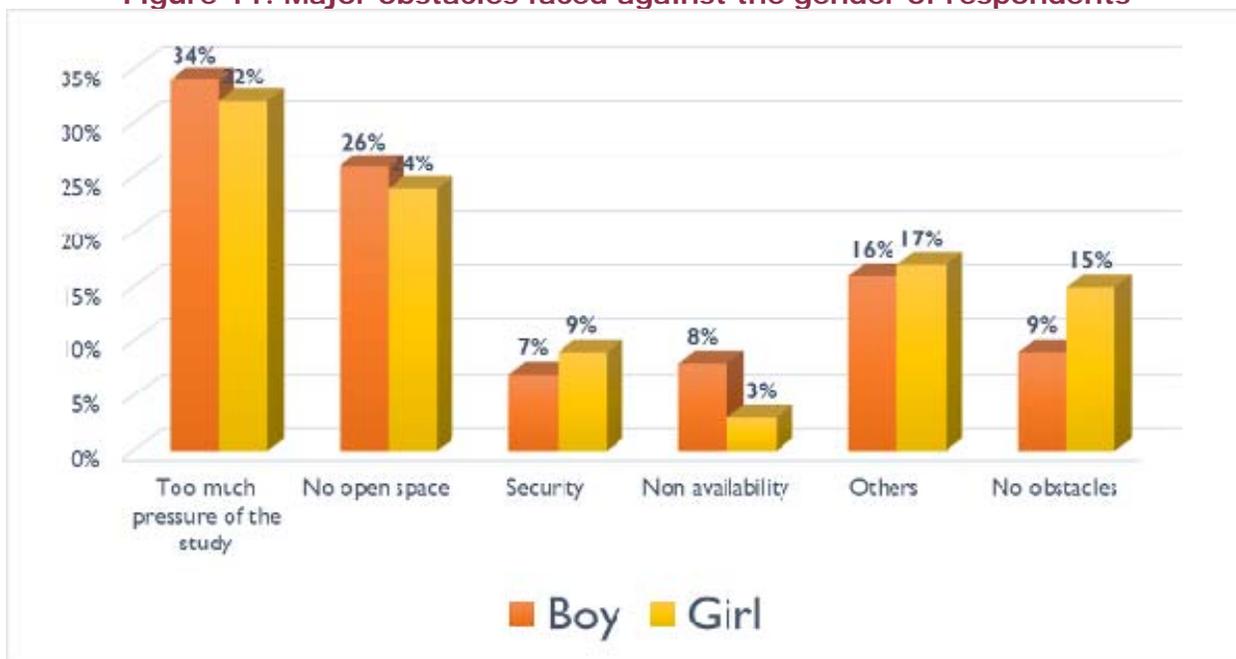
Regarding the major obstacles for children's play right too much pressure on education and lack of space and security are major issues mentions by the children. The following tables presents age group wise, residence wise and gender wise obstacles for ensuring children's play right and all the tables show consistency that too much study pressure (47%) followed by lack of open space (34%) and security concerns (12%) are the major obstacles in Dhaka.

Figure 10: Major obstacles for child's play rights



In the FGD with the children of Kallyanpur slum they informed that lack of proper field or playing arrangement inside or around the residential area as major obstacle for children's play right. They suggested a space adjacent to the slum. They do not go outside adjacent areas as both their parents remain busy during day time and they also do not go to any places where they have to pay for playing as their parents can't afford it.

Figure 11: Major obstacles faced against the gender of respondents



Among school going students, all mentioned of having annual sports and most of them participate in it. But it was apparent from the discussion that different schools have different levels of opportunities, space, equipment's to play at school. Regarding the major obstacles for children's' play right space security are major issues mentions by the children. The children of Dhaka University have proper field or playing arrangement inside or around their residential area. They also go to shopping malls or other play facilities in holidays. They all mentioned of playing video games at home with siblings of friends.

All the children suggested to keep open space in their neighborhood, keeping space near buildings/ houses, access to sports in all schools and arranging sports competitions in all areas.

