ASPECTS OF SOCIAL INTERACTION IN THE NEIGHBOURHOODS OF DHAKA CITY

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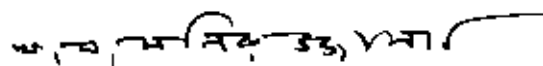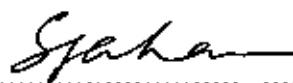#### Roll No. 040315013 (F)

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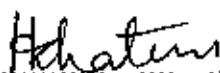
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CANDIDATE'S DECLERATION

It is thereby declared that this thesis or any part of it has not been submitted elsewhere for the award of any degree or diploma.

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ABSTRACT

Lack of social ties among the people of residential areas is identified as an overwhelming drawback of contemporary urbanization. In Dhaka City it is observed that new neighbourhoods are being created, older areas are being redeveloped and housing reform processes has brought about major changes in patterns of ownership and mobility. Therefore, both new arrivals and more established residents of Dhaka City have been experiencing significant disruption and transformation in their daily lives. In the context of physical and social transition in residential areas in contemporary Dhaka, the traditional neighbourhood ties that existed in the old Dhaka seem to be declining day by day.

To understand the stated problem, three neighbourhoods of Dhaka City, Rasulbag, a *mohalla* of Old Dhaka, a block of Dhanmondi residential area and Eastern Point, a housing complex of Shantinagar that represent different and contrasting physical and social characteristics are selected to evaluate the status of social interaction among the residents of the neighbourhoods. This research focused on mental association of the residents with their neighbourhood, pattern of primary social interactions (face-to-face relations) and secondary social interactions (organized social activities). According to the opinion (percentage and score) of the 25 percent heads of the households of each neighbourhood, it is found that the status of social interaction is higher in both Rasulbag, and Eastern Point than a block of Dhanmondi, part of a planned residential area.

According to the findings of questionnaire survey and FGD, it is observed that the pattern of social interaction is influenced by both socio-economic characteristics of the residents such as income, family structure, housing characteristics etc. and physical characteristics of the neighbourhoods such as building pattern, street layout, location of public places etc. Some factors work as positive force and some are as negative force. The influence of these factors also varies from one neighbourhood to another because of the distinct socio-physical-cultural criteria of the studied neighbourhoods.

Social interaction friendly physical environment are need to be created in the neighbourhoods of Dhaka City by incorporating public spaces and pedestrian friendly environment. through architectural design of buildings that promote eye contact and encourage people to talk and exchange greetings. Social initiatives such as, formation of neighbourhood based association and arranging social and cultural events for residents especially for children is necessary to enhance social interaction. As social connectedness at the neighborhood level plays a vital role in promoting wellbeing and strengthening communities, a neighbourhood should constitute a cohesive unit both in terms of the physical layout and the residents' social well being. Both professionals and civil society can play significant role in building strong communities where individuals, families. and children are valued and supported in the neighbourhoods of Dhaka City.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

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BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
DCC	Dhaka City Corporation
DMA	Dhaka Metropolitan Area
DMDP	Dhaka Metropolitan Development Program
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HSC	Higher Secondary Certificate
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Survey
SSC	Secondary School Certificate
USA	United States of America
WASA	Water And Sewerage Authority

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INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION
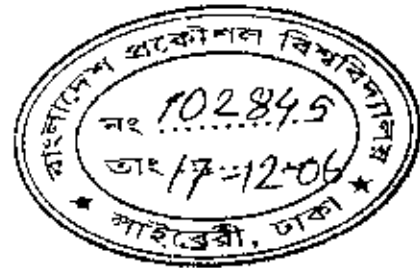
1.1 Statement of the Problem

