POWER, EMPOWERMENT AND CHILDREN IN DHAKA'S POOR URBAN COMMUNITIES

Understanding and Measuring Children's Empowerment

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is about children, power and empowerment. It seeks to both understand and measure power and empowerment from the perspectives of poor urban children living in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Children have been largely overlooked in development studies literature and although empowerment and measurement have been mainstreamed into development practice, children's perspectives on these two essentially contested concepts are marginal. This thesis contributes to existing understandings of children's power and empowerment, with a specific focus on poor urban children living in Dhaka.

To do this, this thesis draws on two competing research paradigms, those of interpretivism and positivism respectively. I show how these two research paradigms can be brought together into a single mixed methods methodology when employed to answer distinct, but related research questions. This enabled me to use a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods and analytical strategies: task-based visual methods employed in a creative art and storytelling workshop; a qualitative thematic analysis; indicator construction; a survey and a descriptive statistical analysis. Bringing together these two competing research paradigms allows for the in-depth, contextual knowledge that qualitative research uncovers, with the ability to use this knowledge as a basis for measurement.

In this thesis, I draw on empirical evidence uncovered through my research methods and insights from post-structuralism, development sociology and the literature on the relationality of childhood to argue that power can be viewed as boundaries to action. Boundaries of power exist as social structures that demarcate fields of action, possibility and imagination and are not resources that any actor has or uses but instead exist as boundaries which constrain all actors. I explore five boundaries of power that were highlighted by my research participants: personal relationships with family and friends; access to material and financial resources; the natural environment; education and children's work.

I present 34 indicators of empowerment I created that were derived from these boundaries of power. I discuss the survey and descriptive statistical analysis I undertook to measure these indicators with a small group of poor urban children. These indicators are therefore context specific and intended to be relevant and meaningful to those who are to be affected by development. They are a tool that could be used by development practitioners to measure a baseline of the relative empowerment or disempowerment of children in Dhaka and to track and measure change over time.

Drawing on both my qualitative and quantitative findings, I show that viewing power as boundaries is not to claim that all power relations are equal. Instead I show that actors are placed in differential positions within power's boundaries and have different channels for action. I suggest, therefore, that empowerment can be reconceptualized as a temporal issue that should first seek to expand the channels for action available to actors within power's existing boundaries, and second, to shift the formation of the boundaries themselves to provide new conditions for future agency.

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1. INTRODUCTION

For the most-part, development studies has been defined by economic approaches and in the most recent decades, by neoliberal approaches which see the market as primary to development (Conway, 2014). In this approach, most development planning comes from above – through government plans and departments, foreign aid, external agents and often in the form of 'technical programmes'. As a response to these dominant approaches, more fringe and radical approaches have surfaced, which have had various levels of influence. Some of these approaches have even questioned whether or not development is a useful term at all, instead claiming that what is needed is 'post-development', where development is questioned, problematized, and possibly rejected (Dessai and Potter, 2014; Escobar, 1995). This thesis cannot address this huge, varied and contested history, but it is concerned with the question, who defines what development is?

The question also of who constructs theory and on which basis dominant paradigms flourish is an important one. Foucault argues that "Each society has its own regime of truth, its general politics of truth: that is the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true" (Foucault, 1980, p. 131). Could this also be true for development? What has been written in these pages has been inspired by those working within the school of alternative development which broadly encapsulates those development scholars and practitioners who believe research, theory and practice should be guided by the people who are to be affected by 'development'. Robert Chambers classic question: "Whose reality counts?" (Chambers, 1997), questions whose knowledge and ways of knowing and being count when development is being conceptualized and put into practice. Alternative development, although diverse, tends to share both an epistemological and normative perspective that expert and professional knowledge needs to be humble and that outside 'experts' need to appreciate other people's own knowledge and ways of knowing (Chambers, 2007, p. 19). It is claimed that in the dominant approaches, too often development practitioners value thematic and technical expertise over local knowledge and lack understanding of local contexts (Autesserre, 2014, p. 251). The alternative paradigm seeks to redress this and as Robert Chambers tells us, "The overarching question 'Whose reality counts?' forces reflection on how powerful outsiders tend

to impose their realities on local people, especially when they are bringing 'superior' knowledge or technology" (Chambers, 2007, p. 19-20).

1.1. BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

Taking this normative and epistemological position into account, this thesis has sought to answer the question "whose reality counts?" for a particular demographic (children), in a particular place (Dhaka's informal settlements[1]) and considers two 'essentially contested concepts' – empowerment and measurement (Cornwall, 2007, p. 472; Gallie, 1955), that have had much influence in development studies.

Children are of great significance to the ways in which international development is portrayed. They are clearly present as targets of development interventions and often feature on the covers of reports and textbooks. They are a prominent focus of NGOs, international agencies, governments, and the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Ansell, 2017, p. 2-3) and development interventions are often justified in the name of children as the 'next generation' or 'the future' (Huijsmans, George, Gigengack and Evers, 2014, p. 1). Yet, the trend in development studies research has been to consider children indirectly (Scheyvens, Scheyvens and Murray, 2014, p. 190) and the incorporation of the young into theories and practice of development can often be called an absent presence (Huijismans, et al., 2014, p. 1). Because of this, children's own understandings and experiences of their situations, of how their lives are impacted by policies and interventions and their attempts to survive and protect themselves, remain largely unacknowledged in development discourse (Mizen and Ofosu-Kusi, 2010).

The literature on power and empowerment is a prime example of this. Power is a concept that has been debated for decades in the social sciences from behaviouralists (Dahl, 1957) through to post structuralists (Foucault, 1980), but the focus has rarely been based on children or their perspectives. From the radical fringe in the late 1980s, empowerment has been brought into the mainstream in development practice and has been adopted by various agencies that traverse

[1] For the remainder of this thesis, I will refer to informal settlements or slums as *bustees,* the Bengali word for informal settlement/slum. Bengali words used in this thesis will be explained where necessary and italicised.

diverse ideological terrain (Batliwala, 2007, p. 558). Yet although its meaning has been hotly contested, the debate has scarcely involved children. When children have been considered it has drawn on frameworks conceptualized in the West, such as Positive Youth Development (Damon, 2004) which is removed and isolated from cultures such as the *bustees* of northern Dhaka where my research took place.

Becoming near universal in their reach, indicators and 'measuring for results' are now too, an important part of development practice. The New Public Management (NPM) wave entered the lexicon of the major development agencies under the term 'Results Based Management' in the 1990s which saw indicators becoming an important way of measuring results and change for development interventions (Prinsen, 2015, p. 354-5). Although some speak cynically about "indicatorology" (Morse and Bell, 2011, p. 22) and the privileging of 'objective' 'verifiable' results, when indicators are designed in consultation with intended beneficiaries, they can be a useful mechanism to help people "maintain their sovereignty" (Indigenous leader quoted in, Louis, 2007, p. 137). Indicators allow for a baseline from which it is possible to measure change and progress can be measured against the situation that prevailed before a development intervention (United Nations Development Programme, 2009, p. 69). If development in its broadest sense can be considered as increases in the well-being of a population (Gardner, 2012, p. 17), then indicators can become an important tool in development interventions to ensure that change is relevant and meaningful to those who are to be affected.

Although my reasons for choosing Bangladesh as a site for inquiry were based in part on pragmatic grounds, Bangladesh is an important place to consider the question of "whose reality counts?". Bangladesh is often presented in news stories as 'on the brink', whether that be in political breakdown, catastrophic flooding, or, more recently and positively, economic 'lift off' (Gardner, 2012, p. 16). Economically, the country is growing steadily and in terms of human development[2], between 1990 and 2017 Bangladesh's human development increased by 57.1 percent (United

[2] The Human Development Index (HDI) is a summary measure of average achievement in key dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, being knowledgeable and having a decent standard of living.

Nations, 2018). However, this growth and progress have not been spread evenly; forty five percent of the population survive mostly from subsistence agriculture (Gardner, 2012, p. 17), twenty four percent of the population live below the national poverty line (World Bank, 2017a) and the United States' Intelligence Agency ranks the country as 177th in the world in gross domestic product (GDP) per-capita (CIA, 2018). The high urban income Gini co-efficient[3] of 0.497 (International Monetary Fund, 2013) has grown significantly since the 1980s. Mass rural-urban migration has led to over thirty percent of Bangladesh's urban population living in *bustees* (Banks, Roy and Hulme, 2011, p. 476; Van Schendel, 2009, loc. 4076). Those living in *bustees have* limited access to resources, connection to the formal economy, or to public services such as schools and hospitals (Cameron, 2011, p. 357). In this highly unequal society, asking the question "whose reality counts?" can give us insights into those whose perspectives have been left out of 'development'.

It is in this space, where children's voices have only had marginal impact on development studies theory and practice and specifically where children's perspectives of power relations and the processes of empowerment have been little recognised that my research is placed, with a specific focus on children in Dhaka's *bustees*.

1.2. RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The high-level aim which has guided this research project has been: To make a contribution to existing understandings of children's power and empowerment.

This aim led to the development of two research objectives, which guided the theoretical and methodological approach to this research, discussed in the following chapters. These objectives were:

1) To explore how children in Bangladesh understand power and empowerment
2) To create indicators to measure power and empowerment, based on the children's understanding

[3] The Gini Index measures the extent to which the distribution of income (or, in some cases, consumption expenditure) among individuals or households within an economy deviates from a perfectly equal distribution (OECD, 2006). A value of 0 equates to perfectly equal distribution. A value of 1 equates to perfectly unequal distribution.

These two objectives are based on two different and some would argue, competing, or even incompatible, epistemological and ontological foundations: positivism/interpretivism and objectivism/constructivism. This will be addressed in chapter four, but for now, I wish to say that these two objectives utilise a mixed methods research design which allows for both a contextualized understanding of power and empowerment from the perspectives of children and for the measurement of power and empowerment.

This research was not based solely on the gap(s) in the literature that have been identified but was also motivated by my personal, professional and academic interests. Here, I wish to highlight my personal interests and positionality and the assumptions that I bring to this thesis.

1.3. PERSONAL INTEREST AND POSITIONALITY

This research was conceived out of three different professional and academic interests; experience working with children, an interest in empowerment approaches to development and recognition of the pervasiveness of 'measuring for results' in development practice. Professionally, I have worked with children over the last eight years in different capacities. I worked as a teacher in Chiang Mai, Thailand between 2011-2012, tutored children in Maths and English while completing my honours degree in Wellington in 2013 and since 2014 have been working with World Vision New Zealand, most recently managing the organisations' schools and youth engagement programme. This experience has given me a strong normative belief that children are competent and capable of expressing their own views and experiences and that these views are crucial for understanding the world that they live in. Consequently, I believe that these views should be given due weight when designing policy and development interventions that affect children's lives. This experience has been instrumental in me conceptualizing this project and in my interest in exploring how children themselves understand power and empowerment.

It is also important to note that it is through my employment at World Vision New Zealand that I was able to undertake this research project. World Vision Bangladesh had expressed an interest in a study on youth empowerment in several *bustees* in Dhaka. With my professional background working with children, academic interest in empowerment and measurement and the opportunity

to conduct research for a Masters thesis – I proposed the research project highlighted in these pages to World Vision Bangladesh, hoping it would be relevant and useful for practice on the ground.

It is important to make explicit here that the children that participated in this research were involved in existing interventions being run by World Vision in the areas that they lived. My research assistants throughout the process were colleagues and the intervention that World Vision Bangladesh was running where I conducted my research was funded by World Vision New Zealand. Although I tried to enable, as much as I could, the free expression and agency of the children involved in the research through briefings and the visual task-based methods that I employed, certain ideas around wellbeing, empowerment and 'development' had likely been introduced to them by World Vision before conducting this research. As will become clear throughout this thesis, the role of discursive norms and social identities are fundamental to conceptualizations of power and empowerment and it is important to recognise that my participants' involvement with World Vision may have influenced their own understandings.

1.4. STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

This thesis is presented in seven chapters.

Chapter one introduces the background to my research, the 'gap' in which it is placed, the research aim and objectives, my positionality and motivations behind it and highlights the layout of the thesis.

Chapter two traces the different ways in which power has been conceptualized in the social sciences, explores the conceptualization of empowerment in the development studies literature, and discusses how children's participation and pedagogy have been conceptualized in education and childhood studies. Throughout this chapter I present an argument which can help explain my own findings, that is, that power can be understood as social and material boundaries which demarcate fields of social possibility and imagination.

Chapter three draws on this conceptualization of power and uses contextual literature from Bangladesh to explore five boundaries of power which were highlighted to me by my research participants; personal relationships with family and friends, access to material and financial resources, the natural environment, education and children's work. This chapter provides the contextual backdrop to my findings and places the children's voices in the context to which they belong.

Chapter four lays out my methodological approach and focusses on the challenges of bringing together at both a theoretical and practical level two competing epistemological and ontological foundations; positivism and interpretivism, and objectivism and constructivism. I introduce my mixed methods approach to research which includes visual, task-based activities in the form of a creative art and storytelling workshop, qualitative thematic analysis, indicator and survey construction and a descriptive statistical analysis.

Chapter five presents the empirical findings from my creative art and storytelling workshop and discusses five boundaries of power, highlighted in chapter three, from the perspectives of my research participants. At the end of this chapter, I draw links to theories of power and empowerment and argue that power can be understood as boundaries that constrain the agency of all my research participants.

Chapter six presents the indicators that I developed after the creative art and storytelling workshop and some of the most significant findings from the survey I conducted. In this chapter, I argue that within boundaries of power exists a space in which differential experiences of power is possible and where children's agency can be constrained to greater or lesser extents, based on their relative position within the boundaries of power.

Chapter seven concludes the thesis in a discussion that is focussed around two questions raised from my research: What do we know about power and empowerment? What can be done for children's empowerment in Dhaka's *bustees?* Here I reflect on the theoretical, practical and methodological implications of this research project.

2. DE-FACING POWER IN DEVELOPMENT AND CHILDHOOD STUDIES

This chapter traces the literature concerning power in the social sciences, provides a chronological analysis of how empowerment has been conceptualized in development studies literature and practice and finally looks at how participation and pedagogy have been conceptualized in relation to children and childhood(s). In this literature review I make two primary arguments, the first, addresses my first research objective and offers a theoretical model of power which holds explanatory weight for my own research findings. The second provides context and rationale for my research methodology.

My first argument draws on the concept of de-facing power as articulated by Hayward (2000). De-facing power requires us to conceptualize power as "a network of social boundaries that constrain and enable action for all actors" (p. 11). In this understanding, power should not be viewed as having "a face" (p. 2) that is "the presumption that power is an instrument powerful agents use to alter the free action of the powerless" (p. 11). De-facing power then, is to claim that it is social boundaries to action beyond the reach of any one individual that constrain action, not 'powerful' agents who have and use power to constrain the 'free' action of other, more 'powerless' actors. This argument will be developed and applied throughout this chapter and thesis.

My second argument is that the mainstreaming of empowerment, which is linked strongly to dominant development norms and discourses primarily in the form of neoliberal orthodoxy, has de-politicised what was an explicitly political concept and in doing so, has overlooked certain voices, in this case, children's voices. It is this gap, where children's voices have been paid scant attention, where my research is situated. It is my intention that this chapter will therefore provide the context for my research methodology outlined in chapter four and provide a framework for understanding power and empowerment which will be explored further in chapters five and six.

2.1. POWER: THE ROOT CONCEPT OF EMPOWERMENT

When Dahl (1957) posed "A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do" (p. 202-3) he shaped a fundamental debate that would occupy political theorists' conceptualization of power for decades. Dahl's starting point was what he referred to as "one's intuitive notion of power" (p. 202); something that powerful actors possess and wield over others to constrain their free action. He defined power as a causal relation, "For the assertion that C has power over R… one can substitute the assertion, C's behaviour causes R's behaviour" (Dahl, 1968, p. 410) that sees power as empirically verifiable causal relationships. He claimed that to establish the dominance of a specific group, analysis had to be based on the careful examination of a series of concrete political decisions; power was about decision making and those who were able to influence it. He used this view to argue that America's post war democracy was relatively open and responsive and that access to political decision makers was unbiased and characterized by power sharing and competition (Dahl, 1961).

Bachrach and Baratz (1962) were not convinced by Dahl's limited scope of power's 'public face' and argued that A can also exercise power over B by limiting the scope of decision making to an agenda set by A, what they called power's 'second face'. In this way, power is not only about decision making, as defined by Dahl, but is also about non-decision making – expressing power by not allowing alternatives to be considered. The claim was that dominant, or powerful individuals and groups could influence the subordinate not only in instances of direct conflict, but more importantly, by preventing conflict from ever arising at all. The powerful can limit the scope of decision making to those decisions that do not challenge the political *status quo*.

A further challenge to Dahl's conceptualization of power came from Lukes (1974) who argued that power should be analysed in terms of interests. In his 'three dimensional' power account he argued that A exercises power over B when A affects B in a manner contrary to B's interests. Luke's premise, like Bachrach and Baratz, is that power is not only exerted in observable areas of conflict, but rather, its most potent expression is in unobservable conflict, power's 'third face'. For Lukes (1974) unobservable conflict is:

> the most effective and insidious use of power is to prevent… conflict from arising in the first place… by shaping [people's] perceptions, cognitions and preferences in such a way that they accept their role in the existing order of things (p. 23-4).

Thus, the supreme effect of power is to prevent people from having ever thought about the conflict in the first place. Conflict can be prevented by making it impossible for people to imagine anything different from the *status quo* – from what they might perceive as naturally inspired (Rowlands, 1997, p. 10).

For Lukes (1974) and other researchers like him, the argument is that people who are structurally and systemically denied the same rights or opportunities as other more powerful groups in society begin to internalise the messages they receive about the natural order of things, the social world and their role in it and how things are supposed to be. When internalised in such a way, this becomes truth, a type of internalised oppression (Rowlands, 1997, p. 10). This idea of unobservable conflict and internalised oppression is closely linked to the work of Freire (1970) who argued that the poor and the oppressed rarely speak out against their situation, a phenomenon he coined as 'the culture of silence'. When the socially marginalized simply accept things as the way they are, then the powerful stay in a position of power, expressing their interests at the expense of the poor.

The power debate at this time had advanced three different 'faces' of power. Power's first, or 'public face', was advanced by Dahl (1957) and saw power relationships as the scope of behaviour that A can elicit from B. It's second, or 'hidden face', coined by Bachrach and Baratz (1962), saw power's scope as wider and argued that the powerful could prevent conflict from arising by limiting the scope of decision making to an agenda set by A. It's third face, as advanced by Lukes (1974), was about the powerful shaping the ways in which the powerless perceive their own wants, desires and interests (Hayward, 2000, p. 12-16). Scholars who accepted Dahl's 'public face' of power were not satisfied by either Bachrach and Baratz (1962) or Lukes (1974) expansive account of power's second and third faces and claimed that they were methodologically lax, unresearchable, and that it became almost empirically impossible to verify such claims (Merelman, 1968; Wolfinger, 1971;

Bradshaw, 1976). Despite these rebukes of power's second and third faces however, after Lukes (1974) had written his account of power, it seemed that the power debate had shifted from looking primarily at decision and non-decision making, to a relatively expansive definition of B's action that included not only B's conduct, but also their perception of their own needs, desires, interests and capacity to exercise agency (Hayward, 2000, p. 17).

However, the debate was still largely framed in the terms Dahl set, in a binary condition where the powerful *exercised* or *used* power over the more vulnerable (Hayward, 2000, p. 18). Connolly (1983) made this explicit by arguing that debates about power are premised on a normative valuation of individual freedom wherein any coercive action that constrains the free independent action of others, whether that be through manipulation, the shaping of preferences, or direct conflict, is suspect. Therefore, although Bachrach and Baratz (1962), Lukes, (1974) Connolly (1983) and others, argued that Dahl's scope of power was simplistic and unnuanced, they still believed that power was *used* by the powerful, to restrain the free action of the less powerful.

In post-structural accounts of power, such as Michael Foucault's writings, the idea of a binary between the powerless and powerful and that those who have power use or direct it over others is rejected. In *The History of Sexuality* Foucault (1978) states this explicitly:

> Power is not something that is acquired, seized, or shared, something that one holds onto or allows to slip away; power is exercised from innumerable points, in the interplay of non-egalitarian, and mobile relations… Power comes from below; that is, there is no binary and all-encompassing opposition between rulers and ruled at the root of power relations" (p. 94).

Foucault and those who draw on his work therefore argue against binary, hierarchical understandings of power and instead make the claim that discursive norms and social identities are at the root of power and its exercise. Foucault and other post structuralists argue that not only do social boundaries determine the free action of an agent, but that social boundaries, in the form of discursive norms and social identities, define the agent *itself* (Hayward, 2000, p. 5). Power does not simply act upon an agent by constituting its preferences, cognitions, and interests, like

Bachrach and Baratz, Lukes, and Connolly claim, but rather, power *produces* this agent. This rejects the premise in other power theories that freedom is negative, that is, that freedom is a state where action is carried out free from social constraint. Instead, Foucault, and those who draw on his work, argue that choices and action are always made within socially constrained possibility.

Hayward (2000), using ethnographic insights from field work within two distinctly different school classrooms in the United States draws from this post-structural account of power and makes the claim that power analysis should be 'de-faced'. Rejecting the binary 'powerful' and 'powerless', she claims that power's mechanisms are best conceived as boundaries that together define fields of action for all actors. Those boundaries include, but are not limited to, laws, rules, norms, customs and social identities which both constrain and enable certain types of action. This rejects the claims in the work of Dahl, Bachrach and Baratz, Lukes, Connolly and Freire, that freedom is a state in which action is free from social constraint. Rather, she argues that conscious social action is not entirely free action, it interacts with social boundaries to produce not only social action, but agents themselves. Hayward claims that to 'de-face' power we need to recognise that all, not just the powerless, but also the so-called powerful, are constrained by social boundaries. Hayward explains that students of power 'de-faced' should understand that it is social boundaries to action which constrain social actors, not powerful actors using their power to constrain the free action of those actors with less power.

2.2. EMPOWERMENT IN DEVELOPMENT THOUGHT

Empowerment, in its initial conceptualization in development studies, has drawn insights from the debates on power: what it constitutes, how it can be analysed and how it is operationalized. A feminist framework of power breaks power into four different forms:

power over: zero-sum, instrumental, conflictual power, which seeks to control. This type of power may be responded to with compliance, resistance, or manipulation.

power to: generative and productive power, power which creates new possibilities and actions and can be expressed not at the expense of others.

power with: collective power, in which action and possibility for change is much greater with the whole being greater than the sum of the individuals.

power 'from within': the strength and uniqueness of individuals; based on over-coming internalised oppression and gaining self-acceptance and self-respect; a sense that things are possible and that one can make purposive choices (Rowlands, 1997, p. 13; Scheyvens, 2009, p. 464).

This framing of power was influential in early accounts of empowerment within development discourse and continues to be today. However, I suggest that framing power in this way treats the differences between how power has been conceptualized in the social sciences as unproblematic. To bring together 'power over', which is influenced by Dahl and other behaviouralists' account of power, 'power from within', influenced by Lukes and Freire and 'power to', that draws on post-structural productive accounts of power, it appears that the assumption is that one can bring together, what I would argue from the previous discussion, are competing conceptualizations of power. In this section I turn to the evolution of empowerment in development studies and take a post-structural lens to it, by looking specifically at what 'de-facing' power might mean for empowerment. In doing so, I hope to highlight two points. The first is that by trying to bring the various conceptualization of power together into a singular framework, inconsistencies within the discourse itself have emerged which has opened possibilities for co-option. Second, the battle over the meaning of empowerment, by the more 'radical' scholars, and the subsequent co-option mainstreaming of the term, can be conceived of as an attempt to influence power's mechanisms, that is, an attempt to act upon the social boundaries of power that enable and constrain certain types of social action.

In development discourse, empowerment first came to the surface in the gender debates of Moser (1989) and Sen and Grown's (1987) work. These writings framed empowerment in radical terms, claiming that gender equality would not be achieved unless women themselves were able to challenge patriarchy (which often meant cultural norms and political institutions) and inequality. At its core, empowerment was a political feminism that sought to overturn oppressive, male dominated structures at both the institutional and cultural levels. For Moser, this required self-

reliance and self-efficacy for women to make choices and influence the direction of their own lives. She pointed to the importance of controlling both material and non-material resources for this progression to occur (Moser, 1989, p. 1815).

Sen and Grown (1987) had a collective approach; they saw the importance of women's organisations and women's groups in mobilizing women around political issues with the intention of transforming society. They were critical of previous economistic attempts to address gender in development planning and practice; economic independence and basic needs were not sufficient for women gaining control of their own lives. Instead, there needed to be a complete overhaul of the system – a radical transformation of the economic, political, legal and social structures that preserve gender, but also race and class domination and subordination.

At this time, the 'empowerment approach' was a fringe, Third World[4], grassroots movement that didn't have much traction in the mainstream debates around poverty alleviation and development. However, in the early-mid 1990s this began to change, as empowerment became more prominent in development discourse. Works by feminist academics such as Batliwala (1993), Kabeer (1994), Rowlands (1997) and alternative development proponent Friedmann (1992), built on the debates which Moser and Sen and Grown had started and this began to build momentum around the reframing of development as empowerment.

Batliwala (1993) studied empowerment from a range of women's groups across South Asia. Influenced by Freire (1970), she argued for a type of conscientization (critical consciousness) which challenged and questioned the ideologies that justified women's subordination. Changing the means, access to and control of resources and transforming the cultural and institutional structures that reinforce the existing power systems was necessary for empowerment to occur.

Nalia Kabeer (1994) focusses on the transformative 'power from within' and argued, like Batliwala, that women needed to understand their oppression, overcome the internalised oppression that

[4] 'Third World'; 'Global South'; 'Majority World'; 'Developing Countries'; 'Developing Economies'; and many other terms have been used to distinguish between different countries and these terms have changed overtime. I will use the terms as they appeared in cited works.

they experience and learn to challenge and overcome gender inequality in the home and in the community. She focussed on collective, grassroots, community action to bring about this change. She argued that working with others is crucial to "control resources, determine agendas and to make decisions" (p. 229).

Rowlands (1997), through in-depth research with two different women's groups in Honduras suggested that empowerment has three components: personal, collective and relational. Each of these components have core values that exist and with encouraging factors, can lead to behavioural change and social transformation. According to Rowlands, empowerment can only exist as a process, when encouraging factors lead to strong core values, which in turn lead to behavioural action and change. All three components; personal, collective, and relational need to be present to overcome subordination at all levels and for empowerment to occur.

John Friedmann (1992) expanded the focus of empowerment from gender, to the poor in a broad sense and used the household as his unit of analysis. He framed poverty not as a lack of material resources, but as a historical and systemic disempowerment of households and in his conceptualisation of alternative development, empowerment is key. Therefore, in order to overcome poverty, Friedmann advocates for an alternative model of development which seeks to focus on people and the environment, instead of production and profit and seeks to empower households at the psychological, social, and political levels to achieve transformation. In his view, empowerment can best be achieved when households can mobilize material and social resources to overcome this historical exclusion.

Based on these works, it is clear that empowerment in the late 1980s and 1990s was radical and inherently transformative. It didn't seek social change within the existing parameters of development or political systems but was a deeply political agenda which sought to overcome the root causes of oppression at both a cultural and institutional level. With the risk of generalizing and understanding that there are nuances and differences in approaches to understanding empowerment, these early works on empowerment saw power as a process, as a productive force and as operating in three key dimensions: personal, relational and collective.