5.6 CHILDREN'S PERCEPTION ON EXISTING GENDER DIMENSIONS OF RIGHT TO PLAY SITUATION

58% boys and 60% girls consider boys and girls should play the same games. However, Children who consider boys and girls should not play same games, majority (42% among whom 58% girls and 29% boys) consider social negative attitude, 16% consider different physical ability of boys and girls and 15% consider gender based different choices as the reasons.

Figure 12: Gender of the respondent and reasons behind thinking that Boys and Girls should not play the same game

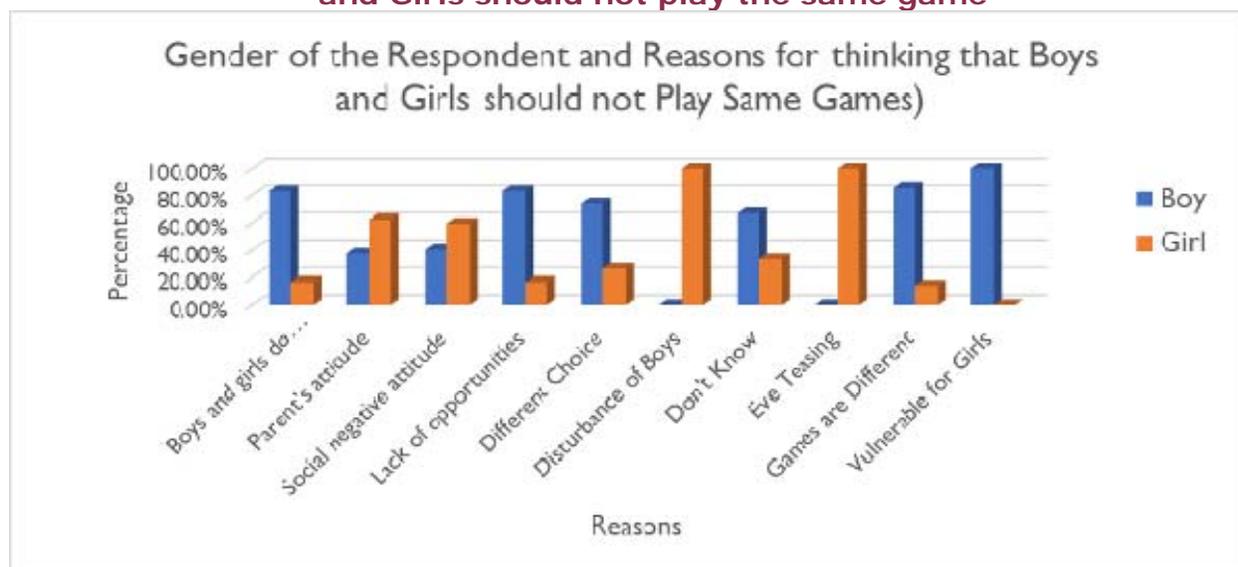


Table 2: Reasons for boys and girls should have not same play rights

REASONS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS SHOULD HAVE NOT SAME PLAY RIGHTS	AMONG TOTAL RESPONDENTS	BOYS	GIRLS
Boys and girls have same physical ability	16%	23%	6%
Parents attitude	7%	5%	10%
Social negative attitude	12%	29%	59%
Lack of opportunities	5%	8%	2%
Different choices	15%	22%	6%
Disturbance of boys	4%	-	10%
Do not know	3%	3%	2%
Eve teasing	1%	-	2%
Games are different	5%	8%	2%
Vulnerable for girls	2%	3%	-