The intimate relation of the people observed in medieval cities is more or less absent in the post industrial towns and cities. It has been suggested that the 'we feeling' of the city-dwellers is weakened by the very complexity of urban society and urbanites become night-dwellers. not neighbours (Ian, 1980). Absence of social interaction among people is observed especially in the cities of third world countries where urbanization takes place mostly due to rural-urban migration and where neighbourhoods comprise of unstable residents moving from one place to another (Keller. 1968). Besides, transition of residential areas through housing reform, development of new areas and continuous redevelopment process rapidly changing the traditional social and physical feature of these cities (Mann. 1965). Dhaka City. capital of a third world country. is going through the same process of transformation where neighbours remain strangers with their neighbours without knowing each other for years while they seek their friends no matter what differences may separate them (Sampson. 1988). Neighbourhood ties seem to be declining in both Old and New Dhaka day by day and the residents of neighbourhoods do not view themselves as a group anymore (Nabi, 1971).

It is widely accepted that 'Living environment not only consists of one's own family and homestead but includes neighbours and neighbourhoods and an array of physical and social relationships' (Ahsan, 1998). A process of day-to-day social and physical interaction creates a suitable living environment and satisfactory understanding of urban space cannot be developed independently without considering the social relation of the people. But life for the residents of Dhaka City living in blocks of flat, offers them little chance to know their next-door neighbours. Such a living has also being pushing their children to be self-centric due to lack of social communication (Rahman. 1994). The present study was an attempt to reveal the pattern of social interactions within the physical boundary of the neighbourhoods of Dhaka City to have an understanding regarding the existence of the problem in real life.

1.2 Background of the Problem

The transition of social context of residential neighbourhoods of Dhaka City is closely associated with its historical transformation process from a small Hindu trading center to a Mega city. The city has arisen more or less spontaneously over four hundred years. In history, the evolution of Dhaka as a town goes back to the 16th century. However, Dhaka rose to prominence after it became the capital of Bengal during the Mughal rule under the Muslims in 1610 A. D. For a long period of its growth, Dhaka was confined with in the medieval Mughal core. An early impetus of growth of a 'new town' outside the historic city started in around 1764 (Akramuzzaman, 1966). After the independence of Bangladesh, New Dhaka has experienced phenomenal growth. Within the successive stages of growth, two dominant urban patterns are conspicuous in Dhaka; these are the historical core of 'Old Dhaka' and the later development known as 'New Dhaka'.

The residential neighbourhoods of Old Dhaka, locally known as *mohallas* were the enclaves of craft or caste groups and are considered by many to be a morphological archetype of this historic city (Nilufar, 1997). These vernacular *mohallas* were either craft settlements or single caste groups. *Mohallas* of Old Dhaka were social as well as geographical units (Khan, 1966). Grouping of homogenous population of similar occupation and caste like *mohallas* was not developed in 'New Dhaka'. Nonetheless neighbourhoods or *para* (in Bengali) are found here as a spontaneous and natural phenomenon as an outcome of the sociological concept of cohabitation. Usually in these *paras* comparatively less stable people, migrated Dhaka from different corners of the country, started to live together with the local people. A kind of social bonding seemed to grow among them but in most of the cases such social relation was developed because of the proximity of dwellings and for social protection and support (Nilufar, 1997).

The mobile residents of Dhaka City did not have the opportunity to feel bonding to the neighbourhood or *para*. 'In an unstable neighbourhood marked by frequent residential change, life tends to decline because individuals and families have insufficient time to become socially established and thereby develop an interest in persons living near them'

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(Drake and Drake, 1969). Thus, *para* become a locality rather than *mohalla* that was established on the basis of social bonding.

With the changing characteristics of the residents, the physical features of neighbourhoods of Dhaka also changed as the roads and streets spread out like tentacles from the central urban core and shapeless and undistinguished suburbs sprawl in all directions. The boundaries of the neighbourhoods have broken down (Nabi, 1971). Apartments became vogue in Dhaka City towards the middle of the 1980s, more or less because of the pressure of huge population. Apartment housing became an instant solution for solving the problem of housing of the ever-increasing population and the trend gained momentum with large-scale acceptability of the concept of living in multi storied apartment houses under acute shortage of land and in a situation of rapid increase in land prices and the cost of construction (Islam, 1996). As the apartment buildings began to come up all over the city without proper planning, the appearance and structure of the city changed remarkably. Even the physical features of planned residential blocks of Dhanmondi, Uttara, Banani, Gulshan, Baridhara have changed dramatically with the influence of high-rise apartment buildings. In this context, the physical identity of neighbourhoods and differentiation of one neighbourhood from the other becomes difficult in contemporary Dhaka. Replacement of low rise single family houses with apartment houses of more than 20 families living in the same plot creates cohabitation of mobile people of various backgrounds that is not favorable for making stable social relation for the residents (Nilufar, 1997).