Personal empowerment involves deep psychological and psycho-social processes, central of which is the overcoming of internalised oppression and unobserved conflict. This is done through forms of conscientization: an awareness of the political and social contexts of one's oppression (Scheyvens, 2009; Freire, 1970; Batliwala, 1993). This can lead to the development of self-confidence, self-esteem and self-efficacy; a sense of agency in which one can interact with his or her world and cause things to happen and influence change (Rowlands, 1997, p. 111). One must build on the 'power from within' in order to improve their ability to control resources and make decisions (Kabeer, 1994, p. 227).

Relational empowerment is closely linked to personal empowerment and is associated with self-confidence and a sense of agency, but is dependent on a person's ability to negotiate, communicate, influence and to understand and defend their own rights (Rowlands, 1997, p. 119). Friedmann (1992) terms this social power, in which the ability to make decisions in relation to others depends on access to resources (information and knowledge) and participating in organisations which give you access to these resources. For feminist writers, this relational empowerment is about the ability to determine choices and make decisions with men, but Friedmann takes this wider to include all social relationships that a household might have.

Collective empowerment is about the mobilization of resources to create systemic and political transformation. It focusses on collective agency and self-organisation in order to deliver objectives that could not be done alone (Rowlands, 1997, p. 115). When groups are able to identify and articulate their own needs, this positions them as competent actors, able to determine their own decisions and collectively, there is a psychological shift from feelings of powerlessness of "I cannot" to "we can" (Kabeer, 1994, p. 262).

The origins of empowerment, therefore, essentialised certain identities, whether that be poor woman, or the poor more generally, with the aim of these groups being able to act upon the social boundaries of power in a way that would enable them to challenge and transform existing institutions, norms and identities which, it was argued, kept the poor, poor, and the powerless, powerless. Thus, empowerment can be seen as a struggle to challenge and reshape those social

boundaries in the form of political institutions and cultural norms and discourses that severely constrained their agency. It is also clear that the empowerment literature very much drew on insights from Bachrach and Baratz (1962), Lukes (1974) and Freire (1970) and insisted that power did indeed have 'a face', that is, that power was something that some people or groups (men, elites, politicians) had and used over others (women, the poor). Personal empowerment drew on insights from Lukes and argued that the powerful had shaped the powerless' perceptions and interests in a way that was against their 'true' interests. Relational empowerment was about the powerless challenging the powerful through greater decision making and negotiating ability with those who had power. Collective empowerment was about mobilizing resources as a tool to achieve these goals. As mentioned above, when empowerment is framed in this way, it gives a 'face' to power; power is something that some people have and use at the expense of others.

The personal, relational and collective domains of empowerment are important because as I discuss in the following section, when the concept of empowerment was mainstreamed into development discourse and operationalized in the major agencies, the collective and to a lesser extent, the relational components have often been forgotten. This leads, I suggest, to the depoliticization of what was an inherently political concept and the neoliberal individualization of empowerment.

2.3. THE MAINSTREAMING OF EMPOWERMENT

From the subversive, emancipatory discourse of how empowerment was originally conceptualized, in the mid-1990s it slowly begun to be mainstreamed from grassroots NGOs and the alternative development paradigm to the main international development agencies (Miraftab, 2004, p. 239). In 1994, The United Nations' International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo produced an action plan that identified women's empowerment as one of the means central to addressing over-population issues and development. The following year, the fourth United Nations Conference on Women took place in Beijing. The platform for action set "an agenda for women's empowerment" (United Nations, 1996, p. 7). The conference report states:

> women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society, including participation in the decision-making process and access to power, are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace (United Nations, 1996, p. 3).

From the radical fringe where empowerment was initially being discussed, the United Nations brought it into to the mainstream. Four years later, in the World Banks's (2000) World Development Report, *Attacking Poverty,* empowerment was identified alongside opportunity and security as the three pillars in the fight against poverty. This report narrowed the definition of empowerment from the one presented by the United Nations and by the original conceptions of empowerment discussed above and subverted the term to align more closely with the Bank's market-based approach to development. Empowerment, for the World Bank, was defined as:

> enhancing the capacities of poor people to influence the state institutions that affect their lives, by strengthening their participation in political processes and local decision-making. And it means removing the barriers – political, legal, and social – that work against particular groups and building the assets of poor people to enable them to engage effectively in markets (p. 39).

According to Parpart, Rai and Staudt (2002), mainstream institutions for the most part have envisioned empowerment *as a means to* establish existing development objectives. Empowerment when viewed in this way is a means for enhancing the efficacy and productivity of programmes within the *status quo*, rather than as a broader mechanism for cultural and political transformation. This has led to a focus on economic empowerment, political representation and viewing empowerment as a technical method of project work and in doing so universalising the term and ignoring its fluidity and contextual nature.

Economic empowerment, in line with neoliberal ideology, has reduced empowerment to mean economic gain and access to material resources and "is key for [economic] growth both through the direct impact of the size of the labor force on output and through the impact of productivity" (International Monetary Fund, 2018, p. 5). This has led to an exponential increase in women's self-

help groups, especially in South-Asia, which engage in small scale savings and lending and micro-finance initiatives (Batliwala, 2007, p. 561-2). In microcredit programmes, women are targeted to be brought into the market by assisting them to gain control of credit and resources. Yet by solely focussing on economic participation through micro-finance and self-help group initiatives, this has in some cases led to increased domestic violence within households (Murshid, Akincigil and Zippay, 2015; Goetz and Gupta, 1996; Batliwala, 2007). This economic approach has been the basis of empowerment programmes to develop small scale entrepreneurialism among the poor. In South-Africa, this has led to the enrichment of a few entrepreneurs at the expense of a collective labour movement and empowerment is seen as something that can be acquired individually (Miraftab, 2004, p. 249). For the World Bank, their definition of empowerment outlined above clearly states how an instrumentalist view of empowerment is more interested in how the poor can contribute to development (i.e. by participating in markets) than how development can contribute to the empowerment of the poor (Wong, 2003, p. 318). By focussing on enhancing the ability of the poor to meet their own needs, they can reduce their dependence on welfare and social services – a goal of neoliberal ideology (Scheyvens, 2009, p. 466-7).

The narrowing of the term has also seen a focus on women being 'empowered' to participate within the political structures of society by occupying political positions and holding office. This has been the case in South-Asia in particular, where empowerment has focussed on the reservation for women within local government bodies, the assumption being that women's representation in government will lead to their collective political empowerment. This overly simplistic view of empowerment, which assumes that by holding office, women can advocate for and advance women's interests, does not challenge the broader social boundaries which marginalize women in the first place (Batliwala, 2007, p. 562). To give individual women political roles, which operate in existing institutional frameworks, women's ability to collectively challenge the social boundaries which marginalize them is unchanged (Parpart, 2014).

What this individual and economistic approach has led to is a 'rendering technical' (Ferguson, 1994; Li, 2011; Li, 2007) of empowerment, a "focus more on the capacities of the poor than on

the practices through which one group impoverishes the other" (Li, 2007, p. 7). Empowerment is seen as a quick fix, a silver-bullet of development – another technical tool that agencies can use to impose development goals set from above (Batliwala, 2007, p. 561). Treating empowerment as a technical method utilised to make development projects more efficient leads to a methodological individualism which obscures the source of the poor's disempowerment in the first place (Hickey and Mohan, 2005, p. 242). Kabeer (1999) has been highly critical of empowerment projects that "predict the nature and direction that change is going to assume" (p. 462).

The 'radical' literature on empowerment came from a deep dissatisfaction of the economistic approaches to existing development and poverty alleviation policies, which did not transform the institutional, social and cultural structures and were seen as the source of women's and the poor's disempowerment. Although, as discussed above, this radical view (un)problematically accepted all of power's theorists and tried to bring them into a singular framework, it was explicitly political - it sought to challenge patriarchy, class, race, ethnicity, caste and religious identity barriers that oppressed woman (Batliwala, 2007, p. 558). With the mainstreaming of the term, empowerment is treated as independent of the structures of oppression and simply processes by which programmes can foster an individual's self-esteem, bring them into existing political structures and increase their access to material resources (Miraftab, 2004, p. 242).

When we take a de-faced view of power, we can see several things occurring in the progression of empowerment in development discourse and practice. Initial conceptions of empowerment looked at existing power structures - the cultural norms, political institutions, and socially constructed identities that led to the marginalization of women and the poor. Yet those original conceptions viewed power in a binary way, as the powerful (men, wealthy, politicians, elites) using and exercising power over the powerless in a way that kept them poor and marginalized. When empowerment was mainstreamed into development discourse and practice, first by the United Nations and then by the World Bank, followed by other agencies, NGOs and governments, there seems to be little reflection on how power operates. The word empowerment was taken and was utilised in way that maintained existing development norms and discourse, most prominently in

the way that it re-established neoliberal ideology by individualizing empowerment to mean individual access to resources, the market economy and existing political institutions (Cornwall, 2007).

The disagreement over the meaning of empowerment can be seen as the desire to re-shape or re-establish the social boundaries of power in a way that allows for certain types of social action to take place. For those in the 'radical' school, it meant challenging patriarchal and elitist norms and institutions. For those that sought to mainstream the term, it meant reinforcing existing norms and institutions, most prominently in the form of neoliberal ideology. From a post-structural perspective on power, although both schools of thought and practice may have an unsatisfactory view of how power operates, what the mainstreaming of the term did do is to depoliticize something that was explicitly political and in doing so, side-lined all conceptualizations of power from empowerment.

2.4. CRITIQUES OF EMPOWERMENT

With the critiques of development that came from post-modern and post-development advocates, empowerment was not spared. Although the fiercest criticism was held for the mainstreaming and universalising of the term, the original conceptualization of empowerment and the way in which it homogenises social groups along with its "obsession with the local" (Mohan and Hickey, 2004, p. 11) has been questioned.

One criticism that has surfaced frequently against empowerment and participatory methodologies is that the language of collective empowerment seemingly assumes that communities and social groups are homogenous entities in which members have shared values, interests, and share similar disadvantages and advantages (Scheyvens, 2009, p. 468). However, social groups, such as children, the poor, ethnic groups, caste, or religious groups are not homogenous in their needs and interests. Nira Yuval-Davis (1994) warns that empowerment for some actors within 'homogenous' groups can easily mean disempowerment for others, especially if categories such as 'women' mask unequal distributions of power within and between these categories. She urges us to be cautious of those constructions that "assumes a specific 'identity politics' which homogenises and naturalises social categories and groupings, denying shifting boundaries and

internal power differences and conflicts of interest" (p. 194). This tendency to homogenise social groups often means an insufficient understanding of power which allows for inequalities and power relations within groups to be downplayed, or worse, not explored at all (Mohan and Hickey, 2004, p. 11).

Another criticism is that empowerment and participation have an "obsession with the 'local' as opposed to wider structures of injustice and oppression" (Mohan and Hickey, 2004, p. 11) whereby the significance of oppressive national and international political and economic structures is often overlooked (Scheyvens, 2009, p. 468). Structural approaches to development argue that wider structures of injustice and oppression, whether at cultural or institutional levels often have much more influence on the disempowerment of individuals and communities than anything occurring at a local level (Hickey and Mohan, 2005, p. 241). This tendency to view the local in isolation from broader economic and political structures means the contextuality of place and external influences are ignored or at minimum underplayed (Mohan and Stokke, 2000, p. 249). The claim is that power and empowerment need to be understood as part of and not separate from this complex web of power relationships (Parpart, 2014).

Social theorists have debated the role of social structures for many years. Social structures are said to be formed from socio-historic processes which constitute historical 'givens' in relation to which individuals act, and which are relatively stable over time (Young, 2006, p. 112). They serve as background conditions for individual actions by presenting actors with options; they provide 'channels' that both enable and constrain action (Young, 2006, p. 112). Blau (1977) claims that "a social structure can be defined as a multidimensional space of differentiated social positions among which a population is distributed" (p. 4). Bourdieu (1980) also uses a spatial metaphor to claim that social structures are 'fields'; spaces in which individuals stand in varying social positions in relation to one another. A structural approach helps us to understand the criticisms of empowerment being "obsessed with the local" (Mohan and Hickey, 2004, p. 11) and assuming "a specific identity politics" (Yuval-Davis, 1994, p. 194) by showing that structures that exist beyond the local level constrain agency and that different actors stand in differentiated positions within

social structures. Not all poor woman or poor households stand in the same position within Bourdieu's 'field' and therefore, do not all have the same 'channels' for action.

One approach that can help solve the criticisms of empowerment being obsessed with the local and homogenizing categories comes from development sociology. An actor-oriented approach, as articulated by Norman Long (1990), challenges the dyadic relationship between agency and structure. Long argues that structural approaches alone cannot account for the diverse choices and actions similar people make that operate within the same cultural, political and institutional structures. However, structures do influence and constrain the ability of people to act in certain ways. Therefore, Long's approach centres on the interplay between societal structures and agency and he argues that structures constrain and enable particular forms of agency (Long, 1990). De-facing power, too, allows us to understand that rather than 'powerful' actors 'using' power over relatively less 'powerful' actors, that social and material boundaries of power demarcate fields of action and provide 'channels' for specific types of agency. Empowerment, in this view, can be reconceptualized as both expanding the agency that is available to actors within existing boundaries of power and for the ability of individuals or groups to act upon boundaries of power, to expand the field of social possibility. By doing this, we can begin to see how power's boundaries shape, constrain and limit individual and group agency, actors' choices and ultimately their empowerment.

2.5. CONCEPTUALIZING CHILDHOOD(S)

Throughout this chapter I have discussed how power and empowerment have been considered and conceptualized over the last seven decades. However, missing from this conversation so far have been children[5] and empowerment – the focus of my research. Here I turn my focus to children, arguing that not only have they been left out of the debates on empowerment, but that their perspectives have been side-lined in development studies literature.

[5] Children, defined by the United Nations are people between the ages of 0-17 (Ansell, 2017, 3). As will be discussed in chapter three, chronological age is not necessarily the most useful way of conceptualizing this term (White, 2008), but it will be the definition used throughout these pages for ease of reading. When I am referring to my research participants as 'children', this refers to the two groups of participants involved in my research who were between the ages of 10-13.

Children and youth are prominent focuses of international development. They are a focus of NGOs, international agencies, public policy, development interventions and are a key part of the recent SDGs (Ansell, 2017, p. 2). The young are present as targets of development policies and practice and these practices are often justified in the name of young people as the 'next generation' or 'the future' (Huijsmans, George, Gigengack and Evers, 2014, p. 1). However, children are viewed as a distinct category, separate to adults and are rarely consulted or viewed as stakeholders in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, or any other type of intervention which focuses on their lives (Chawla and Johnson, 2004, p. 64). The children of the cities of the Global South, (such as Dhaka, where my research is based) are rarely granted a presence in public discourse beyond an understanding of their worlds fashioned through the knowledge of the agencies and organisations working with them. Because of this, children's own understandings and experiences of their situations, of how their lives are impacted by policies and interventions and their attempts to survive and protect themselves, remain largely unacknowledged in development discourse (Mizen and Ofosu-Kusi, 2010).

To understand the overlooking of children's voices in development thought, it is important to look at how childhood has been conceptualized, especially in western thought, as this has strongly shaped international development interventions and therefore our thinking on development practice (Ansell, 2017, p. 12). This is not to deny that other constructs of childhood exist, but that western concepts have had the most influence on development practice.

Developmental psychology has had an enormous influence on how we conceptualize children's role in society. Piaget (1972) focused on the cognitive development of children and was arguably the most influential child developmental psychologist in the twentieth century. According to his theory, children move from one stage of cognitive ability to the next, moving in a linear direction towards the ultimate goal – scientific rationality and being able to interpret and see the world as a set of facts in which rational decision making can be made (Ansell, 2017, p. 18). The field of developmental psychology is still the dominant framework for conceptualizing children's development. This sees the achievement of certain developmental milestones as progress and

views children as human 'becomings', moving along a linear path towards a normative and superior status – that of adulthood (Fattore, Mason and Watson, 2007, p. 8). This approach to cognitive development sees childhood as a linear progression towards adulthood and a universal phenomenon.

In the 1990s, influenced by the post-modern turn, the 'new social studies of childhood' came to fruition. This approach recognised the importance and the role of agency and it became widely accepted that childhood is a social construct and that children are and should be viewed (and studied) as social actors, not simply passive recipients of adult actions being socialised into adulthood (Ansell, 2017, p. 23). Although the focus in the new social studies of childhood has been on children's agency, some authors have also explored the influence of social structures on children's lives (Ansell, 2017, p. 25). Rather than studying children isolated from the broader structures that influence their lives, social structures are analysed from children's perspectives. Children are studied as active agents who are able to shape their societies and their relationships as they navigate their way bound within broader societal structures (Montgomery, 2001).

Furthermore, some researchers have begun to recognise children's agency as constrained. For example, Klocker (2007) describes a continuum between thick and thin agency:

> 'Thin' agency refers to decisions and everyday actions that are carried out within highly restrictive contexts, characterized by a few viable alternatives. 'Thick' agency is having the latitude to act within a broad range of options. It is possible for a person's agency to be 'thickened' or 'thinned' over time and space, and across their various relationships". (p. 85)

In more recent years, there has been a critique from a small group of writers that reject the structure/agency binary and question the emphasis in the new social studies of childhood on children as autonomous actors. This critique pays attention to the importance of the relationality of childhood. It aims to situate children's lives within relationships with their family and peer groups and the other diverse aspects of their identities which influence (sometimes much more than normative age) their social worlds (Huijismans et al., 2014). Often children's identification with

other groups is more salient and meaningful to them at points in time than identifying as a child; for example, being associated with a particular religion; gender; ethnic group; or class (Ansell, 2017; Hopkins and Pain, 2007; Huijismans et al., 2014).

The literature that looks at the relationality of childhood moves beyond the dichotomizing nature of child/adult, powerless/powerful and can be viewed as analysing those social boundaries which define *different* childhoods and operate in ways that allow for certain types of agency to take place. In the next chapter I suggest that in Bangladesh, interpersonal, and especially family relationships, form one of the boundaries of power that operates in children's lives. Like Hayward's (2000) critique of 'power with a face', and the relationality of childhood, this allows for a more nuanced understanding of power relations and an understanding of the social boundaries of power that constrain and enable children's agency.

2.6. CHILDREN, PARTICIPATION AND PEDAGOGY

In line with the new social studies of childhood, children's participation has been an important development in child and youth work, just as participation has become important within wider development studies literature and practice. The arguments for children's participation broadly fall into two categories. First, participation as a right in and of itself and second, participation as instrumentally beneficial (Williams, 2005, p. 83). Those that see participation as instrumental argue that it promotes children's development; protects children; produces better outcomes for children and strengthens democratic citizenship (Landsdown, 2005, p. 7-11). It is seen as a means for fostering democratic citizenship skills – deepening their civic involvement and that of future adult society (Ansell, 2017, p. 219). When framed in this way, policy, services and interventions will be more effective if children's perspectives are understood. This viewing of participation as instrumental is not without critiques. Hart, Newman and Ackermann (2004) argue that when participation is framed in this way, it is a means for promoting liberal democracy and socializing children into existing structures rather than giving them the tools to voice their own concerns and enable them to engage in political action that might provide alternative systems and structures.

When participation is framed as a right and a means in itself, it has stronger ties to the origins of empowerment in development thought discussed at the beginning of this chapter. Children are said to have their lives are dominated by adults, that they are affected by the processes and decisions that adults make and through participation they are able to have their say, strengthen their status, and gain more control and power (Ansell, 2017, p. 219).

Critical theories of schooling and education are rooted in Freirean pedagogy, whereby participation is seen as a tool that can be used to raise children's conscientization and enables them to question and transform existing power structures. Critical educational theorists claim that power restricts freedom in the classroom when 'hegemonic intellectuals' present dominant forms of knowledge as objective and neutral and then test and grade students on their mastery of this knowledge. This social reproduction legitimizes and enforces existing age, class, gender, race and social hierarchies (Hayward, 2000, p. 49). In a foundational work on critical education, Illich (1971) claims that when this process occurs, children learn to accept service in place of value and that "health, learning, dignity, independence and creative endeavour are defined as…the institutions which… serve these ends" (p. 1). Critical education, or empowering education, is the work of 'transformative intellectuals' who provides students with the skills, knowledge, and other tools that they need to understand the root causes of their oppression and to realise their 'true' desire for justice and equality (Giroux, 1986).

In Clarissa Hayward's (2000) framework of power she claims that empowerment doesn't just operate through 'transformative intellectuals' employing a progressive and transformative pedagogic practice, but rather, that social boundaries constrain and enable certain types of action for both students and teachers irrespective of different demographic settings. In her ethnographic study in two different classrooms in the United States, Hayward (2000) shows that although one teacher employs what critical educational theorists would term, an 'authoritarian' pedagogy, she does this in response to the 'environment' outside of the school; a poor, urban, mostly African American community. Due to the role of global capital, zoning laws, school funding mechanisms, and a deep racialized history, this environment means that students need to learn "obedience" (p.

44) and that “there is a right way to do things” (p. 52) in response to urgent problems associated with concentrated urban poverty and racial segregation. The teacher’s pedagogical practice is based on social boundaries, that she, even as a ‘hegemonic intellectual’ cannot control.

Conversely, in another school classroom in a different demographic setting, the teacher employs what many critical educational theorists and advocates of children’s participation would call an ‘empowering’ pedagogy. Children are invited to participate in decision making, rule setting, and are given much autonomy over their learning. But as Hayward shows, in this relatively wealthy, white, suburban neighbourhood, there are significant restrictions on political freedom. These restrictions are promoted by depoliticizing certain norms and values that places them out of the reach of question or critique such as demonstrating “effort” (p. 119), striving “for excellence” (p. 147) and having a “positive attitude” (p. 139). The universalising of these norms and values, treats them as naturally inspired and how closely one internalises these norms and values is akin to the worth of their character. This universalising of norms and values serves to negatively define ‘others’ who transgress these standards and identities.

As the literature on the relationality of childhood does, this view requires us to think beyond the essential nature of the student/teacher, child/adult, powerless/powerful divide and to look at how boundaries of power constrain and enable different types of agency. It requires us to view power as something beyond the control of one individual, but as a system of institutions, discursive norms and social identities which allows for certain types of action to take place. The way that childhoods have been conceptualized in the west through a dominant framework of cognitive and developmental milestones is a discourse that operates in a way that does not recognise or give weight to children’s agency. The move towards the new sociology of childhood, which focusses on children’s agency, recognizes that children can and do exercise agency, albeit within structures that both enable and constrain action. The literature on the relationality of childhood and ‘de-facing’ power moves us beyond the dyadic conceptualization of child/adult, teacher/student and agency/structure and allows us to view all of those things which influence children’s identities and

agency, including other aspects of identity which are more or less salient depending on context, as well as the broader social boundaries of power which constrain and enable certain types of action.

2.7. CONCLUSION

Within this chapter, I have suggested that power can be viewed as social boundaries which include, but are not limited to laws, rules, norms, customs and social identities which both constrain and enable certain types of action. I have also argued that the progression of empowerment in development studies discourse, by those in the 'radical' school and those that have mainstreamed the term, can be seen as a disagreement over the meaning of empowerment; to try and act upon the social boundaries of power in a way that redefines, or re-establishes, certain types of norms, discourses and other social boundaries that define the field of social possibility. I have further shown how childhoods, participation and pedagogy have been conceived of and written about together, arguing that the literature on the relationality of childhoods allows us to better understand how children's lives are situated in broader social structures.

De-facing power allows us to view those social structures that other commentators have claimed to be important in terms of empowerment and children's agency and to view them as social boundaries of power. Rather than looking at specific actors that use power to constrain the agency, action, or freedom of less powerful actors, I instead draw attention to what I will call boundaries of power throughout the rest of this thesis. This does not mean that agency is not important, or that all actors are affected by power's boundaries in the same way. Rather, it allows us to look at those socio-historical processes which present 'channels' of opportunity for children in Dhaka's *bustees*. De-facing power allows us to move beyond looking for individuals and groups to blame for the conditions that poor urban children endure and instead directs our attention to the broader social boundaries which constrain their action. Further, de-facing power allows us to re-conceptualize empowerment as an issue that concerns both structure and agency. Empowerment can be seen as expanding actors' constrained agency that operates within existing boundaries of power, and secondly, as the ability for actors to act upon those boundaries in a way that expands the field of

future social possibility. This claim will be expanded upon at the end of this thesis as I consider the implications of my own research for empowerment.

Most importantly, this chapter has allowed me to explore the existing literature on power and empowerment and shows that my own research does not exist in a vacuum. My research aim, to make a contribution towards existing understandings of children's power and empowerment, requires an understanding of this long and contested history, in order to place my own research findings within this work. My first research objective, to explore how children in Bangladesh understand power and empowerment, comes with a long and contested history. Reviewing this literature has allowed me to put forward a conceptualization of power that holds weight for my own research findings and which allows me to compare and contrast my own findings with the existing literature, something that I will do in chapters five, six and seven. What this chapter also allows for is a setting up of my research methodology, by showing that because children's perspectives have been largely (although not exclusively) overlooked in development studies literature, my research methodology, highlighted in chapter four, places children centrally to help fill this research gap.

3. POWER DE-FACED: BOUNDARIES OF POWER FOR CHILDREN IN DHAKA'S *BUSTEES*

This chapter will look at five boundaries of power that operate in Bangladesh's *bustee* communities; personal relationships with family and friends; access to material and financial resources; the natural environment; education and finally, children's work. The discussion of these boundaries of power will do two things; set up the context in which my research takes place and to explore the existing literature on those things that were most important to my research participants.

Before proceeding, I wish to make two clarificatory points on the decision of what was important to include in this chapter and on the use of terms. Modern commentaries on Bangladesh often focus on the gendered nature of Bengali society (Munro, Patterson and McIntyre, 2015; Munro and McIntyre, 2014; Anwary, 2015; Sayem and Nury, 2013), the Islamic resurgence of Bengali society (Van Schendel, 2009; White 2012; Wood, 2007), or political and cultural rights in Bangladesh (White, 2002). Although these conceptual lenses of exploring Bangladeshi society are important, this chapter focusses on those aspects which were important to the children that participated in this research. This is of course not an exhaustive account of what makes up Bangladeshi society, nor of all the possible boundaries of power which constrain and enable agency for all actors in Bangladesh.

Throughout this chapter and the remainder of the thesis, I use the term 'boundaries of power'. This phrase has been developed from the concept of 'channels' from Young (2006) 'social structure' from Blau (1977), 'fields' from Bourdieu (1980), and 'social boundaries' and 'mechanisms' from Hayward (2000), all discussed in the previous chapter.

Hayward (2000) seemingly uses the terms 'mechanisms' and 'social boundaries' interchangeably but argues that social boundaries

> facilitate and limit action for all actors, in all social contexts. Power's mechanisms include laws, norms, standards, and personal and social group identities. They demarcate fields of

> action. They render possible and impossible, probable and improbable, particular forms of conduct, speech, belief, reason and desire (p. 8).

For Bourdieu (1980), fields are the social spaces in which the exchange of goods, services, knowledge, and status take place and where the competitive positions held by actors in their struggle to accumulate, exchange, and monopolize different kinds of power resources are played out (Swartz, 2016). Blau (1977) denotes social structures as "multidimensional spaces of differentiated social positions among which a population is distributed" (p. 4). Individual people occupy different positions within the social structure and their positions stand in determinate relations to other positions. Finally, Young (2006) claims that "social structures serve as background conditions for individual actions by presenting actors with options; they provide 'channels' that both enable action and constrain it" (p. 112).