Table 3: Reasons for boys and girls should have same play rights

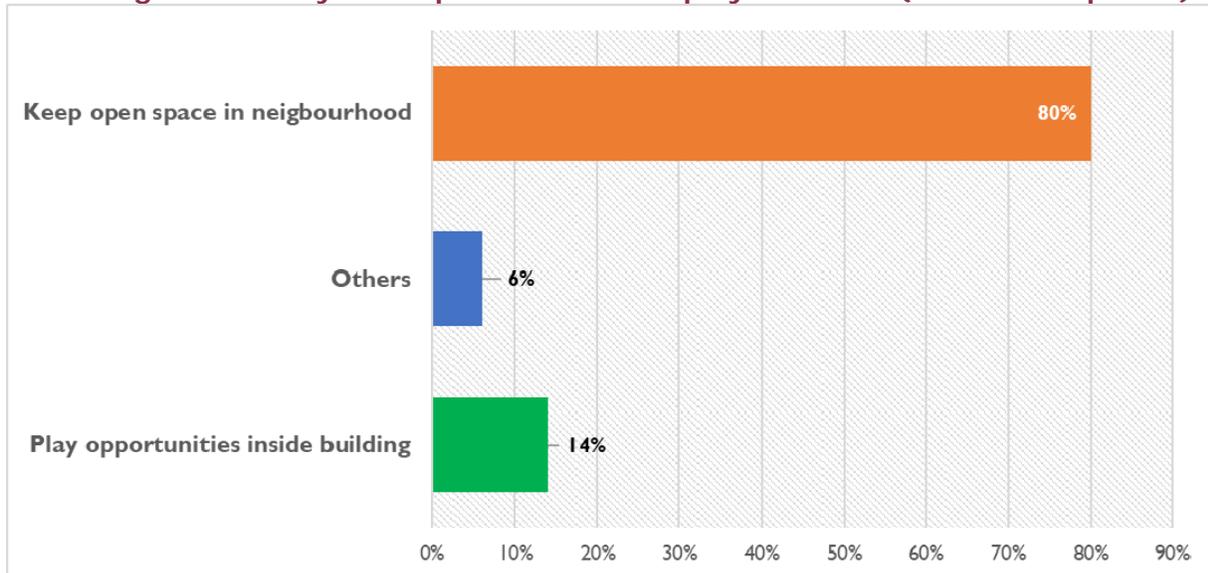
REASONS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS SHOULD HAVE SAME PLAY RIGHTS	AMONG TOTAL RESPONDENTS	BOYS	GIRLS
Boys and girls have same rights	71%	72%	69%
Boys and girls have same ability	9%	7%	12%
Boys and girls have same opportunities	12%	11%	13%
Enjoyable	4%	6%	3%
No Discrimination	1%	2%	-
Various	3%	2%	3%

71% considers boys and girl have same right. Among them 72% boys and 69% girls hold same opinion. In the FGD, some girls particularly who are above 10 years old find there should be separate play facilities as girls do not feel comfortable to play with older boys and some mentioned of having harassing behaviors in the slum. Girls also

mentioned that social attitude is a huge barrier as if they play with boys they face negative comments from neighbors as their mothers are away for their works.

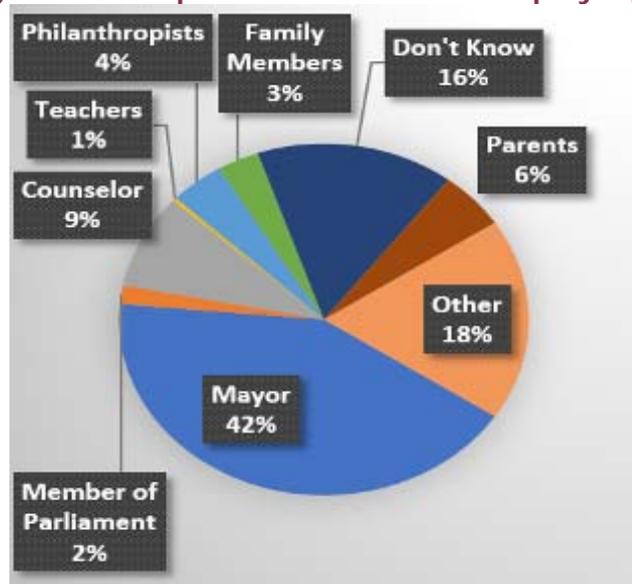
5.7 CHILDREN'S SUGGESTION ON IMPROVING CHILD PLAY RIGHT

Figure 13: Ways to improve children's play situation (Children's opinion)



This is significant that majority (80%) children consider that keeping open space in neighbourhood is the best way to improve children's play right situation followed by play facilities/opportunities inside building (14%). Very few suggested (2%) of play opportunities at school. 2% children suggested to arrange sports competition for allowing children to access to play.