Moreover, in Dhaka City new neighbourhoods are being created, older areas are being redeveloped and housing reform processes have brought about major changes in patterns of ownership and mobility (Siddique, 1991). Therefore, both new arrivals and more established residents of Dhaka City have been experiencing significant disruption and transformation in their daily lives. In the context of physical and social transition in residential areas in contemporary Dhaka, the traditional neighbourhood ties that existed in Old Dhaka seem to be declining day by day (Nabi, 1971).

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The main aim of the study was to understand the present status and differences in the pattern of social interaction among people in the neighbourhoods of three different areas of Dhaka City and to identify the reasons behind these differences. The specific objectives were:

1. To evaluate the status of social interaction among residents of the neighbourhoods of Dhaka City in relation to selected criteria.
2. To identify the factors, associated with social interaction pattern in the neighbourhoods.
3. To formulate recommendations for initiatives needed to be taken for enhancing social interaction among residents in the neighbourhoods

1.4 Rationale of the Study

Neighbourhood ties play an important role in people's life by providing mutual help and moral support, by sharing common goals and expectations, by solving local problems and initiating fulfillment of local needs etc. (Murtagh, 2000) It is considered that social relation and interaction, sense of local belonging and patterns of mutual assistance among people sharing common residential area and neighbourhood can ensure effective people's participation in framing not only in the area development policy but also the national policies (Forrest and Ngai-ming, 2004). Thus, it is necessary to evaluate the status of social interaction in the neighbourhoods of Dhaka City to understand the aspects of social relation and associated factors involved with it. Findings of the study can be considered to facilitate social interaction for developing friendly neighbourhood as well as for encouraging people's participation at the local level. As few studies of Dhaka City have examined social change and social interaction at the level of urban neighbourhood, this exploratory research was intended as a contribution to filling this knowledge gap through an exploration of the aspects of social interaction in the neighbourhoods of contemporary Dhaka.

1.5 Selection of Study Area

In the present study, neighbourhoods of three different areas of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) were treated as study area. One is in Lalbag Thana, situated in the old part of the city, which has historic background and is termed as 'organic city' developed in a natural way and has undergone limited recent physical change and housing reform. Another is in the Shantinagar area of Ramna Thana that has undergone massive physical change in terms of housing in the past few years and the third site is in the Dhanmondi Thana, that was developed as a planned residential area in 1955 and which has also gone through housing redevelopment in the past few years. Thus, neighbourhoods from organic Old Dhaka, informally developed New Dhaka and planned New Dhaka with different backgrounds and physical features were selected to represent different and contrasting physical environments and areas, which were likely to have different social profiles. This is to note here that this study focused on three different types but typical residential areas of Dhaka City. Residential areas resided by extremely affluent people and poverty prone residential areas are excluded from the study. Thus, this research attempted to represent the typical residential neighbourhoods of Dhaka City.