I am using the term 'boundaries of power' to explain those conceptually structured spaces, highlighted by my research participants, that demarcate fields of action in which social actors are differentially positioned in relation to those boundaries and to each other. Like Hayward's notion of 'social boundaries', boundaries of power render possible and impossible particular types of social action and imagination. Within these boundaries lie spaces for differential experiences of power and opportunities to carry out agency, albeit, agency that is always constrained. When I speak of agency being more or less constrained, I am referring to actors' position within a boundary of power whose 'channels' for action are relatively limited, or expanded, depending on their social position within power's boundaries. The place in which an actor is positioned within a boundary then, speaks to the operation of power. The process of moving positions within a boundary, can be seen as the process of empowerment, whereby one's 'channels' for action are expanded. As will be argued later in this thesis, conceiving of power in this way requires the process of empowerment to be conceived of in temporal terms and has both long- and short-term goals.

3.1. PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS

As discussed in the previous chapter, childhood as it is normatively constructed in the West is based on chronological age and cognitive developmental milestones. This construction of childhood loses its traction in a Bangladeshi context. This is perhaps best illustrated by the fact that there is no single Bengali term for child. *Shishu* is the word commonly used by development agencies, but traditionally this was only used to refer to an infant or a very young child (White, 2007, p. 728). Distinctions in entitlements and responsibilities for children are made according to gender, birth order and competency and are commonly expressed in terms of how much 'understanding' one has (White, 2007, p. 729). A working child, a child that 'knows too much' is not considered to be a *shishu*. Conversely, a child in a middle-class family that is well cared and provided for and kept away from responsibilities might be considered a *shishu* right up until the age of 12 (Blanchet, 1999, p. 38).

The dominant way in which children's entitlements and responsibilities are understood and distributed in Bangladesh is through the concept of guardianship. Guardianship is defined as the duty of males to provide for dependents and is an important marital concept in Bangladesh (Munro et al., 2015, p. 44). The primary responsibility for the guardian of a child is to 'make a person'. Making a person involves both material support and moral guidance and leadership. At a bare minimum it involves providing a basic level of material resources, colloquially expressed as 'giving rice'. Along with this material provision, emphasis is given to the development of mental, emotional and spiritual maturity (White, 2007, p. 513). For sons, this means developing the ability to earn a living, to marry and have children and to be seen as respectable members of the community. For daughters, this means finding a husband and being a good daughter in-law, wife, and mother (Blanchet, 1999, p. 49; Kabeer and Mahmud, 2009, p. 13). This position of male guardianship is so inscribed in Bangladesh that legally, children are orphaned if they are fatherless, even if their mother remains alive (Munro et al., 2015, p. 44). Not being able to provide the material and moral support required for 'making a person' is a major source of shame for men in Bangladesh (White,

2002, p. 513) and being able to provide for one's family is a significant part of male honour (Camfield, Choudhury and Devine, 2006, p. 20).

Central to the concept of guardianship is that children's membership to a community is not automatic, or rather, is not theirs by 'right', but is instead derived through their relationships (White, 2002, p. 512). The guardian represents and bears responsibility for all of the family within the *somaj* (White, 2002, p. 512). The *somaj* is a social group which distinguishes itself from others by characteristics such as religion, caste, ethnicity, and place of origin (White, 2007, p. 512). The *somaj* is both a symbolic and an organizational referent for the political and religious community and has the authority to reward or punish those that adhere or deviate from established social norms, usually enforced by an informal council of elders (Chowdhury, 1995, p. 29-30). The *somaj* is seen to uphold a moral order which is far more compelling on its members than any other identity claim in Bangladesh, including citizenship (Blanchet, 1999, p. 27).

Children belong to the *somaj* only as sons and daughters, represented through their guardian, therefore, if they fall outside of these identities, they can no longer belong to the *somaj*. For example, street children who self-identify as *kangali,* meaning not under the control of parents, are emphatically located outside of the *somaj* (Blanchet, 1999, p. 28). Without parents or a guardian, a child cannot be part of this moral community. In families where male guardians are absent, this is seen as a source of shame and stigmatization for children and in households where male guardians are present but unable to fulfil their obligations of 'giving rice', their mere presence is seen as valuable and a source of social legitimacy for their family (Munro et al., 2015, p. 47). When the guardian leaves the family, whether intentionally or unintentionally, studies have shown that this is a major source of stigma and humiliation for women and that at least in poor households, women would prefer a guardian figure that is a material drain on resources than to not have one at all. Wives view guardians as playing a fundamental role in their families - as bringing peace, stability, order and happiness (Munro et al., 2015, p. 46).

To focus on the patriarchal character of guardianship is not to deemphasize the importance of motherhood in Bangladesh, but to show that family roles are highly gendered. A mother's love

receives cultural celebration and is seen as the ideal of self-sacrificing, service, love and devotion to one's family. In comparison to the guardian, a mother is meant to understand, to care and to serve her children and this is an equally important, albeit different, role in the family (White, 2002, p. 513). Strong family ties are the foundation of community life and family allegiance and mutual dependency overrule individual's needs and goals (Ball and Wahedi, 2010, p. 367). Family relationships create both a shared identity between family members and prescribes specific roles and responsibilities within these relationships (Camfield et al., 2006, p. 17).

The central importance of interpersonal relationships for ones' identity is not solely confined to family life but is representative of how society is constructed. An in-depth five-year research project on happiness and subjective wellbeing found the significance of peoples' networks of relationships in Bangladesh for their construction of happiness (Camfield, et al., 2006). As the concept of guardianship and the centrality of the *somaj* show us, people are essentially constituted through interpersonal, intergenerational, and intergroup relationships and these relationships form the core of identity in Bangladesh (Camfield, Choudhury and Devine, 2009, p. 82).

The importance of social connections and interpersonal relationships is brought to the forefront in Katy Gardner's (2012) ethnographic work *Discordant Development* where she uses the central metaphor of connection, to argue that in Bangladesh "poverty might be understood as a state of disconnection and impoverishment as the process whereby [poverty] happens" (p. 237). She shows that in a context where the state is ineffective in its provision of basic human needs, that the poor are the most dependent upon social connections for access to resources. Drawing on ethnographic research, she argues that there is a hierarchy in which help is offered in Bangladesh; first it is given to blood relatives, followed by known village insiders. Outsiders, those people who are unknown and have no social connections, obtain very little help. The extent to which claims of charity can be made and feelings of obligation experienced, are based according to actual kinship links, as well as spatial proximity. When poverty is defined as lacking in social connections, the poor in Bangladesh are those who are unable to access resources, stake claim to charity, or access more formal connections through employment, health care, education and so on.

Therefore, social connection, interdependence and interpersonal relationships form the very identity of people in Bangladesh. For children the most important connection is to their parents, in particular, their father, who represents them as their guardian in the *somaj.* Without these relationships and social connections, one's very personhood and identity is compromised. This social construction of childhood and family will be explored in more detail in chapters five and six, as it was central to my participants understanding of power relations.

3.2. MATERIAL AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Many of the traditional economic indicators for development have made Bangladesh look like a development 'basket case'[6] and for most of its history Bangladesh has been synonymous with poverty and underdevelopment (White, 2012, p. 1429-30). However, in more recent years, rapid urbanisation and modernization have led to many calling Bangladesh a development success (Al-Muti, 2014; Kopf, 2017). GDP growth is as high as seven percent, Dhaka has transformed into a megacity and new roads, electricity, mobile telephone and internet networks connect remote villages to the cities and to the rest of the world (White, 2012, p. 1430).

Over the decades since Bangladesh's independence in 1971, the country has transformed from an agriculturally based economy, reliant on aid, into an export-oriented economy through industrialization and manufacturing, reliant on "hands not land" (Gardner, 2012, p. 16). It has a large export sector, dominated by the garment and shrimp industries, as well as significant migrant remittances (Gardner, 2012, p. 68). This economic transformation has been encouraged and led by neoliberal economic policies that have encouraged overseas investment. This investment is attracted by an abundance of cheap labour and eight tax free Special Economic Zones (SEZs), which are planned to reach 100 by 2030 (Saha, 2015). The garment industry alone has grown to an $8 billion USD annual industry, employing close to two million workers, ninety percent of whom are woman (Quddus, 2009, p. 772).

[6] Henry Kissinger famously dismissed Bangladesh on the birth of its independence in 1971 saying: "the place is and always will be a basket-case."

Yet despite this economic 'success', material poverty remains a defining feature of life for many Bangladeshis. Much of the macro data on poverty in Bangladesh is conflicting as different organisations use different measures. The World Bank (using the international purchasing power parity[7] (PPP) rate of $1.90) estimated that in 2016, 13.8 percent of the population were below the international poverty line (World Bank, 2017a). An International Monetary fund estimate from 2013 puts forty seven million people below the poverty line (International Monetary Fund, 2013, p. 1). Despite these variations, it is clear that there are millions of people living in poverty and while some people are growing wealthier and seeing the benefits of economic growth, a great many are not (Gardner, 2012, p. 71). This is reflected in the high urban income Gini co-efficient of 0.497, which increased significantly between 1980-2005 (International Monetary Fund, 2013, p. 6-7).

This uneven growth is visually represented by the huge numbers of *bustees* that exist in Bangladesh's urban centres, where over thirty percent of Bangladesh's urban population live (Banks, Roy and Hulme, 2011, p. 476; Van Schendel, 2009, loc. 4076). In Dhaka, over four million people live in approximately 400 different *bustees* (Human Development Research Centre, 2015 p. i). Often urban areas are seen to be more economically prosperous than their rural counter-parts and Dhaka does outperform other districts on per-capita income measures (Power and Participation Research Centre, 2016, p. 16), but studies have shown that based on the multidimensional human poverty index[8] Dhaka is among the lowest performing districts in Bangladesh (Cameron, 2011, p. 357). Almost half of the poor households in Dhaka's *bustees*' monthly income is insufficient for their basic needs (Hossain, 2010, p. 194).

The *bustees* are characterized by low-quality housing, overcrowding, poverty, poor environmental conditions, poor hygiene and sanitation facilities and limited access to services (Cameron, 2011, p. 357). In another study with *bustee* households, near the *bustees* where my participants lived, 86.3 percent of households were single room, with an average of 3.7 people per room (Human

[7] According to the International Comparison Programme (2017), "PPPs measure the total amount of goods and services that a single unit of a country's currency can buy in another country… PPPs can be used to convert the cost of a basket of goods and service into a common currency while eliminating price level differences across countries. In other words, PPPs equalize the purchasing power of currencies"

[8] The human poverty index is based on life expectancy, adult illiteracy, access to water sources and child malnutrition.

Development Research Centre, 2015, p. iii). *Bustee* residents are reliant on the volatile informal labour market, whereby the majority of men are involved in low wage labour, street selling, and petty trading (Hossain, 2010, p. 33; Human Development Research Centre, p. ii), while opportunities for woman are more restricted but have expanded in industrial labour and domestic work (Van Schendel, 2009, loc. 4164).

Furthermore, government policy in Bangladesh remains committed to a rural oriented model of development which neglects the urban poor in social policy and poverty reduction planning (Banks et al., 2011, p. 491). While the rural sector is often romanticized in Bengali government discourse, the urban poor are most often associated with issues of crime and squalor and the emphasis has been on removal, rather than on assistance (Banks et al., 2011, p. 491). Government service providers are legally forbidden from delivering services to the residents of informal settlements who lack land holding numbers, which means that almost no government led social assistance programmes are extended to the urban poor (Banks et al., 2011; Cameron, 2017). NGOs are also hesitant to set up service provision in these areas as the risk of losing their operations and investment is high because of frequent evictions due to a lack of land ownership and the illegality of many settlements (Cameron, 2011, p. 358).

As the economic 'success' of Bangladesh has led to the growth of GDP, infrastructure development and property development and increased communication networks, 300,000 rural Bangladeshis continue to migrate to Dhaka every year to try and access the global capital that they see pouring into the country (Gardner, 2012; Van Schendel, 2009). This has led to the swelling of 400 *bustee*s in Dhaka, where millions of people have been disconnected from formal employment and global capital and instead are confined to lives of urban poverty. For my research participants, access to material and financial resources was important in their conceptualization of power, as those with financial resources were seen to hold status and to be able to purchase desirable goods and services.

3.3. THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

As discussed above, population growth and urbanisation have been major factors shaping contemporary Bangladesh society and this looks likely to remain the case into the future. With over 1,000 people per square kilometre, Bangladesh is one of the most populated places on the planet (Van Schendel, 2009, loc. 580). It is no surprise therefore, that as many rural Bangladeshis have seen their incomes fall, their plots of land shrink, their land disappear due to river erosion, rising sea levels and increased soil salinity, as well as a lack of job opportunities, that many have decided to try their luck in the cities (Hossain, 2010, p. 151). In 1971, after the liberation war and the birth of Bangladesh, Dhaka's population was one million, by 1990 it was six million and by 2007 fourteen million people lived in Dhaka (Hossain, 2010, p. 1-2). Today, over eighteen million people live in the wider Dhaka metropolitan area, making it one of the largest cities in the world (United Nations, 2016, p. 4). Dhaka has approximately 300,000 new, mostly poor Bangladeshis moving to the city every year and predictions are that the city will reach twenty four million inhabitants by 2025 (Van Schendel, 2009, loc. 4076).

Dhaka and other cities in Bangladesh offer poor rural people a much wider and growing range of employment opportunities which draws them to the city. Low-skilled men can find work pulling rickshaws, in construction and informal trade while woman can increasingly find work in garment factories and as domestic helpers. But with limited central urban planning, this increase in population has led to Dhaka growing haphazardly. Traffic jams, air pollution, power cuts and overstretched services define life in Dhaka and the migration is so large and straining to existing infrastructure that the city's *bustees* now hold four million people (Van Schendel, 2009, loc., 4188; Human Development Research Centre, 2015 p. i).

Increased urbanization is often the source of the destruction of green spaces as they are transformed into impermeable surfaces for infrastructure, public amenities and housing. As urbanization requires land and infrastructure for residential, commercial and transport development, the demands for such land is met through the development of existing green spaces (Byomkesh et al, 2012, p. 45). With little central urban planning and the overwhelming rural-urban

migration to Dhaka, the city hasn't been able to keep up with development which has led to a deterioration of parks and other green, public spaces (Lanoszka, 2018). Dhaka is noted for having amongst the lowest per capita numbers of playgrounds, stadiums, parks, woods, swimming pools and other public spaces in the world, as very little public land has been put aside for green and public spaces (Hossain, 2010, p. 18).

Common environmental problems in Dhaka's *bustees* include water-logging, flooding, polluted water, fires, improper sanitation, and waste (Ahmed, 2016, p. 203). Uncollected waste in particular is a huge problem and Dhaka City Corporation, the agency responsible for waste collection, has limited resources allocated to waste management, which means that waste is common, skips are often overflowing, landfill sites are full and sewers are often blocked by waste (Rouse and Ali, 2001). Uncollected rubbish is dumped in water bodies or burnt in the open, further deteriorating the quality of the natural environment (Birtchnell, Gill and Sultana, 2018, p. 3).

The natural environment was an important boundary of power for my participants and this is supported by empirical evidence from many other studies with children that show that safe, green spaces are a crucial source of power, support and well-being for children. Other research has shown that children value highly places in nature as long as they perceive them to be safe (Chawla, 2014). One study in South -Africa, discovered that children who lived in a squatter camp on the edge of Johannesburg took a route on the way home from school to visit a different neighbourhood which contained an open green space with trees, a field and a playground. This park was a place that the children valued highly and a place where they were free from the control of their teachers and parents (Chawla, 2003). A similar situation was found in a study by Chaterjee (2007) in a slum in New Delhi. When slum dwellers were evicted and forced to move to a new area, the children's first priority in their new barren home was to plant trees. Trees were donated from a local nursery and the children guarded them from grazing cattle.

Other research shows the value and utility of green spaces in *bustee* communities in Dhaka. In a *bustee* near that one in which my participants lived, research has shown people planting trees for food supply, shade and social spaces (Birtchnell et al, 2018, p. 8). Trees and green spaces were

found to support social cohesion, by offering an open place for people to socialize. In slum communities in Bangalore, India, Gopal, Nagendra and Manthey (2015) found that trees and gardens were both instrumentally and intrinsically valued by slum dwellers. Trees were found to support clothes lines, tents and some trees were considered sacred and important for worship. They also provided an important source of natural medicine and contribution to food supply and food gardens were found to be an important supply of micro-nutritional supplements that many slum dwellers wouldn't otherwise receive. Gopal and Nagendara (2014), show that in the same slums, tree shade was highly sought after, especially in the summer months when tin roofs lead to unbearable heat inside. Because of the shade, trees also served as important micro-economic hubs and a variety of occupations were seen to occur under the canopy of trees. Daily activities such as cooking, washing clothes, grooming and bathing, as well as washing dishes all took place under the shade of trees and children were often seen playing. The most commonly observed activity in this study however, like in Birtchnell et al's (2018) study in Dhaka, was groups of people conversing and socializing underneath trees.

Despite Dhaka's rapid urbanisation and destruction of open green spaces, there is strong evidence that these green spaces are of high intrinsic and instrumental value for children and their communities. This helps to explain why, as will be seen in chapters five and six, my research participants saw the natural environment as an important boundary of power that limited and enabled channels for action

3.4. EDUCATION

Bangladesh has seen a rapid expansion of educational provision in the last four decades, but the pace of change has not been uniform across the population (Kabeer and Muhmud, 2009, p. 12). The provision of education has become incredibly diffuse, with many different providers existing as the state has outsourced educational responsibilities to try and keep up its goal of universal primary education. To achieve this goal, there are now a staggering thirteen different types of primary school (Cameron, 2017, p. 584). The most common are government schools which accounted for fifty five percent of national enrolments in 2005 (Cameron, 2010, p. 2). Registered

non-government primary schools which are privately operated, but mostly funded by the government, are also very common. A large number of NGOs, most famously BRAC, provide informal education to disadvantaged children. Fully private, fee-charging primary schools are known as kindergartens and there also exists a number of *madrasa*; Islamic schools which are operated privately, but do receive some government funding (Cameron, 2011, p. 358). The school system involves five years of primary education, with children officially entering class one at six years of age, and seven years of secondary education.

Despite the rapid expansion and diversity of education provision, there are still many children outside of school. The most optimistic estimates in both rural and urban settings estimate that around fourteen percent of children remain out of primary school nationally (Cameron, 2017, p. 584). A large proportion of out-of-school children live in *bustee* areas in urban centres where UNICEF estimates only sixty five percent of children attend primary school and only eighteen percent attend secondary school (UNICEF, 2010). In a recent study in several *bustees* close to where my participants lived, it was found that thirty one percent of children between the ages of five to seventeen were out of school, twenty one percent had never attended school and twenty percent of primary school aged children (ages 6-11) were not attending school (Human Development Research Centre, 2015, p. iv-v).

There are not enough government schools in Dhaka to cater to the number of children and it is estimated that across the city, only twenty six percent of *bustees* have access to a government school (Cameron, 2011, p. 358). In the study cited above, 43.9 percent of respondents reported that they have access to a government primary school, forty one percent have access to an NGO primary school, and 33.7 percent of respondents have access to a private, fee paying school. Only 25.9 percent had access to a government secondary school, and 42.7 percent to a fee-paying private secondary school (Human Development Research Centre, 2015, p. v). As enrolments have risen, without a corresponding increase in the number of schools and teachers, the number of students per school, per classroom and per teacher has risen and the quality of education has declined (Cameron, 2010, p. 3). In some government schools in Dhaka that have good reputations

and are in densely populated areas, refusal to admit children in school is a common occurrence and is a frequently cited reason for some children having never enrolled in school (Cameron, 2010, p. 6).

Poverty is a primary barrier to children's education in Bangladesh. Children from vulnerable households are less likely to be enrolled at school and are far more likely to drop out. Furthermore, when education is perceived to be costly, it means that parents are less likely to enrol their children in school at all (Kabeer and Mahmud, 2009, p. 18). In the same study cited above, fifty four percent of the families that were not sending their children to school claimed that it was because of the cost (Human Development Research Centre, 2015, p. v). The effect of poverty on education is generational and research shows that the children of household heads who are themselves uneducated are less likely to go to school than those children whose parents have some level of education (Kabeer and Mahmud, 2009, p. 19). Furthermore, *bustee* households are likely to be in a subordinate position when it comes to their relationship with mostly middle-class teachers and past studies have shown that parents of poor households feel embarrassed about interacting with schools because of their own lack of education (Cameron, 2017, p. 589).

Despite these short-comings in the quality and provision of education and in particular for children from *bustee* communities, education is highly valued and is seen as the primary means to ensure cultural and social capital in Bangladesh. For boys, it is closely linked to their occupational choices, to getting a job that would enable them to command money and status. For girls, education is seen as a means to fulfil their roles as future mothers and wives and give them a better chance of securing a good husband (Kabeer and Mahmud, 2009, p. 13; Camfield et al., 2006, p. 21, Blanchet, 1999, p. 49). Similar expressions on the importance of education were spoken about by my research participants, a point I will return to in chapters five and six.

According to Camfield et al (2006), education is the factor that has the most influence on parent's sense of happiness in relation to their children and parents take great pride in being able to send their children to school and secure them a good education (p. 21). There is widespread acknowledgement from parents that education has increased in value over time and is necessary

for their children to live a good life and fulfil their social contracts and duties within the *somaj* (Kabeer and Mahmud, 2009, p. 13).

Despite the current barriers and pockets of exclusion, education is highly valued by both parents and children themselves and is seen as a means to build social and cultural capital to achieve desired outcomes – good jobs, a high income and the ability to fulfil one's social contract.

3.5. CHILDREN'S WORK

The final boundary of power which I have derived from my interactions with children from Dhaka's *bustees* was children's work. Empirical research shows us as families face the pressures of the poverty, a viable option for extra income becomes putting a child to work. Poverty and political economy are therefore central to the prevalence of child labour and working children in Bangladesh (White, 2002). When eviction, hunger and health concerns are everyday realities and possibilities, a child's education and emotional development are put second to income generation (Ruwanpura and Roncolato, 2006, p. 362). However, it is important to note that just because children are working does not mean that their interpersonal and family relationships are broken. Low income and material poverty lead to children working, but usually it will not break household ties. These children often return home at the end of the day to share their income and maintain social relationships (Coticini and Hulme, 2007).

Children in Bangladesh engage in four main types of work which are all seen as dishonourable: street labour such as picking waste, begging and prostitution; paid employment in workshops and factories; live-in employment in the agricultural and domestic services; and work within their own homes (Ruwanpura and Roncolato, 2006, p. 362). I will focus on street labour and waste-picking, as this is the type of work spoken about in the most detail by my own research participants. Street work positions children on the edge of the *somaj* as they are seen to not have a guardian that can 'give rice' (Blanchet, 1999, p. 33). In research with street children, Conticini and Hulme (2007) show that it is the breakdown of social relationships within a household which drives children to live on the street. The source of shame associated with a breakdown in family relationships and

the stigma associated with it, can be best summarised by Rocky, one of Conticini and Hulme's (2007) research participants:

> I left home because I was not able to inspire love and affection from my step mother… When I say I'm on the street because my family was poor, people look at me and I inspire sympathy from them… But if I say that I'm on the street because my parents were violent, people blame me saying I was not a good boy (p. 212).

Other research shows that children who are visible in street labour, begging, or living on the street suffer many, widespread and various forms of verbal and physical abuse, muggings and theft (Reza, 2017). Waste-pickers, who were spoken about in detail by my research participants, are perceived as having very low status in society and are strongly associated with criminals. This stigmatisation is pervasive and leads to waste-pickers being beaten by security guards and police (Rouse and Ali, 2001).

In Bangladesh, children are often pushed or pulled into work because of the political economy of material deprivation. As mentioned earlier, when families are poor, a viable option for parents becomes putting a child to work. However, stigma is attached to those children who are involved in visible street labour, and especially when children have no guardian to represent them in the *somaj.* Waste-pickers, and other street workers, can be seen to occupy a position whereby they are ostracised and stigmatised by society, as their very identity and personhood is compromised. It becomes clear in this context that of central importance to overcoming the 'problem' of child labour is to consider the needs of poverty-ridden and materially deprived families, recognising that material poverty and hardship is the cause of many children working (Ruwanpura and Rocolanto, 2006). Children's work can be understood as a boundary of power as those children who were involved in street labour such as waste-picking were seen to have 'no power'; without family support, access to financial resources, or attending school.

3.6. CONCLUSION

The discussion in this chapter has described in some detail the existing literature on the five boundaries of power that I derived from my research participants in their conceptualization of how power operates. This chapter, therefore, contextualises my findings in chapters five and six and places the voices of my research participants within the social and material contexts to which they belong. These boundaries, as I will elaborate on in later chapters, are not discrete nor operate in isolation from one another. Instead, they intersect to provide a complex picture of the different boundaries of power that operate on children's lives. A breakdown in personal relationships in the home can lead to a child being caught up in street work, where they are isolated from the community and their very identity is compromised. When a family has few financial resources and has no history of education themselves, they are the most likely to not enrol their children in school. Global capitalism draws migrants to the city, which leads to the destruction of green spaces, which are seen as intrinsically important for livelihoods. These boundaries, therefore, are best viewed as the discursive spaces in which power relations are formed and played out – those spaces which constrain the agency of my research participants and other children living in Dhaka's *bustees.*

Importantly, this chapter has helped, in part, to answer both of my research objectives. My research participants highlighted the boundaries of power discussed in this chapter in their understandings of power and empowerment. Understanding how others have written about these boundaries of power help to provide a fuller picture of the context where *bustee* dwelling children are living. This chapter, therefore, helps to meet my first research objective, *to explore how children in Bangladesh understand power and empowerment,* by placing my research findings within the context in which they have come from. Second, this chapter helps in giving context to the indicators that were developed in meeting my second research objective. The indicators that I developed, outlined in chapter six, measure the extent to which these boundaries of power constrain or enable children's agency. To understand the relevance of the indicators it is therefore important to understand this context. This chapter, therefore, not only explores the contextual literature on those things that were most important to my research participants but is an important chapter in meeting both of

my research objectives. It gives context to understanding power and empowerment from the perspectives of children in Dhaka's *bustees* and the indicators that were subsequently developed based on this understanding.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: UNDERSTANDING AND MEASURING CHILDREN'S EMPOWERMENT IN DHAKA'S *BUSTEES*

As outlined in chapter one, the two primary objectives guiding this thesis are 1) to explore how children in Bangladesh understand power and empowerment and 2) to create indicators to measure power and empowerment based on the children's understanding. In order to meet these two research objectives, it was important for me to consider the differing epistemological and ontological foundations associated with both objectives and to employ a mixed methods approach to research to address these concerns. In this chapter I will map the processes that I have gone through to operationalize these objectives into a working methodology.

This chapter will be presented in five sections. First, I will outline the epistemological and ontological foundations of my research which requires marrying two, some would argue, competing approaches to research into a single mixed methods research design. Second, I will show how these considerations have led to a participatory approach which places children at the centre of conceptualizing ideas around power and empowerment. Third, I will scaffold my choice of research methods and the analytical strategies that I use to make sense of the data I gathered. Fourth, I will reflect on this methodology in a discussion around ethics and a reflection on my fieldwork. Finally, I will bring the discussion to a close, showing how this methodology is tied to meeting my research objectives and highlight the theoretical, empirical and methodological implications raised in this thesis so far.