Figure 14: People who can ensure the play-rights

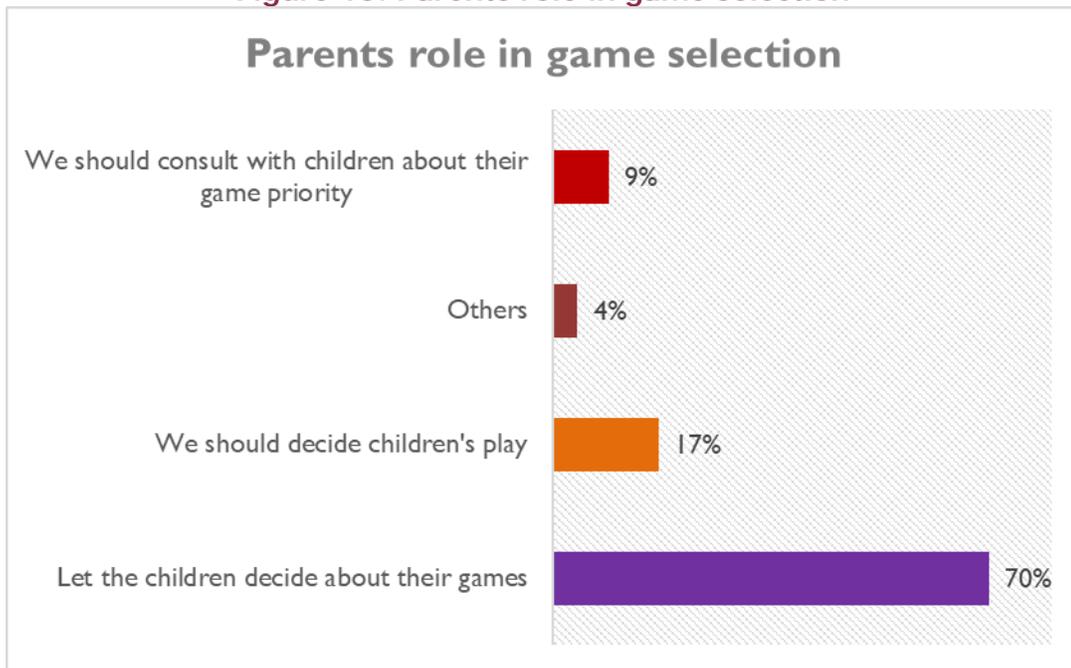


Regarding improvement of playing situation 42% children mentioned of Mayor's role, 9% mentioned of councilors, 8% government departments, 3% mentioned of Prime

Minister but 16% couldn't respond as they are not aware of role of these stakeholders. All children in FGD in slum mentioned of Mayor's role as most significant. Many also mentioned of councilors.