Map 1.1 : Location of Study Area

TONGI

UTTARA

PALLABI

BANARUPA

CANTONMENT

GULSHAN-E-MOHAMMADI

BASHUNDHARA

MIRPUR

KAFRUL

GULSHAN

BADDA

NABINAGAR

MOHAMMADPUR

TEJGAON

KHILGAON

DHANMONDI

HAZARIBAG

RAMNA

SHABUJBAG

MOTIJHEEL

N

W E

S

LALBAG

KOTAWALI

KAMRANGIRCHAR

SUTRAPUR

DEMRA

● **Study Area**

SHYAMPUR

MADANI NAGAR

DHAKA METRO POLITAN AREA

LEGEND

DMP Area

Thana Area

Thana H Q

Railways

River

Road

Source : http://www.bangladesh.net/maps/bangladesh.gif

1.6 Empirical Research Findings

Most literature and policy decision draw on studies of neighbourhoods and local social interaction in western cities, particularly the USA and Western Europe (Suttles, 1972. Sampson, 1988. Crow and Allen, 1994). Only a few studies in Asia have examined social change and social interaction at the level of the urban neighbourhood (Forrest and Ngai-ming, 2004). In Bangladesh whilst there is a rapidly expanding literature on housing facilities. changing nature of housing markets, impact of housing reforms and more macro analysis of urbanization pattern, there is little research on the changing micro sociology of the cities. In this section, objectives and findings of reviewed empirical research conducted on social relations and interactions of neighbourhoods in different cities of the world are outlined which provide the methodological and theoretical basis of the present study:

Nilufar (1997) attempted to reveal the pattern of primary and secondary social relations in both naturally formed organic Old Dhaka and informally developed New Dhaka. From the quantitative calculation of neighbourliness pattern. it is found that neighbourliness is more prominent in the older part of Dhaka than the new areas. Same picture is found in case of kinship. friendship and pattern of social network. From her research it is also identified that homogeneity in income, occupational or religious grouping, residential stability in local areas and home ownership have positive influence on the social interaction pattern. Despite this, people of Old Dhaka showed greater cohesion among rich and poor. educated and uneducated while in New Dhaka there is found a sharp distance among people of different class status. Spatial extent of neighbourliness is also found wider in Old Dhaka than neighbourhoods of New Dhaka.

Nabi (1971) implies that proper neighbourhood planning is the only practical process to recover the social bond, which has lost from the modern industrial city life. He described theoretical support and evidence about how self-oriented attitude, class distinction and segregation, communal life and lack of local facilities for social intercourse of the city affected the social organization especially at the neighbourhood level. To overcome this situation he gave importance on the design of residential layout, creation of residential

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environment, grouping of houses, arrangement of the road system and positioning of buildings. According to his findings, three basic elements that are, patterns of street layout, land division and planned open space determine the housing environment. Aesthetic elements should also be included in the overall planning process.

Forrest and Ngai-ming (2004) conducted a social survey in three contrasting neighbourhoods in Guangzhou in the Pearl River Delta, one of the most economically dynamic and rapidly urbanizing areas in the world. Three neighbourhoods - an area of older inner city housing; an area of predominantly work unit housing; and a newer area of mostly commodified apartments were studied. This study explores the meaning of neighbourhood, sense of local belonging and community and patterns and incidence of mutual assistance in theses neighbours and also reflects on the extent to which market reform are transforming patterns of local social interaction. It is found that the level of social interaction, local intimacy, trust and mutual assistance tends to diminish as we from the older more established neighbourhood to the work unit and commodified area. The implication, therefore, is that weaker, more fluid ties of association will become more prevalent as Chinese cities become more commodified. Besides, changes in housing tenure, residential mobility, extensive urban redevelopment and more general changes in social behavior are all impacting on Guangzhou's urban morphology and its micro sociology.

Forrest *et al.* (2002) conducted in-depth interviews with individuals in three contrasting locations in Hong Kong in terms of physical environment, occupational profile and housing tenures-a public housing state, a new town and an older city area. The interviews explored neighbourhood perceptions, ideas of community, sense of belonging and attachment to neighbourhoods. The study revealed that people are aware of neighbourhood differences and they also have positive feelings about where they live. However, sense of local community in Hong Kong seems to be less important to some groups (busy working people) than others (housewives, elderly people). Besides, other factors like the presence of children in a household, gender differences and age critically influences the pattern and nature of local social interaction. Sense of belonging is more

evident in elderly people than young single people, in household with children than childless family and in women than man. A stronger sense of community has been also associated with higher rates of home ownership because of the longer period home owners remain in the same dwelling and the higher sense of belonging they feel for that community.