4.1. COMPETING ONTOLOGIES AND EPISTEMOLOGIES? BRINGING TOGETHER DIFFERENT WAYS OF KNOWING

Bryman (2012) claims that in social research there are four areas that need to be addressed in research design. These include the role of theory, epistemological issues, ontological concerns and research strategies. The role of theory revolves around the question of whether research is deductive (empirical evidence is used to test theory) or inductive (empirical evidence is used to generate theory). Epistemology concerns the question of what is regarded as acceptable knowledge in a discipline. The two main epistemological paradigms are that of positivism and

interpretivism. Positivism is a position that advocates for the application of methods from the natural sciences to test theories and provide material for the development of 'covering laws'. Interpretivism claims that people and institutions are fundamentally different to the natural sciences and that a focus should be on understanding people's perspectives. The primary difference dividing positivist and interpretivist epistemologies is that positivism seeks to explain while interpretivism seeks to understand social phenomenon.

Questions of social ontology refer to whether social entities can and should be considered objective entities that have an external reality to social actors or whether they should be considered social constructions built up from the perceptions and actions of social actors. Objectivism and constructivism are said to represent these two competing ontological foundations. Finally, research strategies refer broadly to quantitative or qualitative methods. Quantitative research, broadly, is a strategy that emphasises quantification in the collection of data and that entails a deductive approach, a positivist epistemology and an objectivist ontological orientation. Qualitative research, conversely, usually emphasizes words in data collection and is based on an inductive approach, an interpretivist epistemology and a constructivist ontology (Bryman, 2012).

Although this is a gross oversimplification of the different research traditions, with no attention to nuance, setting up these two paradigms in conflict with one another is to show that there are differences in the philosophical approaches to social research and that it is important to be aware of these differences. Arguably, my two research objectives are rooted in two different epistemological and ontological foundations and use research strategies, discussed below, that are based on these different foundations.

The first research objective is tied to an interpretivist epistemology. It seeks to understand human action and is concerned with how individuals make sense of the world around them (Bryman, 2012, p. 30). Epistemologically, it further recognises that knowledge is a construct and that in the interactions between myself as the researcher, my research assistants, and the participants - ideas around power and empowerment are being conceptualized and constructed (Fattore et al., 2007, p. 13). Constructivism further acknowledges that there are a variety of external factors in the social

world that influence one's perception of that world, thus, it is important to uncover not only the meanings attached to experiences, but to place these experiences within the context to which they belong (Moses and Knutsen, 2007, p. 11; Creswell, 2007, p. 20-21).

The second research objective is concerned not with understanding the perspectives of my research participants, but in measuring aspects of people's lives through the construction of and the subsequent measurement of indicators. (Fattore et al., 2007, p. 6). To do this requires a positivist epistemology based upon a foundation which assumes that we can gain access to and explain the world by recording, measuring, and observing it carefully (Moses and Knutsen, 2007, p. 8). It requires an objectivist ontological foundation that assumes that there is an objective, knowable world that is independent from social actors and that world can be measured with social indicators (Bryman, 2012, p. 33).

Bringing together these two research objectives that are based upon different epistemological and ontological foundations into a single research design would be seen by some as problematic and even pseudo-scientific. Some authors have claimed that epistemological assumptions, values and methods are inextricably intertwined and cannot be reconciled between the different research traditions because their underlying assumptions are incompatible (Guba, 1985; Morgan, 1998; O'Leary, 2014, p. 147).

However, mixed methods research have become more popular in the last two decades and many researchers are now combining research methods across the qualitative/quantitative divide (O'Leary, 2014, p. 149). Although there are many different rationales offered for using mixed methods, most pertinent for my own research are two justifications that have been used by other researchers. Using mixed methods to answer different research questions (Fenton, Bryman and Deacon, 1998; Deacon, Bryman and Fenton, 1998) and developing research instruments (Harkness et al., 2006; Walklate, 2006; Livingstone, 2006). Bryman (2012) claims that quantitative and qualitative research methods can be combined for pragmatic reasons, by asking which kinds of research questions are best answered using a quantitative or a qualitative research method and how best to weave the two elements together to answer different research questions

(p. 640). He also shows how other researchers have used mixed methods to take advantage of the in-depth knowledge of social contexts acquired through qualitative methods, to inform quantitative methods such as surveys or structured interviewing (p. 642). My own research is a mixed methods design, that draws on different epistemological and ontological foundations and uses different research strategies, to answer two distinct, but related research objectives. The first objective seeks to *understand* and the second to *measure*. It is in this way that these 'competing' research paradigms can be brought together into a single working methodology.

Thinking specifically about constructing social indicators, other authors have considered the philosophical tight-rope that they are walking when constructing indicators based on a particular group or stakeholder perspectives. Reductionism has been a long-standing challenge in the construction of indictors in which complex, multi-dimensional concepts simply cannot be stated in singular, quantitative terms. It is for this reason that proxy indicators[9] are often used to represent this otherwise non-measurable factor (Prinsen, 2015, p. 355). Taylor (2008) argues that in the tension between creating meaningful and objective indicators for indigenous well-being, what is important is that reductionism is negotiated and that the set of indicators are legitimate and meaningful to those whose aspects of a persons' life is being measured. The challenge is how to achieve measurement, whilst respecting and incorporating the views of subjects (p. 117).

In the case of this research project, incorporating the participation of children for both research objectives has been central. This has been for intrinsic purposes, to value the perspectives of those that have been side-lined in development discourse and also instrumentally, to create indicators that are grounded in children's own understandings and that are intended to be meaningful and relevant to them.

4.2. PLACING CHILDREN CENTRALLY

The idea to build contextual indicators with the voice of children as central to the research process has been a vital component of this research design and has influenced the participatory nature of

[9] Proxy indicators are used to point to, or to represent non-measurable factors. For example, GDP is often used as a proxy indicator for 'development' or 'economic growth'.

aspects of this research. This is not the norm in indicator design, however, it is not without precedent (Fattore et al., 2007, p. 13). At the heart of the rationale for including intended beneficiaries in the construction of indicators is the emphasis on the importance of cultural context, of different meaning and of the power involved in outsiders; professionals, governments and outside organisations deciding what is and is not important for local populations. Various pieces of research (including well-being for indigenous populations in New Zealand, Australia and Vanuatu, as well as localized understandings of peace and violence in cross country settings in Africa) (Ginty, 2013; Taylor, 2008; Wereta and Bishop, 2006; Malvatumauri National Council of Chiefs, 2012) have inspired me to design my own research in a way that seeks to explore and understand local realities and to create indicators that are grounded in children's own worlds and intended to hold meaning for children in Dhaka's *bustees*.

As discussed in chapters one and two, this research acknowledges that children's voices have thus far been overlooked in the wider development studies literature, particularly around the ideas of power and empowerment, despite these concepts receiving much attention with other marginalized populations such as women and the poor. Historically, child-based research methodologies have tended to view children in mostly passive ways, as objects of research, who are incompetent and vulnerable (D'Amico, Denov, Khan and Linds, 2016). This has meant that research with children has often focussed on what happens to children, rather than on what they have to say and the meanings that they place on the things that are important to them. This has created a narrative in which children are viewed as human 'becomings' – people moving towards adulthood, rather than social actors in the present and has exacerbated the view that children are objects of research (Driessnack, 2006). Focussing on children's own perspectives and seeing the world through their eyes requires an epistemological framework that assumes that children are competent, meaningful social actors and that they are experts on their own lives and lived realities (Scheyvens et al., 2014; Fattore et al., 2005).

4.3. RESEARCH METHODS AND DATA ANALYSIS

My research methods and data analysis occurred in five distinct phases. To gather the data to meet the first research objective, to explore how children in Bangladesh understand power and empowerment, I used qualitative, task based, visual methods, followed by qualitative thematic analysis. To meet the second research objective, to create indicators to measure empowerment based on the children's understanding, I constructed indicators that could be measured using a single number, created and piloted a survey as a data collection tool and carried out a descriptive statistical data analysis on the survey data. In this section I will elaborate on the research methods and analytical strategies used for each research objective in more detail below.

4.3.1. Phase one: creative art and storytelling workshop

In recent years there has been an increase in research methods that are child centred and which model participatory research designs used with adults (Due, Riggs and Augoustinos, 2014, p. 209). These methods are often highly visual and task based. Visual participatory methods have been used in research with children in both western contexts (Fattore et al., 2007; Driessnack, 2006) and in developing country contexts (Carboni and Morrow, 2011; Crivello, Camfield and Woodhead, 2009). They are said to affirm children's agency as children can depict what they choose, on their own terms and can therefore lead the subsequent conversation. Visual data enables the researcher to ground discussion in children's own experiences and social environments, making the interpretive process much more open, fun, participatory and collaborative (Crivello, et al., 2009, p. 56).

I drew heavily on the 'draw and tell' method in my research, which is said to be a child centred and directed approach to research with children and has been used in various research settings (Drissenack, 2006; Punch, 2002; Fattore et al., 2007; Crivello et al., 2009; Carboni & Morrow, 2011; Due et al., 2014; D'Amico et al., 2016; Angell, Alexander and Hunt, 2014; Ennew and Morrow, 1994; Tekola, Griffin and Camfield, 2009). The draw and tell method has a participant draw a picture of a particular phenomenon and then describe their picture. It allows children time

to think and enables them to build ideas in stages, rather than having to provide an immediate response (Angell et al., 2015, p. 24). It cuts across a lack of literacy skills and verbal confidence in children which is especially important in cross-cultural settings (Ennew and Morrow, 1994). Importantly, it incorporates children's drawings for their facilitative effect, rather than as a direct method for interpretation. The focus is on what children say about their drawings rather than the drawings themselves. The drawing acts as a transitional space in which feelings can be externalized into a concrete form and allows for children to organize their narratives before they share them (Driessnack, 2006, p. 1415).

In addition to the draw and tell method, I also carried out group discussions as the presence of peers in group work is said to shift the power differentials that naturally exist between children and adults. This gives children the confidence to speak and to participate. Group activities can be critical for building relationships and familiarity and making children more at ease with the researcher and the environment (Crivello, et al., 2008, p. 60). Some children prefer group interviews because they have the supportive company of peers, they are useful for gaining confidence and allow children to explore issues broadly. It is also often considered to be more fun, is useful for exploring consensus and rapport building, not only between the researcher and children, but between the children themselves (Punch, 2002; Crivello et al., 2008).

I also decided to carry out a short ranking activity. Preference ranking is a tool that is used to explore people's perceptions and to understand their choices and decision making. It shifts attention away from the traditional role of interviewer and interviewee and the focus instead is on the ranking activity itself. It allows people to express their perceptions and helps a researcher clarify information (Cramb and Purcell, 2001, p. 33). It is usually used by development workers to work out how to prioritize issues and to choose a course of action from several options (Gay, Stubbs and Galindo-Gonzalez, 2016, p. 1). In my case, I wanted to know if there was a hierarchy of importance in how power operated in children's lives and to clarify whether or not I had understood my participant's stories.

Based on these considerations, in this first part of my research I ran a three-day creative art and storytelling workshop with fourteen children (seven males and seven females) aged between ten and thirteen, that included drawing pictures, group storytelling, group ranking activities, individual interviews, games and icebreakers. This workshop was held at a local World Vision office in northern Dhaka, near the *bustees* where the children lived. World Vision staff selected the children, based off criteria that I gave them, which will be discussed in more detail in section 4.3.5. My participants and their parents were given a chance to 'opt in' to the research and my participants were given opportunities for ongoing assent throughout the workshop where I would give them the option to participate in each activity. On each day I had different research assistants translating and helping run the workshop, which will also be discussed further below in section 4.4. I used an audio recorder to record the group conversations and individual interviews, which I transcribed before I began my data analysis.

The workshop[10] opened with an ice-breaker and get to know you game, before we began the research proper. In the first step of the workshop, the participants were invited to draw a picture of a child that has 'no power'. Once the children finished their pictures, they were invited to narrate their pictures to the group, to tell everyone why the child they had drawn has 'no power'. When all of my participants had shared their pictures, the process was repeated, but the children were asked to draw and narrate a picture of a child that 'has power'. As my participants were narrating their stories, I was taking jottings and documenting what seemed like significant aspects of power and powerlessness.

Following the group discussions on children that had 'no power' and children that 'had power' I cross-checked the initial categories of 'no power' and 'power' that I had taken note of with my participants. I wrote down each category on a post-it note and my research assistant translated in Bengali. We went through each category with my participants and asked them if they agreed this was important for having or not having power. I then asked if there were any other categories that I had missed. Once we had a list of those things that were important for 'having' and 'not having

[10] A schedule for the 3-day workshop is included in appendix 1.

power', I asked them to rank these categories as a group, from the most important to the least important for having 'no-power' and 'having power' respectively. The children debated among themselves and then voted on where each category should be placed in the order.

I then asked the children to place their pictures side-by-side and to think about how a child can move from having no power to having power, or put more simply, how they could move from one picture to the other. They were invited to collect some post-it notes and I asked them to either draw or write the ways that they think this could happen. Once they had completed this, we had a group discussion and the children were invited to come and share the ways in which it was possible to move from having 'no power' to 'having power'. The reason for including this task in the workshop was influenced by the early development literature on empowerment, which as discussed in chapter two, claimed that empowerment was the process of generating power (Rowlands, 1997; Friedmann, 1992; Kabeer, 1994). This task attempted to elicit from the children the processes of generating power, i.e. the process of moving from a state of powerlessness, to a state of being powerful. This assumption proved problematic however and will be discussed further later in section 4.4.

In the final part of the workshop, I conducted individual interviews where the children were invited to bring their drawings and post-it notes to talk about these in an informal interview setting whereby the children's pictures were used as a 'spring-board' for discussion. I asked them to describe their pictures and the ways that a child could move from one picture to the other. The reason for including personal interviews alongside individual storytelling and group discussion is because in individual interviews, people can open up more, share more personal thoughts and experiences, and it is confidential (Punch, 2002, p. 337).

Throughout the three days myself and my research assistants broke the research activities up by playing games and running activities such as 'duck-duck-goose', indoor cricket, 'Simon-says', 'fruit-salad', singing and acting to create a fun and open environment. Some of these activities were planned ahead of time and led by me, some were led by my research assistants and others were led by the children.

4.3.2. Phase two: qualitative data analysis

There are many different qualitative data analysis methods and I drew on insights from several in order to analyse the data generated in the workshop. These helped me to both understand how the children in the workshop understood power and empowerment and to deduct variables from their understandings for measurement.

In thematic analysis, moving from raw data, such as transcripts, pictures, notes, journals, audio, and videos, to understanding, is a process that is reliant on the exploration of relevant themes, themes which can be discovered through inductive reasoning, or uncovered through deduction (O'Leary, 2014, p. 305). For my research, the intention was to discover themes by allowing them to emerge from the data through inductive reasoning. The inductive method uses a set of iterative techniques designed to identify categories and concepts within a dataset (Guest, et al., 2014a, p. 11). This process requires reading transcriptions; identifying possible themes; comparing and contrasting themes; whilst continually checking them against specific data points (Bernard and Ryan, 1998).

The basic task when coding a transcript for content themes is to come up with valid and reliable approaches for grouping content at specified levels of meaning and interpretation. Saldana (2009) defines a theme as "a phrase or sentence that identifies what a unit of data is about and/or what it means" (p. 139). Once themes have been discovered in the text, the next step is to move onto an exploration of the relationship between and among various themes and to turn back to the literature to see how this might inform the data given that the categories of understanding have begun to emerge (Guest, et al., 2014b, p. 2). This engagement with your findings and the existing literature allows a researcher to build a greater depth of understanding (O'Leary, 2014, p. 310). This linking of my findings with the existing literature has been explored in some detail in the previous two chapters and will be further elaborated on in chapters five and six.

Following the creative art and storytelling workshop I had a rich data set – with written notes, audio recordings of the storytelling and individual interviews, pictures and the group rankings. As discussed above, the draw and tell method utilises drawings primarily for their facilitative effect,

so I was mostly interested in what my participants had to say about their pictures, so my first step was to transcribe the audio from the workshop. As I had several research assistants throughout the process translating, I transcribed my questions and the research assistants' translations, making notes where there was any unclear data, or I thought there may have been a discrepancy between what the research assistant said and what the children said. Unclear data was discarded, and I set criteria for discarding questionable translations, discussed in more detail in section 4.4.

I began to read and reread the transcript, identifying different themes in the data. Initially I tagged possible themes and moved on until I could combine and merge those themes into further levels of abstraction. Once I was satisfied with the themes I had developed, I created a content code book, which, drawing on Guest et al (2014b), included a code label, short and long definitions and descriptions of when to use and when not to use the codes. I used this code book to do another coding of my transcript which became the basis first for creating the variables which I wanted to measure and later, for exploring relationships between the various themes and linking these to existing literature.

I utilised three analytical strategies to try and determine a hierarchy of importance on how the children conceptualized power. The first was the qualitative analysis described above. The second was the ranking activity in the workshop described above. Finally, I also employed a counting strategy whereby I counted the number of participants who referred to each of the themes in order to determine their importance. I chose to count the number of participants, rather than the number of times a theme was mentioned, because some children were more confident than others and spoke at much greater length about their stories. To count the number of times a theme was mentioned would be to privilege the accounts of those that were the most confident and willing to share.

I did not privilege one analytical strategy over the other to determine the importance of the various themes, as group ranking has been said to be susceptible to control by more powerful individuals, qualitative analysis to a researcher's own bias and interpretation and counting frequency does not allow for depth or nuance in rich descriptions (Sumner and Tribe, 2008). Therefore, I used all three

strategies to try and triangulate my findings. Each of these analytical strategies enabled me to determine that the themes were significant and important, but not necessarily which themes were the *most* important. As will be discussed in chapter five, the themes, later termed boundaries of power, are interconnected and work in dynamic and non-linear ways.

Qualitative data analysis is not only about understanding your own findings, but about linking these to other theoretical and empirical literature which can help contextualize and explain your findings (O'Leary, 2014, p. 310). The constructivist project focuses not only on data gathered 'in the field' but is also interested in the contexts in which people live, to understand the historical and cultural settings of the participants (Creswell, 2007, p. 21). In my case, I did this reading of the wider contextual literature, presented in chapter three, almost entirely after fieldwork, to ensure that my analysis was inductive and that I was building an understanding of power and empowerment based on my participants' understanding. The literature on empowerment, which I had read before conducting fieldwork, did not help me understand or explain my findings, so I turned back to the literature on power where I found work highlighted in chapter two (in particular, Hayward (2000), Long (1990; 2001), Young (2006), Blau (1977) Bourdieu (1980)) and which will be elaborated on in the following chapters that better helped explain my findings. From this and the themes I identified I began to conceptualize my qualitative findings as 'boundaries of power', discussed in chapter three and further elaborated on in chapter five.

4.3.3. Phase three and four: indicator construction and survey design

My second research objective was to create indicators to measure power and empowerment based on the children's perspectives. As discussed above, this required me to use the understanding of power and empowerment discovered through my qualitative data analysis, to find important variables within each of the themes I had discovered and to create indicators that were able to measure each of those variables. Once I had done this, I piloted the indicators through a survey as a data collection tool, collected a small amount of quantitative data and analysed this data.

Definitions as to what constitutes an indicator do not diverge much (Prinsen, 2015, p. 355-6) and in the last two decades there has been a general consensus that indicators should be capturing

concepts “in a single number” (de Vries, 2007, p. 319) or “a single value” (Morse and Bell, 2011, p. 222). Indicators are intended to reduce complexity into single values that can be more easily understood, digested and acted upon for policy and development interventions (Morse and Bell, 2011, p. 222). Quantitative indicators are statistical measures which measure results in terms of number; percentage; rate; or ratio; they are objective, verifiable and can be used by anyone; they are not reliant on a single researcher (UNDP, 2009, p. 63).

De Vries (2007) claims that indicators should meet the TURC criteria; they should be technically sound, understandable, relevant and cost effective. He argues that to be technically sound, indicators should be well defined, describe the phenomenon they are said to describe, that it is possible to compile the statistics needed to calculate the indicator and that they are reliably repeatable. To be understandable, they should be easy to understand to non-statisticians and easy to explain. To be relevant, they need to be meaningful to policy analysts and I would argue, to the people who are to be affected by ‘development’. To be cost effective they should be able to be easily administered, preferably with existing data (p. 320). The UNDP use the acronym SMART to describe indicators. They should be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time bound; indicators should be specific enough to measure progress; a reliable and clear measure of results; the results should be realistic, relevant to outputs and outcomes and the data should be available at reasonable cost and effort (UNDP, 2009, p. 63).

Although it is important to follow the above criteria when creating quantitative indicators, multi-dimensional concepts such as ‘power’ and ‘empowerment’ cannot be measured directly and therefore require indirect, or proxy, indicators. Proxy indicators do not measure the change in the variable directly, but instead measure the consequence of change in the variable (Prinsen, 2015, p. 355). Because of this, proxy indicators straddle a tightrope, whereby it is important to create objective, verifiable indicators, based on the TURC and SMART criteria discussed above, however, there is much subjectivity involved in their construction. The construction of an indicator owes much more to the craftsmanship of the modeller, than to universally accepted scientific rules for encoding (OECD, 2008, p. 14; Prinsen, 2015, p. 357).

Surveys are the most common means of collecting quantitative data and are widely used by diverse groups, including NGOs, governments, multilateral donors and researchers (Overton and Van Dierman, 2014, p. 41). They are tools that are used to collect information to describe, compare, understand, and/or measure knowledge within a particular population group (O'Leary, 2014, p. 202). Surveys can be structured, semi structured, or unstructured, and in my case, I wanted a closed response, structured survey, where respondents were asked to choose from a range of predetermined options. This was to ensure that I could easily carry out statistical analysis to measure the indicators I had developed (O'Leary, 2014, p. 206; Overton and Van Dierman, 2014, p. 41).

Based on the above considerations, once I had coded my transcript using content codes and counted the number of participants that spoke about each theme, I reread each piece of segmented text looking for variables that were important dimensions of the themes that I had developed. This resulted in eleven different variables that I wanted to measure. Once I had decided on the variables, I went about constructing indicators to measure each of these variables. For each indicator I attempted to follow the TURC and SMART criteria discussed above, but some indicators adhered to the criteria much better than others, a point which will be discussed more in chapter six. I met with my thesis supervisors four times while I was developing these indicators and they gave me much valued insight and suggestions as we navigated the complex terrain of adhering to the TURC and SMART criteria, while exploring the "subjectivity involved in their construction" (Cherchye, Moesen, Rogge and Puyenbroeck, 2011, p. 10940). I knew that I was carrying out a pilot survey but in order to meet the 'cost effective' and 'timebound' criteria, I tried to ensure that there was another type of data source available to measure each indicator if required. In the end, I created thirty four indicators to measure the eleven variables. I explore each of the variables and the indicators chosen to measure them in chapter six, so will not go into more detail here.

Once I had created the indicators, I went about creating a closed response survey to test whether a survey was able to gather the data required to measure the indicators and which others could subsequently use to measure children's empowerment in Dhaka's *bustees*. I wrote a single

question for each of the indicators so that I would have one data point, per indicator, for each respondent. Once I had written the survey in English, I sat down with a World Vision staff member, who translated the survey into Bangla and who asked clarificatory points to simplify the survey into child friendly language.[11]

Twenty children were organised by World Vision to complete the survey at the local World Vision office. Sixteen children were different to those who participated in the workshop, discussed further below, but came from the same four *bustees.* This was to ensure that the indicators weren't being piloted by the same group and could be utilised across a wider population. My research assistant briefed them on the survey, telling them the purpose, how it would be used, that they didn't have to answer any question that they didn't want to and that if they did not understand a question to leave a "*" next to it. My research assistant read out each question and the children were invited to tick the box that best described their response. After the survey was completed, we shared some lunch together and the children went home.

4.3.4. Phase five: quantitative data analysis

My small survey sample (*n = 20)* was based upon convenience sampling (Overton and Van Dierman, 2014, p. 44) whereby the respondents were chosen based on their existing relationship to World Vision and their availability. This sample size therefore was not large enough to draw any inferential conclusions, but I wanted to analyse this data in order to test whether or not the survey was able to collect the required data to measure the indicators.

There are two important steps in quantitative data analysis that sit between the raw data which I collected from the survey and the ability to conduct statistical analysis. The first is managing the data so that a full database can be built and the second is defining the data as variables (O'Leary, 2014, p. 277). Because of my small sample size, I determined that Microsoft Excel was an adequate tool to build a data-base. Each of the indicators were my dependent variables; the

[11] A copy of the survey in English is included in appendix 2.

variables that I was trying to measure. The individual children, their gender, and their *bustee* were the independent variables; those things that might be causing an effect.

There are two types of statistical analysis that can be undertaken on a dataset, the first is descriptive statistics, the goal of which is to describe and summarize the characteristics of a sample. The second, inferential statistics, is to draw conclusions beyond an immediate sample (O'Leary, 2014, p. 284). As mentioned above, my small sample size did not allow me to conduct inferential statistical analysis, so I carried out a small descriptive analysis. Descriptive statistics are used to describe the basic features of a data set and are the key to summarizing variables.

One of the most basic questions that can be asked about a dataset concerns central tendency. In statistics there are three ways to measure central tendency - mean, median and mode. Mean is the mathematical average, median is the midpoint of a range and mode is the most common value (O'Leary, 2014, p. 281-2). I carried out a central tendency analysis for each of my dependent variables and then segmented the data based on each of the independent variables to determine the difference between these. The results from my quantitative data analysis will be described in detail in chapter six, so I will not go into further detail here.

4.3.5. Participant selection and access

As discussed in the opening chapter of this thesis, access to my research participants was directly through World Vision Bangladesh, accessible through my existing relationship with the organisation as an employee of World Vision New Zealand. Participants were selected based on "convenience sampling" (Overton and Van Dierman, 2014, p. 44), whereby the children and their families had a relationship with World Vision and were known to the organisation. For the creative art and storytelling workshop, I asked World Vision to arrange for sixteen children, with an equal gender split, between the ages of 10-13, from four different *bustees*, to participate, but only fourteen children were available. This number was chosen because I wanted an even split of males and females and I determined that sixteen children would provide an ample amount of data to process

for the in-depth, contextual understandings of power and empowerment that my first research objective required.

The children and their parents were required to give informed consent to World Vision and ongoing opportunities for assent and dissent (which some children took up) were available throughout the workshop. Most of the activities the children decided to participate in, but in the group discussion of how a child could move from having 'no power', to 'having power', several children opted out of participating. This will be discussed in more detail in section 4.4. The same process was used for the survey. I asked World Vision to arrange for twenty *different* children to be involved in the survey, with an even gender split and from the same four *bustee*s. Unfortunately, due to availability, the gender split was eight male/twelve female and four of the children that participated in the survey were also present at the workshop.

Table 1: Sample Breakdown

Creative art and storytelling workshop			Survey		
Bustee	Male	Female	*Bustee*	Male	Female
Bakal	2	2	Bakal	2	3
Kakua	2	2	Kakua	2	3
Masaba	2	2	Masaba	2	3
Ajaila	1	1	Ajaila	2	3
Total *n = 14*	7	7	Total *n = 20*	8	12

4.4. ETHICS, REFLEXIVITY AND LIMITATIONS

This project went in front of the Massey University Human Ethics Committee (MUHEC) and was granted ethics approval on 28/07/2017.[12] Because the committee was satisfied that I had

[12] Ethics application number 4000017412 was approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee on 28/07/2017.

considered and mitigated any outstanding ethical issues, in this section, rather than simply relaying procedural ethics in reference to my project, I am interested in discussing some of the issues that came up while conducting fieldwork. In chapter six, I reflect on the challenges of the construction of indicators and use of a survey so here I wish to reflect on some of the challenges and limitations to my research that came up during the workshop.