5.8 PARENT'S ATTITUDE (CHILDREN ARE FACING IN REALIZATION OF THEIR RIGHT TO PLAY)

Figure 15: Parents role in game selection

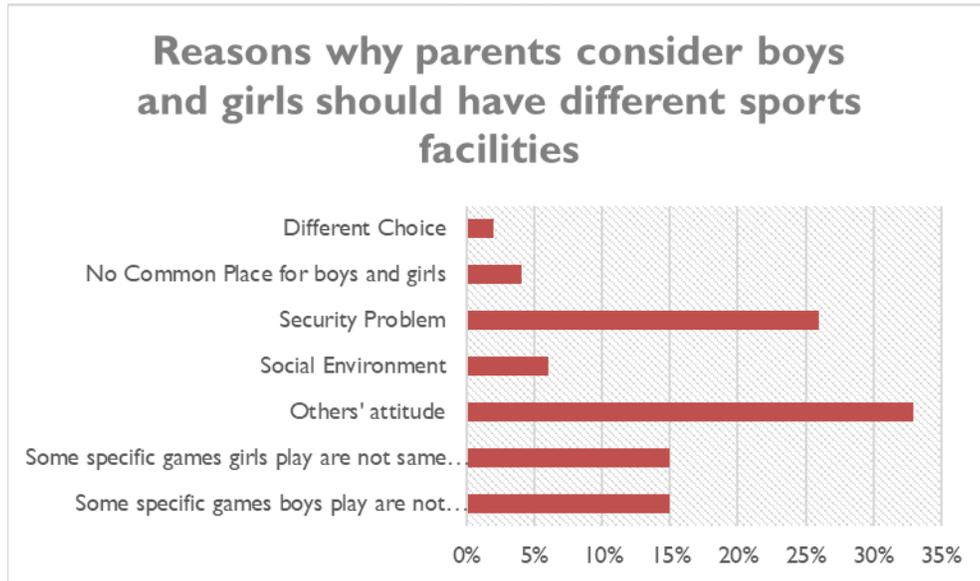


Most parents in the study are in favor of children's freedom about deciding their game choice (70%) in contrast to 17% who consider parents should decide about children's game choice. And 9% consider consultation with children regarding their game choice. There is not much differences of parent's attitude of various socio-economic condition. In the FGDs with children and parents both group mentioned that now a days children take privilege of their games choice. Only a few professional parents mentioned that they discuss this matter with their children.

5.9 PARENT'S PERCEPTION ON EXISTING GENDER DIMENSIONS OF RIGHT TO PLAY SITUATION

60% of the parents consider there should be separate sports facilities for boys and girls though the following table for reasons behind that shows this is not for their parents' independent attitude but they are influenced by others social attitude (33%) and security issues (26%).

Figure 16: Reasons why parents consider boys and girls should have different sports facilities

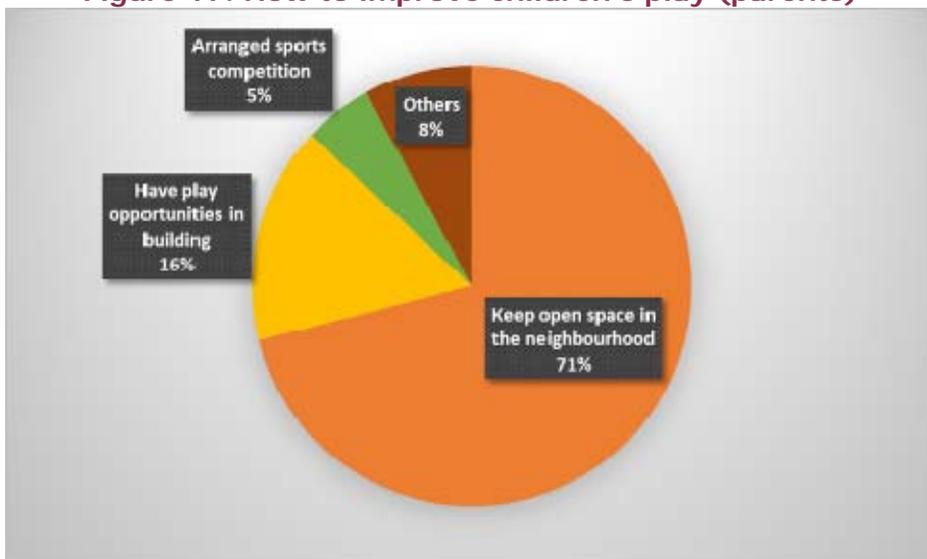


The main reason for parent’s choices for different games for boys and girls is social attitude (34%), security (26%), specificity of games for boys and girls (15%). Thus advocacy is needed for social awareness to change social attitude and parents choices.

5.10 PARENT’S SUGGESTIONS ON IMPROVING ACCESS TO CHILD PLAY RIGHT

71% of the parents suggested to have open space in neighborhood, followed by 16% considering need of play opportunities in side building to ensure children’s regular and adequate access to play.

Figure 17: How to improve children's play (parents)



Regarding who can improve children's play right, parents have similar perception that mayor (57%), counselor (12%), and 12% consider various authorities can do that.