Hart *et al.* (2002) attempted to identify the relationship between the physical living environment, social cohesion and safety both in terms of victimization risk and perception of safety emerge in neighbourhoods of Netherlands, whereby the effects of neighbourhood characteristics and of individual characteristics were compared with one another by multi-level analysis. It turned out that strong social cohesion between local residents significantly reduces the risk of falling victim to varying forms of crime. Strong social cohesion in the neighbourhood is also directly related to less pronounced feelings of unsafely among the residents. Thus, a living environment characterized by weak social cohesion or by social disorganization provides a favorable seedbed for criminality. The study also found that there has been no erosion of social cohesion in the society but there does appeared to have been a changing of the guard under which old forms of cohesion are increasingly being replaced by new ones. Willingness of people to keep relation with one another is now replaced by necessity of relationships for development of local community.

Coulthard, *et al.* (2002) measured civic engagement, neighbourliness, social networks, social support and perception of the local area to evaluate the status social capital of England, Wales and Scotland. They revealed that various socio-cultural aspects such as, age, sex, ethnicity, education, socio-economic group, employment, household type, tenure, length of residence etc. influences the indicators of social capital. It was found from this study that white and black native people feel more civic engagement to the local area than Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi immigrant living in the same area. people of Wales found having more neighbourliness than the people of England and Scotland, Women are more likely to have good relation with relatives and friends than

men and men more likely to engaged in providing social support to neighbours and friends than women.

Murtagh (2000) conducted a study on social activity and interaction in Northern Ireland under the Life and Time Survey, a joint project between Queen's University Belfast and the University of Ulster. This was an attempt to measure social capital activity in the routines of daily activity in Northern Ireland. The survey measured 1800 respondents' involvement in 46 activities, which have been grouped into the four categories of social activity: sporting, church, club and society membership. It was found that the stock of social capital in Northern Ireland is widely distributed and in some sectors like, social engagement and social activity, intensely developed. Protestants are more likely to join clubs and societies and church based activities than Catholics. Residential segregation has an important effect on the way in which social capital is constructed and reproduced. However, a high proportion of activity is conducted in mixed religion settings. Integration tends to take place in selective areas, activities, social classes and age groups. Most of the interaction tends to take place in city centers, riverside restaurants and bars and most of the people like to visit a friend, go out for meal and for weekly shopping. People in the higher socio-economic categories are more likely to go to a play, concert or to the cinema compared to both lower socio-economic groups and the population as a whole. Activities in clubs and societies tend to be highest among people aged between 35 and 65 and it tends to be lower among the younger and older aged category.

Ellen and Turner (1997) synthesized findings from a wide range of empirical research into how neighbourhoods affect families and children. The study identified six distinct mechanisms through which neighbourhood conditions influence families and individuals. These are quality of local services, socialization by adults, peer influences, social networks, exposure to crime and violence, and physical distance and isolation. It also lays out a conceptual framework for understanding how neighbourhood may affect people of different life stages. This study point out that neighbourhood has only a small influence on children's intellectual or emotional development before they begin school. As children grew up however the influence gradually wanes and the importance of peers and adults

outside the family grows The impact of neighbourhood on adults operates somewhat differently, influencing people's ability to gain access to services, information and opportunities, rather than directly shaping their behavior. The researchers opine that despite a growing body of evidence that neighbourhood conditions play a role in the different life stages no consensus emerged about which neighbourhood characteristics affect which outcomes, or about what types of families may be most influenced by neighbourhood conditions.

1.7 Organization of the Study

The present dissertation is organized in seven chapters.

Chapter 1 states the background of the problem. objectives, study area and rationale of the study. Findings of empirical research conducted on various aspects of relation and interaction of neighbourhood people of cities in both Bangladesh and abroad is also discussed here to indicate the theoretical and methodological support of the present study.

Chapter 2 presents theoretical concepts of social interaction, thematic idea of neighbourhood unit. characteristics and changing pattern of neighbourhoods of Dhaka City.