The first point I wish to make is to do with the role of research assistants and translations in cross-cultural settings where the researcher (in this case, me) does not speak the local language. Each day of the workshop I had a different research assistant from World Vision and on the second and third days of the workshop I was not made aware of who would be my assistant until after the children had arrived for the day. This meant that what were meant to be detailed briefs to the assistant on the objectives of each session were rushed through or skipped entirely. It meant that myself and the research assistants and my participants and the research assistants were not able to build a strong rapport.

There were also two volunteers from the local university who were present on each day to help with the running of the workshop and although their English language ability was not as good as the World Vision staff, they understood what I was doing, built strong relationships with the children and were interested in the project. In hindsight, it would have been better to have them as the research assistants and translators for the course of the workshop. Because we had built a rapport and got to know each other, I am confident I could have worked through language issues, because they understood the objectives and rationale of the research. This is an important reflection, as it is not just about the technical ability of a research assistant that is important, but also the relationship that you build together that influences the research process. Other researchers have pointed to the fundamental importance of establishing and building a relationship with your research assistant and spending time together before the research begins (McLennan, Storey and Leslie, 2014, p. 154).

A second issue with translation was that sometimes it wasn't clear if the research assistant was translating *verbatim* what the children were discussing, or whether they were adding their own

descriptions. For example, in one child's (Nasrin) picture, which will be discussed in the following chapter, she had drawn a girl with 'no power', a pond and another person standing next to the pond. In the first description, the research assistant told me that the other person was a man who sometimes watched the girl bathe. The second and third assistants, however, told me that it was her brother. It was unclear here whether Nasrin changed her story, or whether the first assistant told me something that he perhaps thought I wanted to hear. But whether it was her brother or a man that watches her bathe could tell very different stories about what it means to have 'no power'. Other researchers have shown that it is important to be aware of interpreters filtering interviews (Watson, 2004, p. 61) or omitting or changing elements of the interview because they believe it is not relevant (Devereux and Hoddinott, 1992, p. 25) and it is possible that my research was no different.

A positive unintended consequence of having a different person translating each day however was that it allowed for a corroboration of narratives and stories between the different assistants. When the different assistants described the same phenomenon in the same pictures, it corroborated the statements; when three or even two people are translating the same thing, without having heard the other translations, this told me that those stories were an accurate reflection of what was being told to me by the children. In the transcription, I was then able to compare and contrast the different stories told to me, between different assistants, and make notes of those that were similar and those that differed. My intention was to discard any narrative that was different across all three research assistants, but to include any that was consistent across two, assuming that two accounts corroborated what the child said. I did not end up having any narratives that were different across all three assistants, however, so did not need to discard any text based on these criteria.

Another issue that came up was in a conversation at lunchtime that I had with my two research assistants on the second day of the workshop. Before lunch we had a group discussion where my participants were explaining how a child could move from having 'no power', to 'having power'. Two points came up in this discussion which are important to consider here. The first was that my

research assistants explained that the children were shy and although they told them many times that there “is no right or wrong answer” the children were seeking affirmation and approval for what they said. I thought about this and realised that based on my own professional work with children, that whenever children, especially those that are noticeably shy, share in front of a group, I believe that it is important to give them encouragement and praise and I had been doing this throughout the workshop. I realised that perhaps this encouragement led the children to believe that what they had said was ‘correct’ or ‘right’, which could have encouraged other children to share similar stories as they were seeking approval.

Upon reflecting on this, I decided to continue as I had begun, acknowledging that this was part of the interpretivist and constructivist foundations of the workshop. Because I had already been encouraging my participants, I thought it would have been confusing and potentially even harmful to stop this as they may have begun to think that what they were saying was incorrect. This has shown me that it is important for a researcher to think about the role of encouragement and praise before conducting qualitative research with children. Is the role of the researcher to be an objective, neutral outsider? Or to be involved in a way that allows them to build rapport with and to get to know their participants? Rather than there being a right or wrong answer, individual researchers need to answer these questions for themselves, realising that there are different ‘prices to pay’ for different results and make one’s assumptions clear.

A second point that was discussed in this conversation was that the children “didn’t get it” when we were asking them how a child could move from having ‘no power’ to ‘having power’. However, upon reflection, this activity was based on the premise of empowerment existing as ‘states’ and ‘processes’ which I gained from a reading of the empowerment literature discussed in chapter two. But the children did not as clearly distinguish between ‘states’ and ‘processes’, so rather than “not getting it”, they were simply reiterating what they had already told me. For example, if having ‘no power’ meant that you weren’t going to school and ‘having power’ meant that you were going to school, then it makes sense that to move from one ‘state’ to the other, you have to “establish

schools". Or if having 'no power' meant that you were an orphan and 'having power' meant that "everyone is loving you" then, of course, "if he has parents, he will have power".

This affirms the points made by Punch (2002) that it is important in qualitative research with children not to impose your own views and allow children to express themselves freely, while abandoning the commonly held assumption that adult knowledge is more rational and superior to children's (Punch, 2002, p. 325). Furthermore, it also showed that although I had intended for my research design to be inductive, I had been influenced and informed by existing theory, showing an element of deductive logic in the workshop design. This was an important learning for me and I realised their "not getting it" had much more to do with the research design than it did with their competence or capacity for understanding. After this conversation with my research assistants I wanted to ensure that my participants were still enjoying themselves, so I asked them what they wanted to do for the remainder of the day. They wanted to play games, so we spent the final one and half hours of the day playing games that the children led. This was a lot of fun!

4.5. CONCLUSION

This chapter has taken seriously the different epistemological and ontological foundations of different research traditions and has considered how both of these underpin and direct my research methods. I chose to use a mixed methods approach to research, not because mixed methods are an answer to all research problems, but because the nature of my two research objectives required me to draw on both qualitative and quantitative research paradigms in order to answer two, different, but related, research objectives. These different research paradigms had a direct impact on the research methods that I employed and subsequently on my findings. Philosophy and theory are therefore not abstract, purely academic considerations, but are intertwined with and underpin practice. This does not make mixed methods an answer to all research problems and they need to be carefully considered before being employed. The question researchers need to ask is what research paradigm helps me to answer my specific research question? Answering this question allows one to create a research design that is fit for purpose, not one that blindly follows a particular research paradigm or tradition.

This chapter has highlighted the research design that I created at a theoretical, practical and ethical level in order to meet my research aim and both of my research objectives. I considered the role of epistemology and ontology, how that required me to place children centrally in the research design, how those different philosophical foundations directed the choice of my research methods, and how those two different traditions required both qualitative and quantitative research methods and analytical strategies. Finally, I discussed the challenges and limitations of research that employs an interpretivist and constructivist ontology and epistemology – in specific references to the role of research assistants and in how adult and child 'knowledge' can come into conflict. These discussions have important implications as they show how is it possible to explore how children in Bangladesh *understand* power and empowerment and to create indicators to *measure* power and empowerment based on the children's understanding. Mixing methods allows a researcher to utilise the in-depth, deep, contextual knowledge that is uncovered using qualitative research methods and to use this foundation of knowledge to measure those things that are intended to be meaningful to a population to be affected by 'development.' This cautions against blindly using mixed methods, or any other research paradigm without careful consideration of the research problem and the epistemological considerations, ontological concerns and research strategies that it requires.

It is at this point in the thesis where I turn from highlighting the work of others and my own research design and begin to present my findings. So far, I have given a rationale for my research by showing how children's voices have been overlooked in development studies and discussed the evolution of power and empowerment and participation and pedagogy in relation to childhood studies. Drawing on the work of Hayward (2000), Blau (1977), Young (2006) and Bourdieu (1980) I have presented a concept of power as boundaries which demarcate fields of action. I discussed five boundaries of power that my research participants highlighted in Dhaka's *bustees;* personal relationships with family and friends, material and financial resources, the natural environment, education and children's work. In this chapter, I have brought together the methodological considerations of this research, operationalizing theory and knowledge into a working research design. All of this has been to show how other work, and my own research design contribute to

meeting my two research objectives, by seeking to both *understand* and *measure.* I now turn to my research findings and will spend the remaining pages discussing how my research participants understood power and empowerment, the indicators that were constructed based on this, the survey that was carried out and the descriptive statistical analysis I undertook on that dataset. The next two chapters will be dedicated to a different research objective respectively and in the conclusion, I will discuss what my research means for development studies theory and practice.

5. CHILDREN'S UNDERSTANDING OF POWER IN DHAKA'S *BUSTEES*

Outside the window a game of cricket was being played on a brown, dry pitch and Rakib and Sojun were standing beside me, pointing excitedly to the game and asking, "Harley, do you like cricket?". My two research assistants were also watching the game out the window and told me that just down the road was the large Mirpur cricket stadium where the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) teams played several times a week. The juxtaposition of the BPL international player contracts in the hundreds of thousands of dollars (including New Zealand's own Brendan McCullum) and the many *bustees* that are in the immediate area of the stadium, four of which were home to my research participants, was not lost on me as I considered what I had learnt about how power operates in children's lives. It was day two of the workshop and all 14 participants had just finished telling me their stories about the children they had drawn who 'had power'. As morning tea finished, I invited the children to form a circle with their chairs and we sat down, ready for the children to share both of their pictures, their post-it notes and to tell us how a child could move from having 'no power' to 'having power'. Mim, one of my research participants stood up and in a confident and elaborate account told the group the ways in which power operated in children's lives. She explained:

> Basically, the kid has no power in the first picture. The kid is a waste-picker and as the kid has no money, that is why the school committee doesn't want him to be in the school… also, the parents don't love that kid because he's not at school. After that the kid thought 'I have to be something, and I have to prove to all of them that I can do it'. After that he started going to school and after finishing school he has a good job and he can afford to provide school fees. His parents love him and his life has become a changed life and also the society respects him and this is how he changed his life.

This account of the way in which power operates is illustrative of the ways the children in this study conceptualized and understood power; as multiple, intersecting boundaries which demarcate

fields of action and constrain agency. In the case of Mim's first description, agency was much more constrained than in the second, but both situations were constrained by boundaries of power. Education, children's work and personal relationships determine whether or not one is 'powerful'. It is also illustrative of the ways my participants did *not* conceptualize and understand power, ways in which the early literature on empowerment highlighted in chapter two told me they would; as the systematic disempowerment of one group, by another group and that in order to overcome this, the group needed to gain greater decision-making power in their relationships and collectively organise.

As described in chapter three, in this thesis I refer to boundaries of power as conceptually structured spaces that demarcate fields of action and render possible and impossible particular types of social possibility and imagination. To speak of boundaries is to therefore claim that agency is always constrained and that when it operates, it operates within socially constrained possibility. In my study, the five boundaries of power that were identified were: personal relationships with family and friends; access to material and financial resources; the natural environment; education and children's work.

This chapter is presented in two sections. In the first, I draw on empirical evidence from the workshop to discuss five boundaries of power highlighted to me by my research participants. In the second, I discuss two significant themes in the data; the intersecting nature of power's boundaries, the relationship between social identity and stigma and draw theoretical links between theories of power, empowerment and my own findings. I close this chapter by drawing a conceptual bridge between what I learnt in the workshop and what I learnt through the construction of indicators, the focus of the next chapter.

5.1. BOUNDARIES OF POWER

As discussed in chapter four, I employed three strategies to try and determine the relative importance of the various themes (now boundaries) of power; ranking based on initial categories presented in the workshop; counting the number of children who spoke about each theme and a qualitative analysis that looked at the depth in which each theme was spoken about. Each strategy

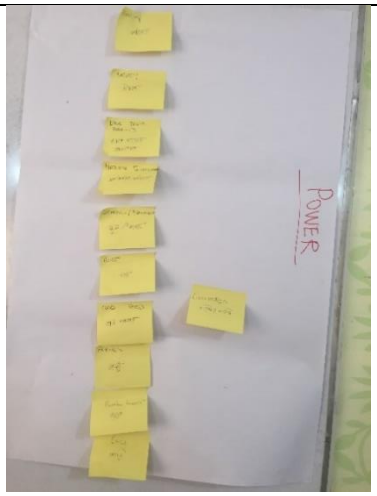
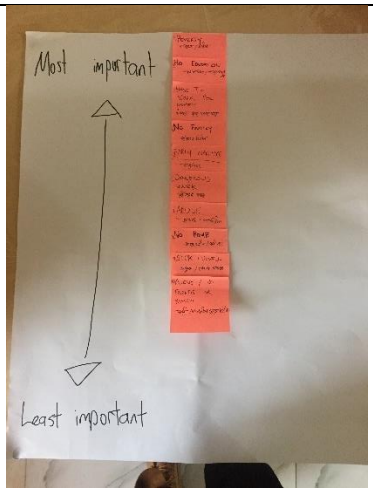
offers somewhat conflicting results in terms of a hierarchy of importance, but each confirmed the intrinsic importance of the five boundaries of power in and of themselves. For example, access to material and financial resources could be claimed to be the most important boundary; it was spoken about by thirteen out of fourteen participants, was ranked as the second most important category for 'having power', the most important for 'not having power' and was spoken about in some depth as will be seen below. However, personal relationships with family and friends was spoken about in the most depth and with the most emotion, was referenced by all of my participants and was ranked as the most important for 'having power'. I wish to make the point that to claim a hierarchy of importance would be to privilege one form of analysis over another and instead, I wish to claim that each boundary of power is important in its own right.

In Table 2 and 3 below I present the percentage of participants that spoke about each category and the two ranking exercises that my participants completed in the workshop. In the workshop, the original aspects of power that I asked my participants to rank were based on listening to their stories, making jottings and cross-checking my intuitions with them. When I began to do detailed data analysis after the workshop, the types of power in the ranking exercise were able to be integrated together, as they were conceptually similar and together defined the boundaries of power, or they were not spoken about at any other time so were not included e.g. there were no references to early marriage in any of my participant's stories.

Table 2. Number of participants that spoke about each boundary of power

Boundary of Power	Number of participants that spoke about each boundary of power (out of 14)
Personal relationships with family and friends	14
Access to financial and material resources	13
Education	13
The natural environment	9
Children's work	7

Table 3. Ranking results on categories of power from most (1) to least (11) important

	To 'have power'	To 'have no power'
1.	Family	Poverty
2.	Money	No education
3.	Love from parents	Working
4.	Natural environment	No family
5.	School	Early marriage
6.	A home	Dangerous work
7.	Good food	Abuse
8.	Friends	No home
9.	Bank account	Sickness
10.	A car	Being alone
11.	Clean water	
		

5.1.1. Personal relationships with family and friends

The most common idea that the children spoke about in the workshop were references to parents, wider family networks and friends. When Asha (image 1) was talking about the picture she had drawn of a girl who had no power, she claimed, "She's an orphan child. She has no mother or father and has to beg on the street." Sasha (image 2) said, "She sleeps alone. Has no relatives. No one. She has no house and always lives outside". Sujon (image 3) told me about the boy he

had drawn, “He has no parents. He is helpless because he has no parents and no relatives can help.” He later went on to add that “When he was five years old, his parents passed away. Nobody can help after that.” Rakib (image 4) told me that, “The child is an orphan child that lost his mother and father”. The child that Ripa (image 5) had drawn also had no parents. She explained, “Her parents left her. That is why she lives on the street… Her father died and her mother left both of the kids and went to marry another person”. It was clear from these descriptions that my participants understood that without parents, children had ‘no power’.

My research participants also referenced the children in their pictures being stigmatized, isolated and alone as important dimensions of having ‘no power’. Nasrin (image 6), when speaking about the girl in her picture made it very clear that although the girl’s parents had died, she had an aunty and uncle, but that they didn’t like the girl. She told me “her uncle and aunty don’t like her because she always takes a bath in the dirty water”. Ripa (image 5) also spoke about the girl in her picture not being liked. She said, “she wants to play, but no one accompanies her to play. No one likes her.” Mina (image 7) told me about the girl in her picture “nobody likes her, nobody loves her, because she has nothing”. Maruf (image 8) too, told me that the girl he had drawn “has no power because nobody likes her”. In these descriptions, the children that had been drawn not only didn’t have parents, but were ostracised and isolated from their wider communities and were unable to form friendships.

This was elaborated on by some of the children whereby powerlessness was linked to having to ask others for help. Sasha (image 2) when discussing how a child could move from powerlessness to having power told the room that “she called her friend and requested… ‘can I get some help from you?’ and the friend said ‘no, I cannot provide you with support, my mother will be angry’”. Nasrin (image 6) explained that, “those who do not have power… sometimes they ask help from others”. It was clear that orphan children were isolated from the community and had no support

Image 1. Asha - 'no power'

Image 2. Sasha - 'no power'

Image 3. Sujon - 'no power'

Image 4. Rakib – 'no power'

Image 5. Ripa – 'no power'

Image 6. Nasrin – 'no power'

structures around them. The foundational principle of these explanations of powerlessness was an intense isolation whereby all personal relationships in the subject's lives had broken down.

These references to personal relationships are suggestive of a social construction of childhood that renders family relationships as a key part of people's personhood and identity. As discussed in chapter three, the dominant way in which children's entitlements and responsibilities are constructed in Bangladesh is through the concept of guardianship. The guardian, most often the father, represents and bears responsibility for the family within the *somaj.* Children belong to the *somaj* only as sons and daughters, therefore, when they fall outside of those identities, they can no longer belong to the *somaj* (White, 2002, p. 512; Blanchett, 1999, p. 28). This boundary of power does not just operate to enable and constrain the action of Bangladeshi children, but for mothers and fathers who also have their specific family roles defined by cultural norms (Munro et al., 2015, p. 44; Ball and Wahedi, 2010, p. 367; Blanchett, 1999, p. 49; White, 2007, p 513; Chowdhury, 1995). In Bangladesh, the poor are the most dependent upon social connections with others for access to resources and the extent to which claims of charity can be made and feelings of obligation experienced, are based according to kinship links and whether or not one is a community 'insider' (Gardner, 2012, p. 48).

When my participants were tasked with drawing a child that had power, all but one referenced the importance of being loved and receiving attention from their families. Shumi (image 9) told me, "She is the only child of her parents and her parents love her". Mina (image 10) too told me that "She is the only child of her parents, so everyone loves her". Rakib (image 11) claimed that the boy in his picture "has a house and his parents love him and he has friends… previously he was picking waste, so everyone used to hate him, but now, everyone loves him". Mim (image 12) said that "The kid has a good family… and she has friends. That is why everyone loves her." Nasrin (image 13) talks about the importance of receiving attention; "In the previous picture the child did not get any attention from their parents, but in this picture, she is getting attention from her parents".

As discussed above, personal relationships form the very identity of people in Bangladesh. In the case of family, it prescribes both a shared identity between family members, but it also prescribes

Image 7. Mina - 'no power'

Image 8. Maruf - 'no power'

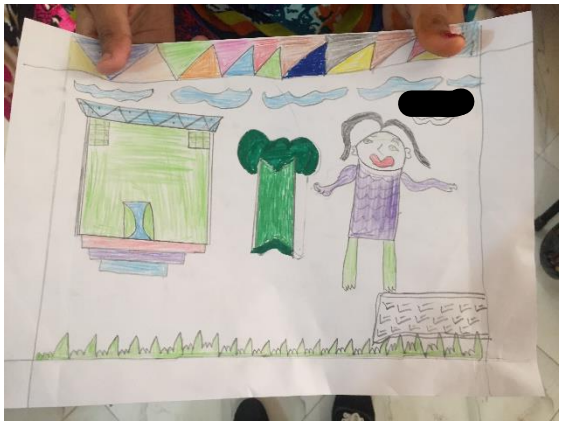


Image 9. Shumi - 'power'

Image 10. Mina – 'power'

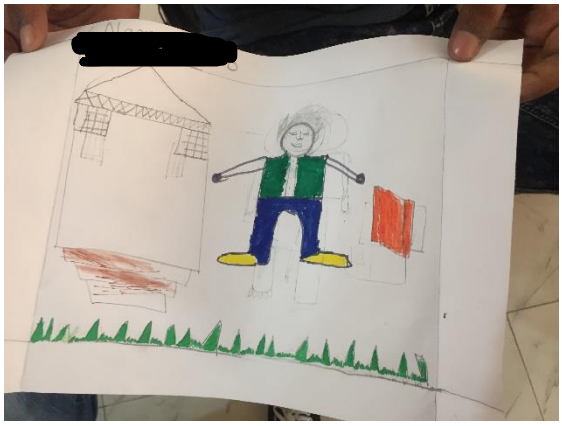


Image 11. Rakib – 'power'

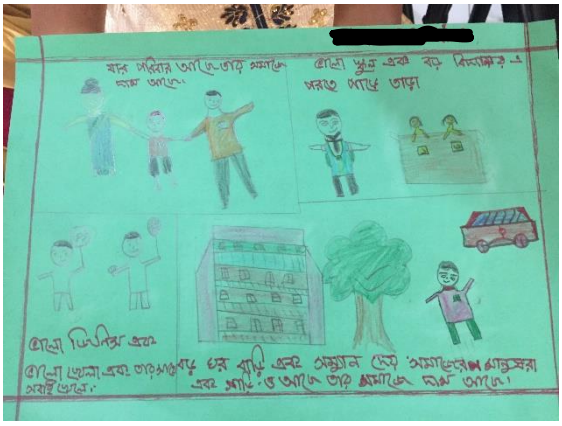


Image 12. Mim – 'power'

specific roles and responsibilities within these relationship(s); the father represents the family in the *somaj,* the mother is a loving and caring figure who devotes herself to her children, and children's identities are based on their parents' (Munro et al., 2015, p. 44; Ball and Wahedi, 2010, p. 367; Blanchett, 1999, p. 52; White, 2002, p. 513). Other research in Bangladesh, spoken about in chapter three, shows how people are essentially constituted through interpersonal, intergenerational and intergroup relationships and these relationships form the core of identity in Bangladesh (Camfield, et al., 2009, p. 82). Strong family ties are the foundation of community life and family allegiance and mutual interdependence are more important than individual needs and goals (Ball and Wahedi, 2010, p. 367; Chowdhury, 1995).

These findings are therefore suggestive of a boundary of power that demarcates fields of action for children in urban Bangladesh; cultural norms and values which form the social construction of families and childhood. Being socialized into these cultural norms and values renders certain types of social possibility and imagination knowable and possible. Understanding these predetermined social identities helps to explain why my participants saw orphaned children being stigmatized and isolated from their communities. Whether it is in Sujon's case, whereby the child's parents had died, or in Maruf's case, where the parents had kicked the child out of the house, without the children having a guardian that represents them in the community and the complete breakdown of personal relationships, they are ostracised by wider society and are emphatically placed outside of the *somaj.*

Image 13. Nasrin – 'power'

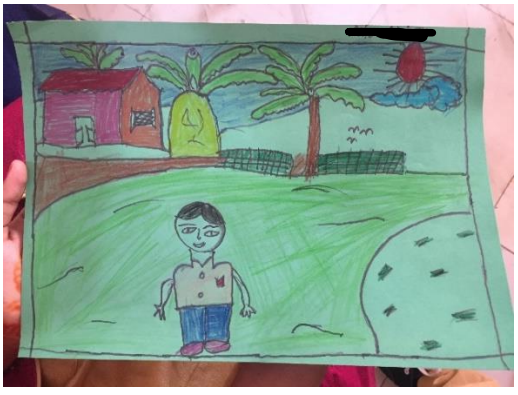


Image 14. Asha – 'power'

5.1.2. Access to material and financial resources

Another boundary of power that became clear through the course of the workshop and subsequent analysis was the importance of access to material and financial resources. Raj (image 15), in his picture of a child with no power, very clearly juxtaposed what it meant to have power and to not. He drew a picture of two boys, one next to a house, with a big tree holding an umbrella in the rain. Off to the side was another boy, standing alone. Pointing to the first child he told me that he "has his own house and own tree", pointing to the other child he went on to say that, "this other child has nothing. No house, no tree". Referring again to the two different boys, he told me, "In the rain time, he has an umbrella…but [the other boy] he has no umbrella." When I asked Raj why the boy who had no power had nothing, he simply replied, "He is very poor".

In the inverse, the children saw powerful children having access to money. Speaking about the child with power that Raj (image 16) had drawn he told me that he "has everything. Parents, mother, father, trees, car, house, everything." When I asked him how he has these things, Raj responded "They have money… they have lots of money in the bank". Raj's friend, Ratan (image 17; image 18), said the same thing. Speaking about the difference between the boy he had drawn that had no power and the boy he had drawn that had power, he told me that (pointing to the child that had no power), "He has no ability to purchase an umbrella, or anything good." Pointing back to the child that 'had power' he went on, "But he has everything. He has the ability to purchase an umbrella. He can purchase what he wants". An important aspect of the way power operated, then, was the ability to purchase desirable material objects.

In my participants stories, financial resources were also conceived of as instrumentally useful for other aspects of power that were important to the children. Some of the male participants, when speaking about the children they had drawn that had power, spoke excitedly about objects that appeared to signal signs of status and prosperity. Sujon (image 19) drew a picture of a boy and a car next to him. Explaining his picture to the group he exclaimed; "These are his friends! And a car. He has his own car!". I asked if it was his parent's car and he told me, "No, it's his own car", to which everyone laughed and nodded excitedly. Raj (image 16) also drew a picture of a car. He told

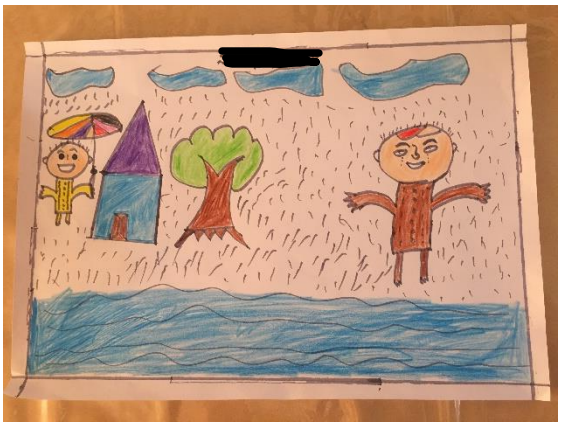


Image 15. Raj - 'no power'

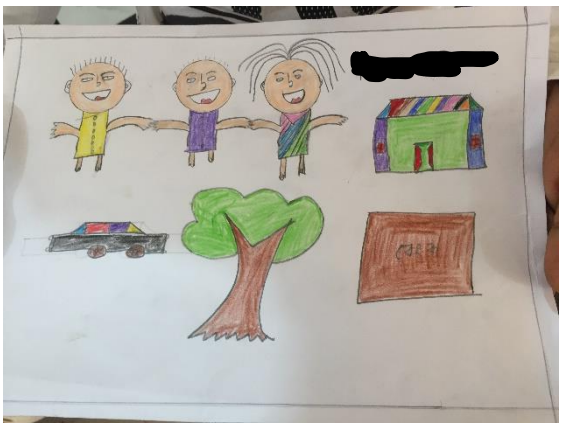


Image 16. Raj - 'power'

Image 17. Ratan - 'no power'

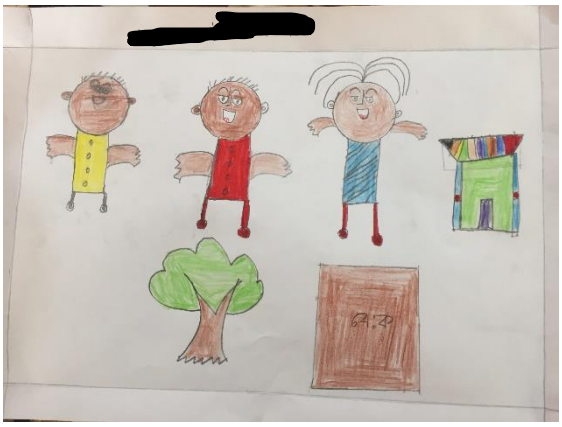


Image 18. Ratan – 'power'

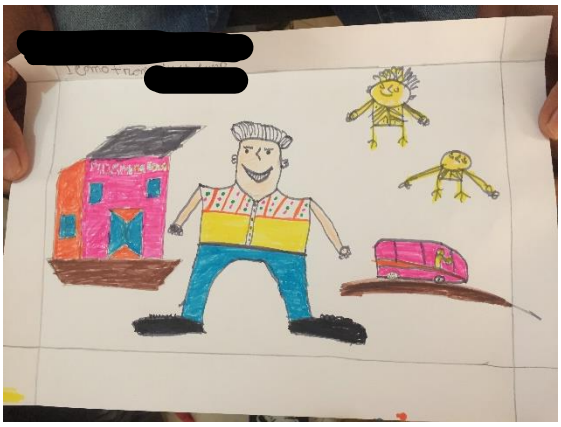


Image 19. Sujon– 'power'

Image 20. Maruf – 'power'

me “The kid has parents and a house, their own car and a bank account, they have trees and also a car. They have a car!”. During the ranking activity some of the male participants reminded me that I had forgotten a car as an aspect of power that was important to rank, showing that this was an important reflection to them in what it meant to ‘have power’.