Parents suggested in the FGD that Government can take awareness-raising program about the importance of playing then child will get more playing facilities within present condition. Government should identify the area and create community space where children will get chance for playing. Also, they should provide 'parenting skill training' to the parents at hospital during pregnancy.

Also, parents have no time to go field with their children. Besides, most of the parents are excessively worried about the physical injuries of their children. They become more tensed about their girls for getting sexually abused outside.

Security is an issue for mother of girl child. "My child can easily join to the unknown child in shopping mall, but she feels shy to play at field with the unknown child." "I have sent my daughter to learn judo, but I closed her program in middle time because I thought that she can become intimate to boys because Judo requires more physical interaction. This was happened for my psychology but I didn't want her understand the reason behind her prohibition to learning Judo."

5.11 PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHERS ON CHILDREN'S RIGHT TO PLAY

Teachers focused on both children's play right at school and beyond. The focused on the lack of facilities for outdoor games at many school and non-availability and accessibility of children to the public places, open spaces and play facilities. There is a sharp difference between facilities at public schools and private schools which is reflected in teachers' voice. Government schools have open fields and children have more access to regular outdoor games. Teachers also agreed that their students can avail open spaces but due to study pressure children cannot play much. Gender differences or discriminations are not an issue at school and boys and girls play together.

Teachers are concerned that presently children's playing has become bounded within technology-based games especially in video games. Their expectations for playing and meaning of playing have become changed. The child who plays video games in computer his/her expectation is to play in tab; but they do not know clearly about the real-life game. 3D games also become more popular to child. Now a days children are not interested in providing physical labour for playing game, they are losing their interest in real life game.

Teachers suggested putting emphasis on children's play at school and appreciate the provision of games class for all children. They suggested the schools which do not have play grounds should be given access to public or nearby fields in the City Corporation areas as renting these places are expensive and restrict children's play right on outdoor games.

5.12 EXPERT'S OPINION ON CHILDREN'S RIGHT TO PLAY

Government Officials of relevant Ministries:

A Joint Secretary, Ministry of Youth and sports consider nationwide competitions can be arranged in schools on regular basis to encourage children to take part in sports. Government can create multistoried vertical play facilities like Australia and Japan to deal with space scarcity but to provide play facilities to children of all ages and background. A Deputy Director from Bangladesh Shishu Academy realizes that in Dhaka city children can't play for the scarcity of field or open space, though there have a good number of fields in Dhaka city, those are restricted by various reasons, children can't play in that field. He considers Government should create open space for the children in every area of Dhaka city and can take necessary actions to free up spaces for playground which are occupied and encroached. He suggests: Shishu Academy provides facilities at its premises even at District level offices, publicity should be done on this so that children can avail these facilities to ensure their playrights and enjoy some open space to some extent. In every area, industrialists, business persons and rich people can arrange sports facilities for the children. Housing societies can also ensure sports facilities in their residential areas. A Deputy Secretary from DSHE, Ministry of Education describes the situation that in Dhaka city there are lots of schools which have no playground at all. On the other hand, there have some schools which have enough space for playing. Another problem is these schools have double shift class system. So students should leave the school very soon after ending the class time, for this reason they cannot play before or after class time in spite of having available space. He suggests schools where not enough space available, can arrange indoor sports facilities.

Urban Planner:

An Urban planner suggested that the DAP (Detail Area Plan) should be strictly followed and also all the provisions of City Corporations and Rajuk regarding open space, parks and building codes. He suggests to have public private partnership and more active role of DC and other government departments as LG is responsible to ensure open space for children and with limited budget and authority it is not possible for LGs to do that without support from the District Administration. Another Urban planner considers that main obstacle for child play right is lack of open space, fields, though City corporation's provisions mentions of ensuring these. He suggests buildings should include child's play space including different age friendly arrangements as child play lot, play grounds. He also suggests that schools with shortage of space can use efficient planning of space use for play where no play ground is available to ensure children's physical activities. He also suggested to have Public Private Partnerships for efficient use of open space to ensure play facilities for all age groups and both gender.

Private Sectors:

Executives of renowned Groups and Industries such as Beximco, Abdul Monem Groups, Akij Groups were consulted. They suggested:

- Government can propose a plan to these organizations to invest in Child's play right as they do not have any designated person assigned or expert to work on it. Relevant Ministries can work on this collaboratively.
- Government can provide subsidy, incentive such as tax reductions or other social benefits to these organizations to motivate to these activities.
- These activities can be brought under CSR and through a consortium where large investment needed.
- Government like it's Economic zones can inspire private sector to invest in children's park under PPP and provide necessary support

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Lobby and advocacy to increase play and sports facilities at city corporation areas.

- Main obstacle for child play right is lack of open space and playing fields, though City Corporation's provisions mentions of ensuring these. Land grabbing and unplanned expansion of residential areas is the major cause of lack of or inadequate play grounds. The project could advocacy with the Ministry of Local Government so that City Corporation take drastic actions to free the encroached parks and open fields by commercial and other reasons which is under their jurisdictions.
- Lobby advocacy with the Local Government Ministry, City Corporations, RAJUK and other authority so that they consider children's voice in creating more open space, access to the open spaces for their play, in developing new policy and in effective implementation of the laws and policies.
- Real Estate Development and Management Act 2010 mentions some important common facilities in buildings, it does not mandate play facilities within the high-rise compound. So this remains optional but this should be mandatory for all high rising apartments building.

Inter-ministerial efforts: Education and Sports Ministries can work together to ensure increased play and sports facilities. This came out from the children, parents and teachers that in most schools there is no play field and open space to play, whereas on the other hand there are some open spaces (part, abandoned space, playground) or commercial play spaces in nearby areas of schools where schools can arrange access for children to these facilities for play. So education Ministry and Sports Ministry can have MOU to subsidized and free in occasions to enjoy school children the nearby commercial or privately owned play fields at least for a few times.

As of children perception, too much pressure on education is the prime concern to enjoy playtime, many suggested in reducing syllabus and exams for primary level students to allow them to play more. Education Policy 2010 clearly mentions of play facilities and ensuring children's play right. Education Ministry can work together on how to make study enjoyable, enabling environment at school so that children have more play scope, and add more play time as co-curricular activities and ensuring all schools' participation in various sports completion considering rural urban, and gender difference.

Public private partnership and work with private sector for promotion of children's play

As policies incorporate and emphasize on private sectors roles in development to achieve Vision 2021, government should motivate and incentivize private sectors to invest in children's play facilities and play grounds at urban areas and organizing sports competition at Upazila, district and city corporation areas. Private sectors need to invest in improving child play right including infrastructure, equipment, sponsoring sports. Save the Children can lobby with government for an appropriate policy for private sectors investment on play grounds and children's access to the play.

Implementation of Laws:

Implementation of laws and policy are important, particularly the DAP (Detail Area Plan of Dhaka), RAJUK and City Corporation's laws and policy should be strictly followed in allocating & maintaining open spaces at community, parks and building codes. Importantly in DAP revision time (2017/2018), more open space for children should be ensured in the DAP including specific monitoring checklist of the DAP implementation.

Coordination among authority:

Several agencies are in charge of providing basic services in the Dhaka mega city but their activities are not effectively coordinated. These include: the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC), the Capital City Development Authority (RAJUK); Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (DESA); various line Ministries (e.g. Local Government Ministry, Land Administration, Public Works, Education and Health) which are authorized to undertake local urban planning as well as utility services, infrastructure and site development activities for housing, commercial and industrial use. Effective coordination among all these agencies is very important in proper implementation of existing laws for open space and play ground.

National and International partnership and cooperation for promotion Right to Play

Save the children can take a leading role in collaboration with other development partner regarding promotion of Children's right to play. Save the Children can also form a national network and form a campaign for children's play right as well as proper implementation of the existing laws for more open space for children's play.

The study team **also recommends** that – there should be special measures by the government for the slum and low income community children's play space and park; ensure children and community people in the 'management' of park and playgrounds; bring more innovations in utilizing the existing roads and explore more options for children's play place; large program/campaign by the government for awareness of mass people on importance of children's play; increase government investment for children's play.

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