The female participants were also interested in material objects, although spoke about different types of objects. Mim (image 12) told me that the girl in her picture “has good toys, yes, she has good toys to play with” and Mina (image 10) claimed that “she has lots of wealth…if she wants to buy toys or something else, then she can”. Mina spoke about the link between having financial resources and social standing. She told me that the girl in her picture “has lots of wealth and friends so she can do everything”. It was clear from these descriptions that the belongings that the different children had in their pictures were important dimensions of ‘having power’. It also appeared that not only were these objects valuable in and of themselves, but that they also acted as a form of cultural capital; as a means for children and their families to acquire social standing and status.

Poverty is a defining characteristic of life for many in Bangladesh and helps explain why the participants in this study saw financial resources as important in their understanding of power. Per-capita, Bangladesh is one of the poorest countries in the world; the U.S. Intelligence Agency (CIA) (2018) places Bangladesh as 177th in the world in per-capita GDP and the World Bank (2017a) estimates that 14.8 percent of the population live below the poverty line defined as $1.90 USD (purchasing power parity adjusted) per day. In Dhaka itself, despite an increase in infrastructure development, manufacturing and overseas investment, the urban income Gini co-efficient has increased dramatically in the past three decades and is a staggeringly high 0.497 (International Monetary Fund, 2013, p. 6-7). This inequality is visually represented by over thirty percent of Dhaka’s population that, like my participants, live in Dhaka’s *bustees* (Banks et al., 2011, p. 476).

The majority of *bustee* dwellers do not have access to the formal wage economy and instead are involved in low-paid jobs in the informal sector; rickshaw pulling, street selling, petty trading and

day labouring (Hossain, 2010, p. 33; Van Schendel, 2009, loc. 4164). Furthermore, the urban poor have been marginalised in the domestic poverty reduction agenda, being characterised as criminals, living in squalor and an emphasis has been placed on their removal, rather than poverty reduction (Banks et al., 2011, p. 491). Local and central government services are rarely delivered to the urban poor as legally, the majority are illegally residing, meaning that they are not entitled to welfare and social services (Banks, et al., 2011, p. 493; Cameron, 2017, p. 585).

These historical and social processes help explain why access to financial resources were a critical concern for my research participants, not only for purchasing desirable goods, but also because of the status and security this brings in a modernising and increasingly global city, where signs of wealth, such as the Mirpur cricket stadium and BPL teams, are visually juxtaposed side-by-side with extreme poverty, in the *bustees* that my research participants live.

5.1.3. The natural environment

A further boundary of power was spoken about by many of the children when they were narrating their pictures of children that 'had power' and was spoken about as references to "the environment". Nasrin (image 6 and 13) explained in her pictures, "that picture was environmentally polluted, that was why that picture [child] had less power, but this picture [child] has power…the environment is not polluted because there are trees and there are rivers". In Sasha's (image 21) picture she drew a picture of a girl holding her sister's hand and told me that "they have a house, they have trees and beside the house there is a river". She added that "This picture has power because they have everything. She has parents and good surroundings and a natural environment". Tanvir (image 22) explained that in his picture they have "an agricultural field and they have a river beside their house. They usually catch fish there. And they also have trees.

In a discussion after the ranking activity where the children had placed the natural environment as the fourth most important aspect of 'having power' (Table 5.1), my participants spoke about the natural environment as a source of oxygen and that it is because of the natural environment that we are alive. They also saw the natural environment as being intrinsically valuable and important to steward.

Image 21. Sasha – 'power'

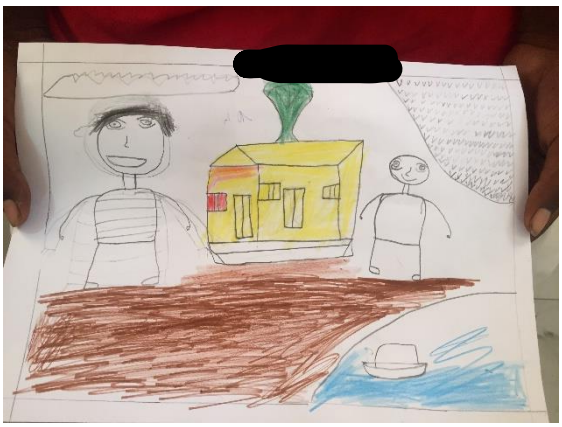


Image 22. Tanvir – 'power'

I further asked them what parts of the environment were important, and after a discussion, my research assistant summarised their answers by saying "They like trees, birds, and they love to play in the field… they don't like waste". These references to the natural environment being an important aspect of 'having power' were surprising because they hadn't been mentioned as explicitly, or commonly, when the children were discussing powerlessness. However, when looking at these responses in relation to the literature discussed in chapter three, they begin to make more sense.

Internal migration and urbanization have put a massive strain on infrastructure and services in Dhaka. Bangladesh is one of the most densely populated countries on the planet and there are approximately 300,000 new, mostly poor, rural people migrating to Dhaka every year (Van Schendel, 2009, loc. 4084). The huge and largely unplanned expansion of Dhaka has led to traffic jams, pollution, power cuts, overstretched services and the destruction of green spaces, as they are transformed into impermeable surfaces for commercial development (Byomkesh et al., 2012, p. 45). Dhaka is known for having amongst the lowest, per-capita numbers of public spaces in the world and in *bustee* communities, access to these spaces is often non-existent (Hossain, 2010, p. 18; Lanoszka, 2018). Waste especially is a huge problem, with local government lacking the resources and political will to remove waste from *bustees*, because as mentioned earlier, most *bustee* dwellers are residing in areas illegally (Rouse and Ali, 2001; Banks et al., 2011, p. 493). Yet despite these environmental issues, *bustee* dwellers still try to 'green' their *bustees*; in Korail

bustee near the Mirpur *bustees* in which my participants lived, research has shown people planting trees for food supply, shade and social spaces (Birtchnell et al, 2018).

Therefore, although the natural environment and green spaces are intrinsically valuable to both my participants and other *bustee* dwellers in Dhaka (Birtchnell et al., 2018, p. 8), mass urbanisation and over strained services constrain the ability of *bustee* communities in Dhaka to access green spaces in response to the urbanization happening around them (Byomkesh et al., 2012, p. 3). This boundary of power, the natural environment, is constructed from socio-historical processes that although valued by my participants, severely constrains *bustee* residents' ability to access green spaces.

5.1.4. Education

In both the conceptualizations of power and powerlessness my participants spoke about the value of attending school. This boundary was closely linked to both access to material and financial resources and to personal relationships. In Rahat's (image 23) picture of a child without power he said that "the school asked for tuition fees, but he didn't have any money to cover the tuition fee." Rakib (image 4) said "He has no money to go to school". The girl Mina (image 7) had drawn, also was not going to school. When I asked why, she replied, "She has no money to go to school, to pay the tuition fee". Shumi (image 24) explained that "once upon a time, due to financial problems, her father stopped her school, so she isn't going to school". Maruf (image 8; image 20) talked about the difference between his two pictures "In the previous picture they had two kids and they couldn't afford to send them to school. In this picture they have one child, so they are sending her to school". From these descriptions it was obvious that the children understood that tuition fees were a financial barrier for children attending school, yet they conceptualized education and attending school as an important dimension of 'having power'.

Mim (image 25) spoke about the role of school administrators in denying working children access to school. In an elaborate and detailed explanation of her picture of a child without power she showed a boy who was working as a waste-picker that tried to enrol in school. She went on to

Image 23. Rahat - 'no power'

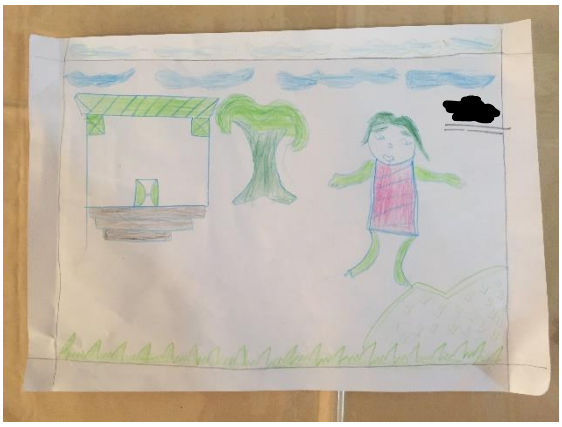


Image 24. Shumi - 'no power'

Image 25. Mim - 'no power'

Image 26. Rahat – 'power'

Image 27. Ripa – 'power'

explain; “This is a school and this is the admission desk… but the admission department doesn’t allow him to come here as a student because he is a waste-picker”. In a later description, when I asked why the school administrator wouldn’t let the child enrol in the school she told me that, “The kid is a waste-picker and as the kid has no money, that is why the school committee doesn’t want them to be in the school as they have no money”. Sojun (image 3), also spoke about the boy in his picture being denied access to school. He told me that “He wants to go to school, but the teacher never admits him because he is a waste-picker”. It is not entirely clear in these narratives whether school administrators denied access to working children because they are waste-pickers (i.e. discrimination), or because they were unable to pay for tuition fees (i.e. financial exclusion), or whether my participants drew clear distinctions between the reasons why children were denied access to school. Yet what is clear from these stories is that working children, especially waste-pickers, are marginalized and stigmatized in society (as will be discussed in the next section) and that working children face barriers to attending school.

Getting a good education was also correlated with being loved and receiving attention from their families. Mina (image 7) told me that “She didn’t get an opportunity to go to school. She doesn’t study. She is an orphan child so no one honours her and no one loves her”. Rahat (image 26) told me “His parents didn’t send him to school in the previous picture. Now the parents love him, because he goes to school”. Mim (image 12) explained that “In the previous picture, the child was a waste-picker, that is why everyone hates that child. Now she goes to a good school, that is why everyone respects her”. Ripa (image 27) tells a similar story, “In her previous picture, she didn’t go to school, that is why her parents didn’t love that kid… Currently she is going to school, that is why her parents love her”.

I wish to make the point that although in some of these descriptions, it could be argued there is a causal dynamic between being loved and attending school, it would be a stretch to make this claim definitively based on my data. Throughout the workshop I tried to understand whether a child attended school because they were loved or if they were loved because they attended school, but I received conflicting responses to my questions. What can be drawn from my data is that education

as a boundary of power interacts closely with access to material and financial resources and personal relationships with family and friends, sometimes in ways that are hard to separate. The intersecting nature of the boundaries of power will be discussed further later in the chapter.

School was also valued instrumentally for its perceived ability to provide future job opportunities. Mim (image 12; image 25) told me about her two pictures that "she started going to school and after finishing school she has a good job and she can afford to provide school fees, her parents love her and her life has become a changed life and also the society respects her". Maruf (image 20) told me that "school is the most important factor for a child because there is nothing that children can learn or earn without going to school". When asked why school was important in a group discussion after the ranking exercise, my research assistant summarised the children's discussion by telling me that school "gives them good lessons, so they can study there, and they can get a good job". In the above description therefore, education was linked to receiving love and attention from their families, gaining respect in their communities, and gaining access to good jobs in the future.

These findings make sense when understood in relation to the wider context of educational provision in *bustee* communities in Dhaka. As discussed in chapter three, although there has been a rapid expansion of primary education in Bangladesh in the last three decades (with a bewildering thirteen different types of primary school), the provision has not been consistent across the population and there remains significant pockets of exclusion, one of these being in urban *bustee* communities (Cameron, 2010). In a recent study in *bustees* close to those where my participants lived, it was found that thirty one percent of children from five to seventeen years old were out of school, twenty one percent had never attended school and that twenty percent of primary school aged children were out of school (Human Development Research Centre, 2015, p. iv-v). In the same study, fifty four percent of parents of children that were not at school, cited cost as the primary reason for not sending their children to school (Human Development Research Centre, 2015, p. v). Furthermore, in some popular government schools in Dhaka that have good reputations, in densely populated locations, refusal to admit certain children in the school is a well-

known and common occurrence and is a frequently cited reason for children having never enrolled in school (Cameron, 2010, p. 6). This inadequate provision of education in *bustee* communities helps to explain why all but one of my participants referenced the importance of education – many children their age in Dhaka's *bustees* are out of school.

Despite the inadequate provision and lack of access to education for children living in Dhaka's *bustees*, my research participants value education and see it is fundamental to secure good job opportunities and for children to fulfil their respective roles in the *somaj* and in a rapidly changing economy. Education exists as a boundary of power therefore that provides different 'channels' of action for children, based on their relative position within the boundary.

5.1.5. Children's work

The final boundary of power related to work and in particular, working children. This was referred to as a consequence of not having access to financial resources and was correlated, with an unclear causal link, with not receiving love and attention from their families.

An explicit link was drawn by my participants between not having access to financial resources and children having to work. Maruf (image 8), speaking about the boy he had drawn, told me that he "lived in this house with his parents, but he has been thrown out because they are poor. They depend on him [to work] to give his family financial support". Sujon (image 3) said "He is a waste-picker [for the] City Corporation and picks waste and throws it in the dustbin. What he earns will support his mother and family as his mother is ill". For Rahat (image 23), the child he had drawn was "sometimes working as a child labourer, and he is cutting paddy, harvesting, and he has no ability to go to school". Children working, especially as waste-pickers, led to social stigma. As Ripa (image 5) told me when I asked her why waste-picking meant the child in her picture didn't have any power, she responded by telling me; "Nobody likes them… Nobody is interested to play with them because they have nothing. They have no money… or dress well, so nobody likes them". Rakib (image 4) told me that "the previous picture was a boy who was a waste-picker, and everyone used to hate that boy and the parents didn't love that kid". Mim (image 25) told me "if he wants to go to

his friends' place… his friends denied him because he is a waste-picker." One of my research assistants, after I had been talking to Mim, told me that "waste-picking is a disrespectful job generally. Nobody likes it."

These narratives show children having to work and not being able to attend school, was most often because they were poor and sometimes because their personal relationships had broken down at home. This was spoken about in chapter three, whereby putting children to work when facing situations of poverty is common occurrence in urban Bangladesh (Ruwanpura and Roncolato, 2006, p. 362). Twenty per cent of children aged five to fourteen in Dhaka are working (Cameron, 2017, p. 585). Economic issues are usually presented as primary drivers for why children work (White, 2002) and in a recent study, engagement in wage earning was the primary reason presented for why children were not at school (Human Development Research Centre, 2015, p. v). Out of all of the forms of child work in Bangladesh, street labour is seen as the most dishonourable and those children picking waste, begging, or engaging in prostitution occupy a border zone on the edge of the *somaj* (Blanchet, 1999, p. 33), explaining why they are stigmatized and looked down-upon in my research participants' descriptions. Waste-pickers are perceived as having very low status in Bangladeshi society and are strongly associated with criminals (Rouse and Ali, 2001). Children involved in street work have been found to suffer from various forms of abuse because of this stigmatization (Reza, 2017).

Work can therefore be described as a boundary of power for my research participants which demarcated fields of social possibility. Those children forced to work on the street, especially in waste-picking, are stigmatized and discriminated against through cultural norms and stereotypes. All of my participants are operating in a bounded field of possibility, one that ensures that what job they do will determine their status and their social standing within the *somaj.*

5.2. MAKING SENSE OF THE INTERCONNECTED BOUNDARIES OF POWER

As will be clear from the presentation of the five boundaries of power presented above, these were not conceived by the children as being mutually exclusive and operating in isolation from one another, but rather, the boundaries all interact with and reinforce each other, to create a dynamic

picture of how power operates in children's lives. Mim's narratives (image 9) illustrate this well. Describing the boy she had drawn that had no power, she explained that, "He has no parents, and works with the dirty rubbish, that's why no one likes him…the admission department doesn't allow him to come here as a student of the school because he is a waste-picker." Here it is clear that being an orphan, living in poverty, working as a waste-picker, being stigmatized by society and being denied access to school all interact in ways that are not simply additive, but compound the way in which power operates. This suggests that multiple and intersecting boundaries of power operate in children's lives. For example, financial and material resources were tied to social standing and status; school attendance was linked with perceptions of feeling loved; and working children were stigmatized and looked down upon, sometimes to the extent that school administrators appeared to not allow them admission into school. The boundaries of power highlighted in the presentation of my findings above therefore, are not discrete boundaries that operate in isolation from one another, nor do they simply work in additive ways, but rather these fields intersect in ways which create specific vulnerabilities and a dynamic picture of the way in which power operates.

These overlapping boundaries of power created unique situations of children feeling unloved or loved by their parents. When I interviewed Ripa individually, she was explicit in explaining the link between being loved and going to school. She told me that the girl in her picture "has her own house, and also her parents love her…In her previous picture, she didn't go to school, that is why her parents didn't love that kid". I followed this up by asking her "So what changed, so that her parents love her now?" and after pausing to think about it, she replied, "currently she is going to school, that is why her parents love her, but previously she didn't go to school, that's why her parents don't love her". Mina, Rahat, Tanvir and Mim were just as matter of fact about this, when drawing the link between being loved by their families and going (or not going) to school.

Some working children and children who were considered 'dirty' were marginalized and stigmatized. Rakib told me that the boy in his picture "currently is not picking waste, previously he was picking waste, so everyone used to hate him, but now, everyone loves him". Ratan spoke in

similar terms, “his parents don’t love their kid because he used to pick waste”. Sojun told me that “some educational institutes in Bangladesh do not like these kind [waste-pickers] of children”. When I asked him why that was the case, he told me that “he has no good clothing and sometimes his friends or teachers can get a bad smell from him”. This idea was expanded on by some other children who explained that being dirty and unhygienic, which working children were said to be, meant that they were stigmatized. Mim told me “he has no parents, and works with the dirty rubbish, that’s why no one likes him”. Nasrin explained that “she always takes her bath in pond water, dirty water, and sometimes she gets sick and no one likes her, because she lives in the open space”.

Goffman (1963) defined stigma as “the situation of the individual who is disqualified from social acceptance” (p. i) which leads to a ‘spoiled identity’ in which the person is no longer accepted as a qualified full member of society. Societies have defined roles and people are expected to fit into those socially constructed and predetermined roles – when they don’t, they are stigmatized (Goffman, 1963). We have seen from the descriptions of my participant’s stories throughout this chapter that children are stigmatized when they don’t fit into their socially constructed roles; orphans who have no guardian to represent them in the *somaj,* waste-pickers who are associated with criminals and treated as such; and street-children who are seen as unhygienic, unhealthy, and sick, are all stigmatized based on their inability to fulfil their social obligations. All of these characterizations of working children see them falling outside of the norm of ‘childhood’ and social acceptance, placing them emphatically outside the *somaj*.

Another point that I wish to note, is that at no point in their narratives did my participants conceptualize power as a child having autonomy, independence from, or greater decision-making power *vis-a-vis* adults, or any other group in their lives. As mentioned in chapter two, the early literature on empowerment tended to “assume a specific identity politics” (Yuval-Davies, 1994, p. 194) that essentialized group identities and ignored the complex and various markers of identity. This homogenising of group identities consequentially viewed power relationships as dyadic power structures in which one powerless social group was fighting for recognition against another

powerful social group. However, for my participants, relationships with adults, namely parents, were foundational to their conceptualizations of power. This suggests that empowerment for the children involved in my study is not about gaining greater decision making or negotiating ability with the adults, or any other 'powerful' social group, in their lives. Rather, the boundaries of power which constrain children's agency are more significant for how power operates. This questions the logic implicit in the early empowerment literature reviewed in chapter two, which views women, the poor and children as homogenous categories which are powerless in relation to men, the rich, and adults.

Instead, my research participants highlighted broader systems and structures that in my data-analysis, and subsequent reading of literature on Bangladesh, could be viewed as the boundaries of power which constrain and enable social action in Bangladesh. The children's references to these themes identified in the data and my subsequent reading of the literature on culture, political economy, poverty, migration, urbanisation, and so on, in Bangladesh, made me question much of the logic implicit in the early 'radical literature' I had read on empowerment and led me to return to the literature on power to see if I could find an explanation. Through the insights of Hayward (2000) I learnt that power can be defined not as an instrument that some agents use to alter the independent action of others, but rather as a network of boundaries that delimit, for all, the field of what is socially possible. Through the insights of Blau (1977) and Bourdieu (1980) I learnt that these boundaries could be thought of through a spatial metaphor, as a 'field' in which different social actors stand in different, but determinate social relations with one another. Through the insights of Young (2006), I learnt that those different actors, standing in different positions, had certain 'channels' available to them in which they could act.

Viewing power in this way would mean that the operation of power in Dhaka's *bustees* is not about powerful adults 'using' power against powerless children. Instead, power operates as boundaries which constrain the agency of the fictional children spoken about throughout this chapter and could also be seen to constrain the agency of the 'powerful'. We can see from analysing the broader contextual literature that the school administrator denying access to the boy in Sujon's story, very

likely has hundreds of children applying for places in her already over-capacity school. The parents of the girl that Maruf had drawn, who sent her to work, perhaps had no job opportunities because of a shifting agrarian economy, no access to the formal economy and because of a rural bias in poverty alleviation programmes. Fathers, who are obliged to fulfil their social contract as guardians, public policy makers, with limited resources and competing priorities, mothers, who remarry to find another guardian for their children and so on and so forth, could all be seen as actors who are constrained by the boundaries of power highlighted in this thesis. This is not to claim that power effects all in the same way, clearly it does not. The school administrator and the waste-picking child are not equal in power relations but instead have different 'channels' available to them in which they can act. But importantly, their possibilities, action and even imagination are operating within power's boundaries, their agency more or less constrained depending on their relative position within this conceptual space.

5.3. CONCLUSION

This chapter has addressed the empirical evidence I uncovered to meet my first research objective, to explore how children in Bangladesh understand power and empowerment. It has presented five boundaries of power based on my research participant's stories about children that they had drawn and narrated, that had power, that did not have power and the ways in which they could move between these two states. Those boundaries of power can be seen to constrain the agency of the fictional children spoken about in this chapter. Those boundaries rendered the imaginations of my research participants to conceive of what it means to have power or not have power before we began to discuss the operation of power. My participants described these boundaries as intersecting and creating specific and unique situations of how power can both constrain and enable agency.

It should be clear that in meeting this first research objective that this chapter could not have been written without the work of chapter two and three. Chapter two explored the existing literature on power and empowerment and as I argued at the end of chapter two, the post-structural literature on power, specifically Hayward's work on de-facing power, and the work of Blau, Bourdieu and

Young, help to explain how my research participants understood the operation of power. Chapter three, explored contextual literature on those things that were most important to my research participants and in doing so, helped to carry out the constructivist research project that is not only interested in people's perspectives, but in the social, cultural, economic and historical contexts in which those perspectives are from. It will be clear to the reader that that contextual literature helps to frame, give weight to, and explain my participants understandings which have been explored throughout this chapter. This chapter, on the back of these two chapters, has focussed primarily on hearing children's voices, in an attempt to fill a research gap in development studies that has overlooked children's perspectives, but most importantly to meet my first research objective.

My research participants understandings of power and empowerment and my subsequent analysis has led me to believe that power can be viewed as a network of boundaries; personal relationships with family and friends, access to material and financial resources, the natural environment, education and children's work, that together render possible and impossible, different imaginations, reason, desire and social possibility for children living in Dhaka's *bustees*. Empowerment, therefore, can be viewed as the ability for a child, or a group of children, to move their relative position within the boundaries of power to open up more 'channels' for action. Yet what will become clear in the next chapter is that there are diverse and differential experiences of power, even within a small sample size of what could be perceived as a relatively homogenous group, children living in Dhaka's *bustees.* The following chapter will show how I have operationalised this chapter's empirical focus into measuring the ways in which power is experienced, giving the development practitioner an insight into creating pathways for change.

6. OPERATIONALIZING POWER: INDICATOR DESIGN AND POWER'S DIFFERENTIALS

Mim had stood up and told the group about the child she had drawn, which as I mentioned in the introduction to the previous chapter, was illustrative of the multiple boundaries of power at play that constrained children's agency in Bangladesh. What further became clear in this part of the workshop was that my participants did not only describe multiple boundaries of power operating on children's lives, but also described differential power relations; the ways in which power was experienced and responded to by different children. After Mim had shared her story, Sujon, another of my participants, followed. He told us that for a child to move from having no power to having power that:

> First of all you have to go to school and study. And you have to have good parents and you have to have money. You have to have a house and your parents should love you. You have to have good friends and you have to have a part time job to earn money. You have to live in a big city and also study and you have to live in a good environment. You have to be clean and healthy so that your friends do not hate you. If you want to live a good life, you have to have good food and water.

Sujon's story is illustrative of the ways in which the boundaries of power highlighted in the previous chapter affect actors in different ways. Power's boundaries can constrain some actors more, as shown in the descriptions of children that had 'no power' in the previous chapter, or less, as in Sujon's description above. When children are able to access education, financial resources, have strong personal relationships, and so on, children's 'channels' for action are much more expansive than those who do not.

I have been exploring throughout this thesis what it means to understand power operating as a network of boundaries that delimit fields of social possibility. In the last chapter I used empirical evidence from my creative art and storytelling workshop to explore this claim and to show how viewing power in such a way helps to explain my own findings. However, this thesis and development studies as a discipline, is not only interested in theory, but in operationalizing theory

as a pathway for change. There is a normative underpinning to development studies which seeks to improve the lives of the poor, vulnerable and marginalized and as discussed in the opening pages of this thesis, I am incentivized by this same normative positioning. The first objective of this research project was to explore how children understood power and empowerment and this was addressed in the previous chapter. The second objective was to create indicators for power and empowerment, which this chapter addresses.

This chapter is presented in four sections. The first section explains the theoretical grounding of this chapter, expanding on the concept of constrained agency discussed in chapter two and explaining why, despite power's boundaries, there are differential experiences of power. The second section presents the indicators that I developed after my creative art and storytelling workshop. It will give a rationale for these indicators, grounded in the data from the workshop. The third section will explore some of the results from the survey in three themes on differential power that emerged; power between individuals, genders, and place. The final section of this chapter will explore some of the challenges that I uncovered when trying to operationalize the concept of power into a pathway for change. I will conclude by showing what these indicators are able to do and discuss what this chapter has taught us about power.

6.1. AN ACTOR ORIENTED APPROACH: CONSTRAINED AGENCY

Throughout this thesis I have explored how children understand the ways in which power operates on their lives. What the results from my survey show, is that the existence of boundaries of power does not mean that all power relations are equal, nor that there is no scope for differential experiences of, or responses to, power. Instead, they show that both individuals and groups of individuals with common characteristics (gender, place) experience boundaries of power in different ways.

Norman Long's (1990) 'actor-oriented approach' helps to explain the differential experiences of power. Long's approach, which draws on Giddens' (1986) structuration theory and Bourdieu's (1984) notion of habitus, focuses on the interplay between structures and agency. Long claims that structures both constrain and enable particular forms of agency; they condition what actors

are able to do. Structures guide, produce, and constrain the ability of agents to act in certain ways and agency operates within and is constrained by these broader structures (Long, 1990). Long (2001) uses the example of different groups involved in the mining industry in Peru (peasants, miners, company managers, and politicians) and shows how their strategies and decisions have contributed to the development of a regional economic system, showing that agency is at once constrained by, responsive to, and reinforces, economic structures (p. 24).

My research shows that boundaries of power as highlighted in the previous chapter allow for certain and specific types of action to be carried out. Personal relationships with family and friends; access to financial and material resources; the natural environment, education and; work; these boundaries create bounded fields of possibility, of knowing, of conceiving what is and is not socially possible. What will become clear in this chapter however as that within these boundaries, actors are positioned in this conceptual space, their agency more or less constrained relative to their position with others, and within the boundaries of power. As Young (2006) claims, different actors placed within a social structure are presented with options; structures "provide 'channels' that both enable action and constrain it" (p. 112). There is a rich literature, much of it based on Giddens' (1986) and Bourdieu's (1984) theories of structuration and habitus, like Long (1990), which claim that structures certainly guide agency, but that there is a wide range of responses to, and the expression of agency, within these structural conditions (Langevang, 2008; Mizen and Ofosu-Kusi, 2013; Klocker, 2007; Ansell, 2014).

An actor-oriented perspective "begins its interest in explaining differential responses to similar structural circumstances, even if the conditions appear relatively homogenous" (Long, 2001, p. 13). It places its attention on "examining how individual choices are shaped by larger frames of meaning and action" (Long, 2001, p. 14). Long's approach is important because it highlights the importance of structures on both constraining and enabling action and is interested in how different responses and different experiences of these structures come to fruition. The findings presented in this chapter show how twenty children, from a similar geographic and demographic

area, have differential experiences of boundaries of power, despite, from the outside at least, what might look like relatively similar structural conditions.

6.2. INDICATORS OF BOUNDARIES OF POWER

After the workshop was completed, I transcribed the audio and used thematic analysis (described in chapter four) to categorize the transcript into different themes of power, discussed as five boundaries of power in the previous chapter. For the development of indicators, these five boundaries of power were further distilled down to eleven variables, which were important aspects of power for my participants. In this section, I present the variables and indicators I developed for each boundary of power separately, giving rationale as to why these specific variables and indicators were created. To be clear, the sample size from the workshop was fourteen children, and for the survey was twenty children, explaining the difference in percentages in the sections below.

6.2.1. Personal relationships with family and friends

Table 4. Indicators of boundaries of power: personal relationships with family and friends

Variable	Indicator
Family stability	1. Whether or not the child lives with at least one parent
	2. Whether or not the child lives in a permanent dwelling
Attention and love from caregivers	3. Number of evenings in the previous week that a parent had been home with the child
	4. Number of hours the child spends with a parent in a day
Interaction with wider social circle outside of the immediate family	5. Whether or not the child has spent time with friends outside of school in the last week
	6. Whether or not the child has spent time with extended family in the last week

As discussed in the previous chapter, personal relationships with family and friends was an important boundary of power operating on children's lives. This was broken down into three variables. First, a stable family structure, in which parents are present and the child has a place to live, were fundamental aspects of 'having power'; those that did not, were isolated from their communities and seen as unlovable. In the workshop, eighty six percent (12/14) of participants said that the children who had no power, did not have parents while 100 percent (14/14) said that the children who had power, had parents. The first indicator, *whether or not the child lives with at least one parent* was fundamentally important to my research participants. It was similar for the indicator *whether or not the child lives in a permanent dwelling*. Sixty four percent (9/14) of the participants spoke about the child they had drawn with no power, having no home or living outside. In the pictures of children that had power, eighty six percent (12/14) mentioned that the children they had drawn had a home.

Second, my participants did not only speak about family stability in the form of having parents and a home, but as discussed in the previous chapter, they also spoke about the importance of love and attention from their parents, therefore, this became an important variable to measure. In the pictures of 'having power', sixty four percent (9/14) of my participants directly referenced the children in their pictures being loved by and/or receiving attention from their parents. I determined that time that parents and children spend together could be a good proxy indicator for love and attention, which resulted in the two indicators presented in Table 4.

Finally, it wasn't just relationships with parents that were important, but wider relationships in the community. This was spoken about in different ways, but seventy one percent (10/14) of my participants spoke in at least one of their stories about references to one or more of friends, relatives, or the wider community. Because of this, I wanted to measure children's interaction with their wider community; the two indicators created were intended to measure one's interaction outside of the home with friends and family.

6.2.2. Access to material and financial resources

Table 5. Indicators of boundaries of power: access to material and financial resources

Variable	Indicator
Access to household income	7. Number of personal belongings (total out of the 6 binary indicators below; indicators 8-13)
	8. 1 or more books
	9. 2 or more toys
	10. 1 or more pairs of shoes
	11. 3 or more pairs of clothes
	12. Toothbrush
	13. Mobile phone
Household income	14. Number of household assets (total out of the 8 binary indicators below; indicators 15-22)
	15. Soap
	16. Mobile phone
	17. TV
	18. Form of transport
	19. Electricity
	20. Toilet
	21. Bathroom
	22. Water source

Access to material and financial resources was broken into two different variables; a child's access to household income, and household income. This was done to distinguish between the level of income at the household level and the intrinsically valued material possessions that children have as a result of that income. As discussed in detail in the previous chapter access to material and financial resources was a key aspect of my research participants' understanding of power. Access

to financial resources gives children the ability to purchase items that were said to be valuable; umbrellas, toys, and even cars. It also gives them the ability to go to school and to not have to work, which are measured by other indicators on education and work below.

The different personal belongings were chosen because they were either explicitly referenced in the workshop as being important or because they were intended to be a proxy measure for a more abstract concept that had been referenced in the workshop. Books were intended to measure the value a child's parents placed on education. The importance of education was discussed at length in the previous chapter and ninety three percent (13/14) of my participants mentioned school or education in at least one of their stories. Toys were chosen as they had been directly spoken about by two (fourteen percent) of my participants and five (thirty six percent) other children referenced the importance of play. Shoes, clothes and a toothbrush were chosen to measure children's physical appearances and personal hygiene, which was directly referenced by forty three percent (6/14) of my participants. The same was true for some of the household assets; the existence of soap, water, toilet and bathroom were chosen to measure cleanliness and hygiene, in the proxy. Transport was chosen because when I conducted the ranking exercise with the children, they told me that I had missed "car" as an aspect of power. When I asked them why a car was important, they discussed, and my research assistant told me that "they can move around… they can afford to go on a trip", pointing to the importance of mobility that derives from financial resources at the household level. The other household assets; mobile phone, TV, electricity, water source, were all chosen because I had seen them used in the most recent Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) run by UNICEF and the Bangladesh Government as indicators for measuring household income in the proxy (Pathay, 2015).

6.2.3. The natural environment

Table 6. Indicators of boundaries of power: the natural environment

Variable	Indicator
Access to green spaces	23. Number of trees in *bustee*
	24. Number of green spaces the child has played in the previous week
Clean environment	25. Perception of waste in *bustee*
	26. Frequency of rubbish collection
Personal cleanliness	27. Number of times bathing a week
	28. How many times clothes are worn before they are washed

The natural environment was broken down into three variables that I wanted to measure based on what the children had discussed as being important. As mentioned in the previous chapter, during the ranking exercise my participants collectively placed "the natural environment" as the fourth most important aspect of 'having power'. When I asked them why, my research assistant summarised their answers by telling me that "They like trees, birds and they love to play in the field". Access to green spaces was therefore an important variable to measure. Fifty seven percent (8/14) of my participants spoke about there being trees in the picture they had drawn where children had power. As quoted above, playing in fields was important to the children and as play was referenced by thirty six percent (5/14) of participants throughout the course of the workshop, I chose the second indicator, *number of green spaces to play in local vicinity,* to reflect the importance of both green spaces and play.

Related to green spaces, a clean environment was also seen as important. When my research assistant summarized why my participants thought that the natural environment was important she said "they don't like waste". Pollution, rubbish or waste was spoken about by thirty six percent (5/14) of my participants when they were speaking about their pictures that had 'no power' and in

the pictures of children that 'had power', fifty percent (7/14) of my participants referenced the natural environment, clean spaces or good surroundings. Based on this, I wanted to measure the existence of waste in the children's *bustees*, as an indicator for a clean environment. The two indicators were chosen to measure the children's perception of waste in the *bustee* and how often someone came to collect their waste.

Finally, as mentioned above, personal cleanliness and appearance were also referenced by the children. I struggled slightly with the correct place for the indicators on personal cleanliness, but the reason I placed these within the natural environment field, was that it had been linked to the natural environment, for example, in Nasrin's account, she told me that "she always takes her bath in pond water, dirty water, and sometimes she gets sick." This was especially so when my participants were talking about the children in their pictures that had 'no power' whereby there was a sense of stigma around children who "have no smart dress", "work with the dirty rubbish", or because people can "get a bad smell from them". Appearance, hygiene or cleanliness was referenced by forty three percent (6/14) of my participants, therefore it appeared to be an important dimension of power to measure. The indicators were chosen because they were able to measure both personal hygiene and physical appearance.

6.2.4. Education

Table 7. Indicators of boundaries of power: education

Variable	Indicator
School access and attendance	29. Whether or not the child is enrolled in school
	30. Percentage of school days the child has missed in the last month
Future job and income prospects	31. Number of years of disrupted education
	32. Whether or not the child has been denied access to a school

The two variables on education were chosen to reflect that my participants referenced school attendance being an important aspect of having power, but they also saw school attendance and receiving an education as instrumentally beneficial because it allowed them to get good jobs in the future. Therefore, I wanted to attempt to measure both school access and future job and income prospects.

Attending, or not attending school, was spoken about by ninety three percent (13/14) of my research participants and it was clear that having access to school was an important dimension of boundaries of power to measure. I chose two indicators, one, on whether or not a child is enrolled in school, and two, to determine how often, if they are enrolled, that they go to school.

As mentioned above, the children also saw education being important for future job and income prospects; as I was told that, “after finishing school she has a good job”, “there is nothing that children can learn or earn without school” and that by going to school “they can study there and they can get a good job”. Therefore, I wanted to try and measure this aspect of education too.

These were hard indicators to develop, because it is impossible to directly measure future income and job prospects. However, I thought that looking at the history of disruption to a child’s education tells us about past barriers to education, which helps determine whether they will finish school. I had seen in the most recent Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (Pathay, 2015) in Bangladesh an indicator on years of disrupted education as a measure of whether a child would finish school, which I determined would also be a useful measure for future job and income prospects. Some of the children also referenced being denied access to school and Cameron (2010) found that this is a common occurrence in Dhaka’s government schools. Therefore, the indicators selected above were chosen to measure past disruption to education, to measure future job and income prospects.

6.2.5. Children's work

Table 8. Indicators of boundaries of power: children's work

Variable	Indicator
Prevalence of working children	33. Whether or not the child has ever engaged in work outside of the home
	34. Whether or not the child has ever been involved in waste-picking

Although children working was portrayed either because of not having access to financial resources or was linked to not being loved by one's family, it occurred in the descriptions of powerlessness frequently enough and created unique situations of stigma and marginalization that I wanted to measure the prevalence of work in children's lives as a discrete category. To do this, I chose two indicators; one, which sought to gauge the extent of children working broadly. Fifty percent (7/14) of my participants, in at least one of their stories, spoke about the role of work as an aspect of powerlessness. I also chose an indicator specifically around waste-picking, because it was directly referenced at least once by forty three percent (6/14) of my participants; Sujon, Rakib, Mim, Ratan, Ripa and Mina all spoke to varying degrees about the role of waste-picking in the children's lives that they had drawn.

6.3. DIFFERENTIAL EXPERIENCES OF POWER

As discussed in chapter four, once I had created these indicators, I used a survey to gather some data from a small group of twenty children. This was done to test the usability of both the indicators and a survey as a data source for the indicators. I was also able to do a descriptive statistical analysis on the survey data, to measure the indicators. In the following section, I will discuss the usability of the indicators and the survey, but in this section, I wish to discuss some of the themes the emerged in the data captured in the survey.

In appendix 3, Tables 9, 10, 11 and 12 show the results from my survey, broken down by each child's response to each indicator, with means and medians shown at the bottom of the table for

each independent variable. Three themes were prominent in the data that I wish to discuss here. Each of these themes is around the differential experience of power between individuals, genders and place, showing that the experience of power's boundaries is experientially different. I want to stress that because of my small sample size, the analysis below is applicable to my sample, and not to all children living in *bustees* in Bangladesh.

6.3.1. Power's differentials between individuals

Although most children who I surveyed experienced power in similar ways, there were a minority of children who for some indicators significantly stood out as being considerably more constrained by power, than the mean or median results from the survey. For inferable statistical analysis the outlier effect would warn against paying too much attention to these outliers. However, as Hopf (2007) claims, "interpretivists treat anomalies as evidence to inform a truer account, not an aberration to be explained away" (p. 66) and that interpretivists treat "every anomaly as if it is, at least potentially, meaningful" (p. 68). In this first account, I am not trying to explain the 'pattern of the many', but instead, am focussing on the outliers intentionally because they show us the different ways that power can be experienced; that it can constrain the agency of some individuals much more than others.

One of my participants, for example, was the only one that had been home by themselves without a care-giver every evening in the last week, suggesting a lack of attention and feeling loved by their parents. The same child was also one of the four children that responded that they are involved in work outside of the home. Interestingly however, when it came to the indicators for access to material and financial resources, this child had five out of six of the personal belongings and seven out of eight of the household assets, equal to the median of five personal belongings and slightly higher than the median of 6.5 household assets. This shows that this child had slightly higher access to material and financial resources than the median yet had the lowest results out of all of my participants when it came to the indicators for *attention and love from caregivers*. In the previous chapter I explored how children's work was sometimes seen consequentially because of a lack of material and financial resources and was correlated with a breakdown in personal

relationships. In this case, while a claim cannot definitively be made, it may be a breakdown of personal relationships which is a key driver of power's constraint on this individual, or it may be that the child's parents place a higher value on access to material and financial resources than personal relationships with family. This shows how power is experienced not only differentially between different children, but also between the same children between different boundaries of power. To have access to financial resources does not mean that one receives love and attention from their family and *vice-versa*.

Another child had a unique experience of power and was severely constrained by power in several variables, especially relative to the other nineteen participants in the survey. The first was through access to financial resources. While the average number of personal belongings from the survey was 5/6, this individual had only one: toys. The same was true for household assets, the median number of household assets from the survey was 6.5/8, yet this child only had access to one which was soap. This shows low levels of access to household income, but also low levels of personal hygiene and appearance; having no shoes, less than three pairs of clothes, no toothbrush, and no toilet, bathroom, or water source in their household. Relative to the other participants, this was an entirely different experience of power's boundaries and showed the extent to which this individual was constrained in their access to financial resources.

Furthermore, this child was the only participant to not be currently enrolled in school and looking at total years of disrupted education, already had two years of non-schooling, calculated by subtracting their total years of schooling from their age. From the reading of the previous chapter, we know that financial barriers to education often stop children attending school. When we look at the indicators for household income above, then it is possible that financial barriers play in a role in this child not attending school and disruption in their education. This shows the interrelated nature of the boundaries of power, and how they can intersect to compound power's exercise.

Yet, what the results from this survey also show and as mentioned above, power constraining in one boundary will not always lead to its constraint in other boundaries. The participant discussed above who had very little access to financial resources and was currently not enrolled at school,

had a care-giver home with them in 5/7 evenings in the past week and they had spent time with friends outside the home. This shows that although their agency may be severely constrained in education and access to financial resources, they still have access to personal relationships with family and friends.

6.3.2. Power's differentials between genders

There were many examples from the survey in which it appeared that girl children were more constrained by power than boy children and in some instances this was significant. Again, this small sample size cannot be used to make claims about gender in Bangladesh, but it is certainly suggestive that power constrains girl children more than boys. As discussed elsewhere in this thesis, boys and girls have different expectations upon them for the future roles they will play in the *somaj*. Boys are expected to earn a living, while girls are expected to be a good daughter in-law, wife and mother (Blanchet, 1999; Kabeer and Mahmud, 2009; Munro et al., 2015).

This was first noticeable on the indicators for the variable, *interaction with wider social circle*. Eighty eight percent of boys (7/8) had spent time with their friends outside of school in the last week, while only forty two percent (5/12) of girls had. It was similar for spending time with extended family; 100 percent of boys (8/8) had spent time with extended family, while only sixty seven percent (8/12) of girls had. These results suggest that there is a strong gendered element to *interaction with wider social circle outside the family*.

Boys, on average, had slightly more personal belongings than their girl counterparts, with the boys having an average of 5.25/6 personal belongings and girls having an average of 4.4/6. Where the difference was the most noticeable was when it came to having a mobile phone; zero percent (0/14) of the girl children had a mobile phone, while fifty percent (4/8) of the males did. The indicator, *number of green spaces to play,* also showed that thirty eight percent (3/8) boy children had been to play in parks in the last week, while only eight percent (1/12) girl children had.

There were also discrepancies between boys and girls in access to education and children working. Thirty three percent of females (4/12) had missed days of school in the last month, resulting in an

average of nine percent of school days missed in the last month. Comparatively, only twelve percent (1/8) of boys had missed days of school, leading to three percent average school days missed for the boy participants. When it came to disrupted education, the girls in this case fared slightly better, with an average of 0.75 disrupted years of education relative to 0.875 for the boys. When it came to working children however, thirty three percent of the females (4/12) had engaged in work outside of the home, comparative to 0 percent (0/8) of the males, suggesting a strong gendered element in the case of child work.

Therefore, in the variables of *attention and love from caregivers; interaction with wider social circle; access to household income; access to green spaces; school access and attendance and prevalence of children working,* the girls, at least in this survey, were all more constrained by power than the boys. The only indicators where it appeared that boys were more constrained than girls was with having toys (seventy five percent of boys had toys comparative to eighty three percent of girls), and *disrupted years of education*, which as mentioned above, was slightly higher for boys. In all other indicators, the girls in this study were more constrained by power's boundaries than the boys.

6.3.3. Power's differentials between place

There were significant differences in the experience of power's constraint, particularly in access to material and financial resources, between the four different *bustees* that the survey participants resided in. The responses to the survey suggested that residents in Ajaila *bustee* had the least access to material and financial resources; the participants from Ajaila had an average of four personal belongings in comparison to 5.2 in Bakal, five in Kukua and 4.8 in Masaba. Ajaila also had the lowest average number of household assets with 4.2, in comparison to 5.4 in Bakal and seven in both Kukua and Masaba.

The most significant difference was between Ajaila and Bakal comparative to Kukua and Masaba, in relation to the household assets of a water source and toilet. None of the participants from Ajaila had a water source in their home and only one had a toilet (twenty percent). One participant (Twenty percent) from Bakal had a water source and one other (twenty percent) had a toilet. This

was in comparison to Kukua, where eighty percent (4/5) participants had a water source and all five participants had a toilet in their home. In Masaba, all five participants had a water source and a toilet. These significant differences suggest that access to material and financial resources are significantly higher in Kukua and Masaba that in Bakal and especially in Ajaila, which, at least from my findings, was the poorest area.

Three out of the four children who had engaged in work came from Masaba, suggesting that the prevalence of children working is higher in Masaba than in other areas. Interestingly, based on the indicators above, Masaba was also the wealthiest *bustee,* suggesting that children's work likely contributes to household income. Although of course further research would need to be conducted to show if this was the case, if it was the case, it would show the significance of children's work to household income. Interestingly, four out of five of the participants in Ajaila, the poorest area as described above, responded that they had "many" trees in their *bustee,* the highest response out of any of the *bustees.* The other indicators for the variable, access to green spaces, also suggested that Ajaila had the highest number of green spaces in their local vicinity, with two children responding that they had been to a park to play every day for the past fifteen days. As discussed above, this shows that power's constraint in one boundary (i.e. access to material and financial resources) does not necessarily mean that power constrains in other boundaries (i.e. the natural environment). During my time in Bangladesh I visited Ajaila and it was located on the outskirts of Mirpur, in an underdeveloped area with many trees and an open space at the back of the *bustee*. My observation was that Ajaila did have access to green spaces and that there were lots of trees in this *bustee.* This also helps to explain why there was a lack of water and sanitation at the household level.

These findings show that for my survey participants, power is experienced differently and show that power's boundaries affect individuals, and groups of people in different ways. These indicators allow us to measure how individual and groups of children are affected by power and to begin working out the targeted interventions, or activities required to expand the agency of individuals and groups that are most constrained by power's boundaries.

6.4. CHALLENGES WITH INDICATORS AND SURVEYS

In chapter four, I explained the four phases of my research methods and analytical strategies; creative art and storytelling workshop; qualitative thematic analysis; indicator and survey construction and piloting; and descriptive statistical analysis. I claimed that the role of my quantitative methods was twofold; one, to collect a small amount of data that could be analysed using descriptive statistical analysis and two, to test the usability of both the indicators and a survey as a data source. I wish to spend some time here unpacking the challenges involved in the survey and data gathering phase.

Overall, the majority of the indicators and the survey I used to capture data to measure them were well suited. It appeared that the children understood most of the questions and the data was telling in which children, or groups of children were most affected by the boundaries of power. However, there were some technical challenges with a few of the indicators, which questions the use of these indicators and more importantly, the use of my survey as a data source.

One of the indicators for future job and income prospects was the *number of years of total years of disrupted education*. To calculate this, I asked the children "how many years in total have you been to primary school". This number was then subtracted from their age. Any number above seven was seen as a year of disrupted education, because the official starting age of primary school in Bangladesh is six years of age. However, two of the responses suggest that a survey, completed by young children, might not be the most accurate data source for measuring this indicator. Two children responded that they had been to school for eight years. One of those children was eleven years old, meaning that if their response was correct, they started primary school at three years old. I believe that the indicator is a useful one, in telling how many years of schooling a child has completed relative to an official benchmark set by the government. However, administrative data from schools themselves would serve as a more accurate data source than a survey.

Other technical challenges with my survey were seen in the subjective responses for the indicators *number of trees in bustee* and *perception of waste in bustee*. The children were given a choice of different subjective responses to a question; "looking at the trees/waste in your *bustee*, would you

say there is…". A survey, such as the one I undertook, did not tell us anything about the actual number of trees or amount of waste, but only participants subjective feelings about that phenomenon. Trees, green spaces and waste were important to the children, therefore, I wanted to measure these. However, using a survey to capture the data for these indicators is limited in that it cannot tell us objective, verifiable numbers in relation to the number of trees or amount of waste in the *bustee.* Other data sources, such as observation or counting, would be more valid data sources for these specific indicators.

Finally, there was a technical challenge with the responses to the indicator; *Number of green spaces the child has played in the previous week*. In the survey, I asked the children, "how many different parks have you been to play in the past 15 days". A large majority (16/20) responded 0, however two children responded fifteen, which skewed the results substantially to show an average of 1.85 parks that children had played in. Again, green spaces and somewhere to play were important to the children, so it was important to have an indicator to measure this, however a survey was not the best suited data source for this indicator. Observation of parks within a set distance from a child's community would give a more objective result.

6.5. CONCLUSION

This chapter has highlighted the findings for my second research objective, to create indicators for power and empowerment based on the children's [from the workshop] understanding. I have presented the construction of indicators based on my creative art and storytelling workshop and the results of the survey I conducted with a group of twenty children to measure those indicators. The indicators I constructed were very much grounded in the data from the workshop; they were based directly on what was important to my research participants. This has allowed for contextualized indicators which are (at least intended to be) meaningful for those that participated in the research. The results from the survey show that the boundaries of power in Bangladesh are experienced differently by individuals, genders and places, and suggest that girls are more constrained than boys by boundaries of power, that different *bustees* are significantly poorer than

others and that being constrained by power in one category does not necessarily suggest that one will be constrained in another.

The indicators that I developed and the survey I used to measure those indicators, therefore meet my second research objective - they measure and describe the extent to which boundaries of power constrain children's agency. Carrying out a survey and a descriptive statistical analysis and then reflecting on the usability of the indicators was completed as part of this research objective to show other researchers and practitioners the value and usability of the indicators that I developed.

As shown in this chapter, I argue that those children that are the most constrained by power, can be said to be 'disempowered' and those that are less constrained by power, can be said to be relatively more 'empowered'. Empowerment then, is the process of moving within power's boundaries, expanding the 'channels' available in which children can take action. The indicators presented in this chapter could be used by researchers, policy makers, activists, NGO staff and anyone else interested in improving the lives of Bangladeshi children, to measure the extent to which children, or groups of children, are empowered and disempowered. This allows for conceiving of targeted interventions that seek to empower children; to expand their socially constrained agency. What this action looks like, or what those interventions are, are out of scope for this research project, but are exciting opportunities for further research and practice.

This chapter has further allowed for a more nuanced and complete picture of how we can conceptualize power, helping to meet my first research objective. Based on what we have learnt in this and the previous chapter, I argue that power can be conceived of as boundaries which demarcate fields of action and where actors are differentially placed in position to one another within these boundaries. Within these boundaries of power agency can be more or less constrained; different 'channels' of action are available to different actors, depending on their differentiated positions within power's boundaries. Therefore, if development studies as a discipline is underpinned by a normative positioning that seeks to improve the real lives of real people, then attempting to increase the availability of actors' 'channels' to take action is a worthy project. The indicators presented in this chapter are a tool that can be used to measure a baseline

understanding of the ‘channels’ available to children and the ability to measure and track change over time.

7. CONCLUSION: REFLECTIONS ON THE THEORETICAL, PRACTICAL AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF CHILDREN'S EMPOWERMENT

In this thesis I have addressed two research objectives; to explore how children in Bangladesh understand power and empowerment and to create indicators to measure power and empowerment based on this understanding. In this concluding chapter, I reflect on two questions that have emerged for me throughout this process; what did I find out about power and empowerment? And what can be done for children's empowerment in Dhaka's *bustees*? By reflecting on these questions, I discuss what my empirical evidence and subsequent theoretical considerations mean for practice and offer some suggestions for ways forward for children's empowerment in Dhaka's *bustees.*

This chapter is organised in four parts. The first addresses the question what did I find out about power and empowerment? I will discuss my empirical findings and the theoretical claims that I have made throughout this thesis. In the second section, I turn to the question of what can be done for children's empowerment in Dhaka's *bustees*? I will suggest that the goal of empowerment for development studies is temporal and consists of both long and short-term goals. Empowerment's short-term goal can be conceived of as increasing actors' constrained agency within power's existing boundaries. The long-term goal of empowerment can be defined as providing spaces for actors to act upon boundaries of power, in ways that shift those boundaries and the field of social possibility and imagination. In the third section, I reflect upon some of the methodological implications of this research and discuss how the 'competing' epistemological foundations of my research objectives reflect different structures of knowledge, but how together they can tell us different stories about the world and about the research problems we are trying to 'understand' or 'explain'. Finally, I will conclude by considering some personal reflections and things that I have learnt through the research process beyond the direct findings of my thesis.

7.1. WHAT DID WE FIND OUT ABOUT POWER AND EMPOWERMENT?

In my creative art and storytelling workshop my participants discussed what it meant for children to have, or not have, power. I subsequently conceptualized during my data analysis that what they told me could be conceived of as boundaries of power, boundaries that demarcated fields of social action, possibility and imagination. These boundaries were personal relationships with family and friends; access to material and financial resources; the natural environment; education; and children's work. Insights from Hayward (2000), Young (2006), Blau (1977), Bourdieu (1980) and Long (1990; 2001) help to explain these boundaries as they tell us that these boundaries are not resources that the powerful 'have' or 'use' at the expense of the 'powerless', but instead exist as boundaries which constrain all actors. These boundaries demarcate fields of action and render possible and impossible, certain types of action, beliefs, reason and desires (Hayward, 2000, p. 8). In the case of my research, these boundaries of power determine, among many other things, that a child must have a guardian to be loved, go to school to be respected in the community, tell us that street workers are dirty and therefore stigmatized and that access to trees and green spaces are important. These are boundaries which are products of socio-historical actions, not that the powerful have at their disposal to 'use', but which constrain children's agency in different ways.

Upon creating indicators for and carrying out my survey to measure empowerment, it became clear that there were differential experiences of power's boundaries between both individual actors and groups of actors. Blau (1977) helps us understand this by telling us that social structures "can be defined as a multidimensional space of differentiated social positions among which a population is distributed" (p. 4). Bourdieu (1980) conceives of these structures as 'fields' in which individuals stand in varying positions in relation to one another. What these authors tell us and what my empirical evidence sheds light on, is that within boundaries of power is a space where different experiences of and different responses to power's boundaries is possible. Actors placed in differential positions within power's boundaries have different 'channels' for action. So that although some have more channels available to exercise agency than others, all of my participants are constrained by the boundaries of power.

The results from my survey show that children and groups of children are placed in differentiated social positions within boundaries of power. A constrained agency perspective allows us not to retreat to "a relativistic stance according to which all social relations are equivalent" (Hayward, 2000, 161), nor to unrealistically romanticise and celebrate the free agency of children (Huijismans et al., 2014), but to see agency as constrained within the boundaries of power in which it is located (Long, 2001), enabled, to greater or lesser extents, according to the social position an actor is positioned within the boundary.

In sum, this research project suggests that power, can be studied, analysed and understood as operating in the interaction between boundaries of power and actors' constrained agency that exists within these boundaries. Boundaries of power demarcate fields of action and render possible and impossible, different forms of action, possibility and imagination, but within these boundaries exists different experiences of, and different responses to, the bounded fields. The process of empowerment, therefore, is the process of expanding the 'channels' available to actors to exercise agency.

What does this mean for the literature on empowerment discussed at length in chapter two of this thesis? In chapter two, I claimed that the early literature on empowerment (Moser, 1989; Sen and Grown; 1985, Kabeer, 1994; Rowlands, 1997; Friedmann, 1992), attempted to unproblematically bring together what I argue are competing frameworks for understanding power. This literature saw power as 'having a face'; as the powerful (men, elites, politicians) exercising power over the powerless (women, the poor). The literature on critical pedagogy and children's participation makes the same claim that 'hegemonic intellectuals' (Giroux, 1986) exercise power over their students. The solution, therefore, was to increase one's self esteem and efficacy through a process of conscientization (Freire, 1968; Rowlands, 1997; Kabeer, 1994), to gain greater negotiating power and decision-making abilities in relationships (Rowlands, 1997, Friedmann, 1992), and to collectively organise to overthrow systems and structures of oppression (Sen and Grown, 1985; Kabeer, 1994; Rowlands, 1997). But the findings from my research show that for my participants, the solution to 'powerlessness' is not in gaining greater decision making in their relationships with

adults. In fact, my participants saw relationships with adults as being intrinsically important in and of themselves. As I have argued, the source of disempowerment for the participants in this study was the extent to which power's boundaries constrained children's agency. This shows how deeply contextualized knowledge is and warns of universalist claims and discourses on what empowerment is, something that Kabeer, Rowlands, Friedmann and Moser, amongst other proponents of empowerment would likely agree with. It certainly opposes the mainstreaming of the term, which completely robbed empowerment both of is contextuality and any references to power at all.

All of this theorizing begs the question, if this is how my research participants viewed and I have come to understand power relations, then what can be done for children's empowerment?

7.2. WHAT CAN BE DONE FOR CHILDREN'S EMPOWERMENT IN DHAKA'S *BUSTEES*?

As I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, this research shows that children's empowerment in Dhaka's *bustees* can be viewed as a temporal issue with both long and short-term goals. The long-term project of empowerment would focus on the processes of the formation of power's boundaries and the shifting of social possibility. The second short-term project of empowerment would focus on the everyday material and social realities of power's boundaries; of the immediate possibility of expanding children's agency in the present within the boundaries that currently exist.

Empowerment's short-term goal directs attention to the capacity for action within power's boundaries; the increasing of agency and expanding of 'channels' available to exercise agency. This requires development interventions understanding in what ways power's boundaries are constraining children and directing resources to expand children's agency within these boundaries. The indicators that I developed in this thesis provide an initial platform to do this – they allow for the gathering of baseline data, which can measure which children are disempowered (those most constrained by power's boundaries) and targeted interventions with the objectives of increasing children's agency. To do this requires a methodological approach which seeks to hear from those who are to be affected by development interventions, answering the question highlighted in the first page of this thesis, "whose reality counts?". Doing this allows the development practitioner to

design interventions that are meaningful to those affected by 'development' and creates possibilities of improving the real, lived experiences of those whose agency is most constrained by power's boundaries. In the case of my study, this might see interventions that focussed on increasing children's access to financial resources or access to green spaces. For the females involved in my study, it might be an intervention that provides a space to interact with friends and family.

However, it is important to recognise that while important, this short-term goal of empowerment does not put pressure on the existing boundaries of power. Instead, as Giddens' (1984) concept of the duality of structure tells us, people act on the basis of their knowledge of pre-existing structures and in so acting, reproduce those structures (p. 24). This insight shows that as that people think, act and even imagine according to the rules, expectations and norms that are determined by existing boundaries of power, that they reproduce those boundaries. If, as I have suggested throughout this thesis, power can be conceived of boundaries, then it can be argued that the long-term goal of empowerment is to create spaces and opportunities for actors to act upon and in ways that affect, the boundaries of power that shape their own fields of social possibility and imagination. This goal takes the normative position that people should be the architects of the boundaries that constrain and circumscribe their fields of action (Hayward, 2000, p. 166).

Without working towards the shifting of boundaries of power to broaden the scope of social possibility, children that live in Dhaka's *bustees* will continue to have limited 'channels' in which to express their agency. Short-term interventions might see, for example, attempts to get waste-pickers off the street and providing other opportunities for income and education, while long term interventions could work towards shifting the social identities of waste-pickers so that they are not stigmatized in discourse and practice. A short-term intervention might focus on finding orphan children care-givers or foster parents, while the long-term goal could work towards a social reconstruction of childhood identity that renders guardians necessary for the formation of children's personhood. These short and long-term goals, when understood as both important, allow

for the immediate expansion of agency available to children in the present and for shifting the boundaries of power to expand and shift possible future agency with new wider and deeper 'channels' for action. Wider 'channels' refer to those possibilities for action that exist within the existing boundaries of power. Deeper 'channels' refer to new possibilities for action, made possible through the shifting of the formation of power's boundaries.

The indicators that I developed in this thesis, as a result of asking the question "whose reality counts?" and listening to a small group of children that live in Dhaka's *bustees*, are a tool for the short-term goal of children's empowerment. These indicators allow for a baseline measurement of those who are most disempowered and the areas in which empowerment, or the expansion of agency is possible. For the long-term goal of empowerment, further research is necessary that explores how actors may begin to shift the boundaries of power to open up new 'channels' for exercising agency. This research should aim to include the perspectives and voices of those who are most constrained by boundaries of power and have the most to gain by expanding social possibility. The ways in which this could be done are exciting areas for further research. Some avenues for this process already exist; deliberative democracy theorists, for example, claim that to be legitimate, a norm must be the product of debate and deliberation that include as free and equal participants, all whom it affects (Habermas, 1998, p. 107-108). Other areas are ripe for research. But if empowerment's long-term goal is to shift the boundaries of power, then it can be argued that this goal is "an inclusive and expansive politics, where politics are the processes through which people collectively delimit social possibility" (Hayward, 2000, p. 178).

Development practitioners that seek to include those that are to be most affected by development interventions can begin to bring together these two temporal goals of empowerment. They can seek to not only understand where power is the most constraining and design interventions which seek to increase the agency of actors, but also begin a process in which actors can begin to define the material and social boundaries of power that constrain their own agency. It is in this way that empowerment's short- and long-term goals can be realised, whereby one's agency is only constrained to the extent that they have defined their boundaries to action themselves.

7.3. METHODOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS

As discussed in chapter four, my two research objectives, to explore how children in Bangladesh understand power and empowerment, and to create indicators to measure power and empowerment, are based on two different epistemological and ontological foundations; positivism and interpretivism and objectivism and constructivism respectively. These two foundations required some reconciling to bring them together into a working methodology.

According to some, these two approaches are at odds with one another. Brannen (2005), explains the tension nicely,

> Quantitative researchers have seen qualitative researchers as too context specific, their samples as unrepresentative and their claims about their work as unwarranted… qualitative researchers view quantitative research as overly simplistic, decontextualized, reductionist in terms of its generalisations, and failing to capture the meanings that actors attach to their lives and circumstances (p. 7).

Is it possible for these two competing ontological and epistemological foundations to be combined and what does this tell us about the nature of knowledge? Some would claim that it is useless trying to do so, as the realities and worlds that they try to 'understand' (in the case of interpretivism and constructivism) or 'explain' (in the case of positivism and objectivism) are so different from one another (Pollins, 2007). However, one way to bring these frameworks together is to see them as different approaches to 'knowing'. This leads to the researcher seeking different types of knowledge dependent on the different research problems which they are trying to address (Raizi, 2016). Rather than arguing which approach is 'right', the question should be, which approach is the most appropriate for the research problem I am trying to solve? Social scientists ask many sorts of questions that require different sorts of approaches (Chernoff, 2007) and qualitative and quantitative sources of data collection and the paradigms which they rest on, should be based on the nature of the object of study and what one wants to learn about it (Creswell, 2007; Moses and Knutsen, 2007).

In the case of my project, I wanted to understand the localised, contextual understandings of children who live in the *bustees* of Dhaka. But I also wanted to create indicators that were able to measure the understanding of power and empowerment that was important to my research participants. To do this required the marrying of these research paradigms, in a way that tells us different things about the nature of reality and answers two, distinct, but related research problems that my objectives outline. This is not to claim that mixed methods are a solution to all research problems, but is to question those traditionalists in either paradigm that claim one way of knowing is better than another, or that it is impossible to mix methods in social research. As Taylor (2008) tells us in the construction of indicators for indigenous well-being, "the development of indicators in cross-cultural settings will always involve a degree of reductionism and a process of translation. What is important to ensure is that this reductionism is negotiated and that the sets of indicators developed are seen as legitimate and appropriate by all stakeholders" (Taylor, 2008, 117-118). I concur, and it is my hope that the indicators which I did develop, if employed, would be seen as "legitimate and appropriate" by the children whose understanding they were based on.

7.4. PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

This research project was originally inspired by the work of the original proponents of empowerment and participatory development; Moser, Sen and Grown, Kabeer, Rowlands, Friedmann, Freire, Chambers and many others. What initially drew me to this work and inspired this research project was the radical and explicitly political approach that the empowerment approach offered to development theory and practice. These authors, some more than others, sought to transform existing political and cultural institutions to liberate women and the poor. This radical, transformative approach inspired me to seek out a relatively 'powerless', marginalized group and to intentionally use their perspectives to inform my thesis and led me to want to build a deep and contextualised understanding based off the perspectives of this 'powerless' group. This project therefore began as much normative and political as anything else.

I still believe that this normative and political positioning is important for development studies, that it is important for both theory and practice to be informed by those that are affected by and have

the most to gain from development interventions. But when I began to analyse the qualitative data from my creative art and storytelling workshop and read the contextual literature on Bangladesh, the radical and political literature that I had been so inspired by was not giving me the theoretical framework I needed to explain my own findings. What I have learnt throughout this process is that although listening to the voices of those on the margins is important and admirable, it is equally important to place those voices within the broader social, historic, political and economic contexts in which they have come from. I have drawn on various social and political theorists to do that in this thesis and I have learnt that development practice does not exist in a vacuum but is informed by theory. If I had not attempted to read the literature on the anthropology, history and political economy of Bangladesh, then my understanding of the broader context in which my participants lived would have been under and probably ill-informed. Understanding the social construction of childhood in Bangladesh for example, has given the weight that my participants placed on the importance of family so much more significance than when they first told me about it in the workshop.

More than anything, what this has shown me is that the local is not isolated from the national or global contexts. Local, national and global economic, social, cultural and political structures all collide and interweave in complex and dynamic ways that form the boundaries of power which constrain agency. Understanding the broad context therefore is vital to understand those social structures that are oppressing, marginalizing and constraining actors, some much more so than others. What this has also taught me, is that global, universal models, where technical programmes are rolled out across populations, with little regard for context, helps explain the (I believe, fair) post-development criticism of development interventions that fail to live up to their promises. My hope is that others would learn from this research, like I have, that although the political and normative position that seeks out voices of ‘the oppressed’ is admirable, this alone is not enough for long-term social and political transformation. To do this requires a long-term and much more complex and complicated process, but one that is nonetheless worthwhile.

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9. APPENDIX

9.1. Appendix 1. Creative Art and Storytelling Workshop Schedule

Creative Art and Storytelling Workshop - 3 Day Schedule		
Time	**Activity**	**Detail**
Day 1.		
9.00	Briefing	Initial briefing, giving the children the background to the research, how their input will be used, their rights as participants and the ongoing opportunities for 'opting in' and 'opting out' of the research
9.15	Ice breaker	An initial ice-breaker - throwing a ball around and introducing yourself to the group and something about you. Followed by a game of 'Simon Says'.
9.45	Drawing activity - 'no power'	Activity where children are invited to draw a picture of a child that has 'no-power'
10.45	Morning tea	Group morning tea, provided by World Vision.
11.00	Group storytelling - 'no power'	The children are invited to stand and share with the group why the child they have drawn has 'no power'
12.00	Lunch	Group lunch, provided by World Vision
12.30	Ranking activity	Harley to cross check categories of 'no power' that have been shared with the group. The children are then to discuss each category and vote on what cateogry is the most important to the least important.
1.00	Drawing activity - 'power'	Activity where children are invited to draw a picture of a child that has 'no-power'
2.00	Afternoon tea	Group afternoon tea, provided by World Vision.
2.30	Closing game	A game of 'Fruit Salad' to finish the day
Day 2.		
9.00	Ice breaker/game	The children to lead us in an opening game
9.15	Group storytelling - 'power'	The children are invited to stand and share with the group why the child they have drawn has 'power'
10.30	Morning tea	Group morning tea, provided by World Vision.
11.00	Ranking activity	Harley to cross check categories of 'power' that have been shared with the group. The children are then to discuss each category and vote on what cateogry is the most important to the least important.
11.30	Drawing/writing activity - moving from 'no power' to 'power'	The children are invited to place their pictures side-by-side and to think about ways in which a child can move from the first picture ('no power') to the second picture ('power'). They can draw or write on post-it-notes
12.30	Lunch	Group lunch, provided by World Vision
1.00	Group discussion - moving from 'no power' to 'power'	The children are invited to stand and share with the group how a child can move from their first picture to their second picture
2.00	Games	Closing the group activities with some games, led by the children and research assistants.
Day 3.		
9.00	Ice breaker/game	The children to lead us in an opening game
9.15	Individual interviews	Local volunteers to play games with the children and look after them while individual interviews occur in a quiet space. Children invitited one by one to come and share their pictures with Harley and research assistant
12.30	Lunch	Group lunch, provided by World Vision
1.00	Feedback	An opportunity for the children to provide feedback and to share those things that they liked, and did not like about the workshop
1.30	Singing/acting/dancing	Closing by sharing some songs from Bangladesh and New Zealand and the children sharing some of the acting they had learnt in school
2.30	Goodbyes	Saying goodbye to one another and wishing each other well

9.2. Appendix 2. Survey

Children's Survey

Instructions:

- Please answer each question as honestly as you can – there is no right or wrong answer
- Mark your answer with a ✓
- The facilitator will read out the questions, please wait until they have read out the question before you write down your answer.
- If you have any trouble answering any question because you don't understand it, please mark it with a *
- If you do not want to answer any question, please leave it blank (i.e. do not answer the question).

1. How old are you?
   - ○ 9 years old
   - ○ 10 years old
   - ○ 11 years old
   - ○ 12 years old
   - ○ 13 years old

2. Where do you live?
   - ○ Duripara
   - ○ Rahmat Camp
   - ○ Millet Camp
   - ○ Beguntila

3. Do you live with at least one of your parents?
   - ○ Yes
   - ○ No

4. Do you live in a permanent home (i.e. do you sleep in the same house everynight)?
   - ○ Yes

- ○ No

5. In the last week (7 days), how many times has at least one caregiver been home with you in the evenings?
   - ○ 0
   - ○ 1
   - ○ 2
   - ○ 3
   - ○ 4
   - ○ 5
   - ○ 6
   - ○ 7

6. How much time do you spend with your caregivers on an average day?
   - ○ No time
   - ○ Less than one hour
   - ○ 1-2 hours
   - ○ 2-3 hours
   - ○ 3+ hours

7. In the last week, have you spent time with your friends outside of school?
   - ○ Yes
   - ○ No

8. In the last week, have you spent time with your extended family (grandparents, aunties, uncles, cousins)?
   - ○ Yes
   - ○ No

9. In the last month, have you had to miss any meals because there wasn't enough food?
   - ○ Yes
   - ○ No

10. Have you ever been to a doctor before?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

11. Can you please place an 'tick' next to each of your personal belongings:
    - ○ 1 or more books
    - ○ 2 or more play-things (toys)
    - ○ 1 or more pairs of shoes
    - ○ 3 or more pairs of clothing
    - ○ A toothbrush
    - ○ A hairbrush
    - ○ A mobile phone

12. Can you please place an 'tick' next to EACH ITEM that you have in your HOUSEHOLD
    - ○ Soap
    - ○ A mobile phone
    - ○ A T.V.
    - ○ A mode of transport (e.g. car, motorcycle, bicycle, rickshaw etc)
    - ○ Electricity
    - ○ A toilet/latrine
    - ○ A place to bathe (a bathroom)
    - ○ A water source (tap, pump, etc)

13. Are you currently attending school?
    - ○ Yes
    - ○ No

14. In the last month, how many days of school have you missed?

_____

15. How many years in total have you spent at primary school (pick the closest year – e.g if you have been to school for 3 years and 2 months, pick 3 years, if you have been to school for 3 years and 10 months, pick 4 years)?
    - ○ 0
    - ○ 1

- ○ 2
- ○ 3
- ○ 4
- ○ 5
- ○ 6
- ○ 7
- ○ 8

16. Have you ever been denied access to any school, for any reason?
    - ○ Yes
    - ○ No

17. Do you ever engage in work outside of your home to earn money?
    - ○ Yes
    - ○ No

18. Do you ever engage in 'waste-picking' to earn money?
    - ○ Yes
    - ○ No

19. Looking at the trees in your slum, do you think that there are
    - ○ None
    - ○ A few
    - ○ Some
    - ○ Many

20. How many different parks and/or fields have you been to play in the last 15 days?

_____

21. Looking at the waste in your slum, do you think there is
    - ○ None
    - ○ A little
    - ○ Some
    - ○ A lot

22. How many times a month does someone come to collect your rubbish?

- ○ Zero
- ○ Once
- ○ Twice
- ○ Three times
- ○ Four times or more

23. In the last week, how many times have you bathed?

- ○ 0
- ○ 1-2
- ○ 3-4
- ○ 5-7
- ○ 8+

24. For how many days do you usually wear your clothes before washing them?

- ○ 1
- ○ 2-3
- ○ 4-5
- ○ 6+

9.3. Appendix 3. Survey results

Table 9. Survey Results – Personal Relationships with Family and Friends									
Indicator	Gender	Age	Slum	Whether or not child lives with at least one parent	Whether or not child lives in a permanent dwelling	Number of evenings in the previous week that a parent had been home with the child	Number of hours a child spends with a parent in a day (maximum of 3)	Whether or not child has spent time with friends, outside of school, in the last week	Whether or not child has spent time with extended family in the last week
Child									
1	Male	12	Kukua	Y	Y	7	3	Y	Y
2	Male	10	Kukua	Y	Y	7	3	Y	Y
3	Male	11	Ajaila	Y	Y	7	3	Y	Y
4	Male	11	Ajaila	Y	Y	7	3	Y	Y
5	Male	12	Bakal	Y	Y	7	3	Y	Y
6	Male	11	Bakal	Y	Y	6	1	N	Y
7	Male	12	Masaba	Y	Y	7	3	Y	Y
8	Male	11	Masaba	Y	Y	7	3	Y	Y
9	Female	11	Bakal	Y	Y	7	3	Y	Y
10	Female	11	Bakal	Y	Y	6	3	N	Y
11	Female	11	Bakal	Y	Y	7	3	N	Y
12	Female	13	Kukua	Y	Y	7	3	N	N
13	Female	11	Kukua	Y	Y	7	3	N	Y
14	Female	11	Kukua	Y	Y	4	3	Y	Y
15	Female	12	Masaba	Y	Y	0	0	N	Y
16	Female	11	Masaba	Y	Y	7	3	N	Y
17	Female	10	Ajaila	Y	Y	5	3	Y	N
18	Female	11	Ajaila	Y	Y	6	3	Y	Y
19	Female	10	Ajaila	Y	Y	5	3	Y	N
20	Female	11	Masaba	Y	Y	7	3	N	Y
Average/Aggregate				100%	100%	6.15	2.8	60%	85%
Median				-	-	7	3	-	-

Table 10. Survey Results – Access to Financial Resources																		
Indicator	**Gender**	**Age**	**Slum**	**Number of personal belongings (total)**	**1 or more books**	**2 or more toys**	**1 or more pairs of shoes**	**3 or more pairs of clothes**	**Toothbrush**	**Mobile phone**	**Number of household assets (total)**	**Soap**	**Mobile phone**	**TV**	**Transport**	**Electricity**	**Toilet**	**Bathroom**	**Water source**
Child																			
1	Male	12	Kukua	6	Y	Y	Y	Y	y	Y	6	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N
2	Male	10	Kukua	5	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	8	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
3	Male	11	Ajaila	6	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	4	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	N
4	Male	11	Ajaila	5	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	7	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
5	Male	12	Bakal	5	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	6	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y
6	Male	11	Bakal	6	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	6	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N
7	Male	12	Masaba	5	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	7	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
8	Male	11	Masaba	4	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	7	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
9	Female	11	Bakal	5	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	5	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N
10	Female	11	Bakal	5	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	6	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N
11	Female	11	Bakal	5	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	4	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	N
12	Female	13	Kukua	4	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	7	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
13	Female	11	Kukua	5	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	7	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
14	Female	11	Kukua	5	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	7	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
15	Female	12	Masaba	5	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	7	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
16	Female	11	Masaba	5	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	7	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
17	Female	10	Ajaila	1	N	Y	N	N	N	N	1	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
18	Female	11	Ajaila	4	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	4	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	N
19	Female	10	Ajaila	4	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	5	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N
20	Female	11	Masaba	5	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	7	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Average/ Aggregate				4.75	90%	80%	95%	95%	95%	20%	5.9	100%	95%	90%	30%	95%	60%	70%	50%
Median				5	-	-	-	-	-	-	6.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 11. Survey Results – Natural Environment									
Indicator	**Gender**	**Age**	**Slum**	**Number of trees in slum**	**Number of green spaces to play in local vicinity**	**Amount of waste in slum**	**Frequency of rubbish collection per month**	**Number of times bathing a week**	**How many times clothes are worn before they are washed**
Child									
1	Male	12	Kukua	Some	7	A little	4	7	1
2	Male	10	Kukua	None	0	A little	4	7	1
3	Male	11	Ajaila	Some	0	A little	4	7	1
4	Male	11	Ajaila	Many	15	A little	4	7	1
5	Male	12	Bakal	Some	2	Some	4	7	2
6	Male	11	Bakal	A few	0	A little	4	7	1
7	Male	12	Masaba	A few	0	A little	4	7	1
8	Male	11	Masaba	A few	0	A little	4	7	1
9	Female	11	Bakal	Some	0	Some	4	7	1
10	Female	11	Bakal	Some	0	A lot	4	7	1
11	Female	11	Bakal	Some	0	A lot	4	7	1
12	Female	13	Kukua	Some	0	A little	4	7	1
13	Female	11	Kukua	None	0	A little	4	7	1
14	Female	11	Kukua	Some	0	Some	4	7	1
15	Female	12	Masaba	Many	0	A little	4	7	1
16	Female	11	Masaba	A few	0	A little	4	7	1
17	Female	10	Ajaila	Many	0	A little	4	7	1
18	Female	11	Ajaila	Many	0	A little	4	7	1
19	Female	10	Ajaila	Many	15	A little	4	7	1
20	Female	11	Masaba	Some	0	A little	4	7	1
Average/Aggregate				Some	1.95	A little	4	7	1.05
Median				Some	0	A little	4	7	1

Table 12. Survey Results – Education and Working Children									
Indicator	**Gender**	**Age**	**Slum**	**Whether or not a child is enrolled in school**	**Percentage of school days missed in last month**	**Number of total years of disrupted education**	**Whether or not a child has been denied access to a school**	**Whether or not a child has ever engaged in work outside of the home**	**Whether or not a child has ever been involved in waste-picking**
Child									
1	Male	12	Kukua	Y	0%	1	N	N	N
2	Male	10	Kukua	Y	0%	1	N	N	N
3	Male	11	Ajaila	Y	0%	2	N	N	N
4	Male	11	Ajaila	Y	0%	1	N	N	N
5	Male	12	Bakal	Y	20%	1	N	N	N
6	Male	11	Bakal	Y	0%	0	N	N	N
7	Male	12	Masaba	Y	0%	1	N	N	N
8	Male	11	Masaba	Y	0%	0	N	N	N
9	Female	11	Bakal	Y	25%	0	N	N	N
10	Female	11	Bakal	Y	0%	0	N	N	N
11	Female	11	Bakal	Y	0%	0	N	N	N
12	Female	13	Kukua	Y	0%	0	Y	Y	N
13	Female	11	Kukua	Y	0%	3	N	N	N
14	Female	11	Kukua	Y	0%	1	N	N	N
15	Female	12	Masaba	Y	50%	1	N	Y	N
16	Female	11	Masaba	Y	0%	0	N	Y	N
17	Female	10	Ajaila	N	0%	2	N	N	N
18	Female	11	Ajaila	Y	25%	0	N	N	N
19	Female	10	Ajaila	Y	5%	1	N	N	N
20	Female	11	Masaba	Y	0%	1	N	Y	N
Average/Aggregate				95%	6.25%	0.8	5%	20%	0%
Median				-	0%	1	-	-	-