Chapter 3 states the methodology of the study. This chapter includes the criteria for selecting neighbourhoods, criteria for describing neighbourhood characteristics, process of selecting indicators of social interaction, process of data collection, methods of measuring and evaluating status of social interaction in the selected neighbourhoods and process of identifying factors that influences social interaction.

Chapter 4 illustrates the physical, socio-economic and housing characteristics of the studied neighbourhoods.

Chapter 5 mainly intends to evaluate the status of social interaction in terms of selected indicators of mental association with neighbourhoods, primary social interaction and secondary social interaction for studied neighbourhoods.

Chapter 6 describes the factors influencing social interaction among residents in the studied neighbourhoods.

Chapter 7 summarizes findings of the study and recommends measures that need to be taken for enhancing social interaction among residents of neighbourhoods of Dhaka City.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE STUDY

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE STUDY

2.1 Social Interaction: Definition and Concept

The term 'Society' is derived from the Latin word 'Socius', which means friendship or companionship. 'It has been contended that wherever there is life, there is society, because life means heredity and so far as we know, can arise only out of and in the presence of other life' (Dickens, 1990). The people in a society share a common way of life as a result of interacting on a regular, continuous basis and because they have acquired patterns of behavior on which all, more or less, agree. Thus, social interaction is the fundamental concept of society formation. 'Social interaction is the process by which we act toward or respond to other people' (Ian, 1980). When one person's acts influence or are influenced by the acts of another person, social interaction takes place. This continuous interaction between people provides the basis for all social life, and thus for society itself. Thus, it can be said that, social interaction is the process by which we act and react to those around us.

2.2 Forms of Social Interaction

Social interaction requires numerous forms of verbal and non-verbal communication. Language is fundamental to social life and is the only way of verbal interaction. Much of our interaction is done through informal conversation with others. Non-verbal communication is the exchange of information and meaning through facial expressions, gesture and movements of the body. Every day interaction depends on subtle relationships between what we convey with our faces and bodies and what we express in words. 'In many social interactions, we engaged in unfocused interaction with others. Unfocused interaction takes place whenever individuals exhibit mutual awareness of one another's presence. On the other hand, focused interaction occurs when individuals directly attend to what others say or do' (Giddens, 1984).

Social interaction at neighbourhood level is classified as primary and secondary interaction. Primary social activities are like mutual help and visiting which require a

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face-to-face contact and local cohabitation. By secondary social contact a transpatial grouping is indicated where people are members of a larger organizations beyond the spatial boundary of the neighbourhood. Glass (1948) tries to establish another issue that requires organized and spontaneous contacts which might be generated by co-present in common functional institutions. It might be considered as a version exceeding primary level but not similar to the secondary contact.

It is very important to identify the aspects, which inspire people to participate in social networks and society and which hold such participation back. 'At individual level social relation primarily concerns three aspects. In the first place, it concerns the general involvement of citizens with their fellow human beings, their identification with other people and their endorsement of solidarity values. In the second place, it concerns the contacts the people enter into and maintain with one another and their integration in the social environment. This includes for example contacts with others in the neighbourhood, inclusion in social networks and the provision of informal help. In the third place, the affinity with central social institutions forms part of the operationalisation, as does the level at and way in which people organize them socially and participate politically' (Hart, *et al.* 2002).

2.3 Origin and Development of Neighbourhood Idea

A neighbourhood is a collection of physical objects: of houses and streets, of parks and stores. But the real importance of a neighbourhood is that it is made of neighbours. Neighbours are people, who are acquainted with each other at least by sight and who have some sense of responsibility to each other and neighbours are not anonymous (Sucher, 1996). 'A group of people who occupies a discrete territory constitutes a neighbourhood' (Blowers 1973). The word neighbourhood originates from the word 'neighbour', which simply means 'people united primarily not by common origins or common purpose but by the proximity of their dwellings in space' (Mumford, 1968) This fact of local cohabitation arouses a feeling, thus people help each other in neighbourhood by what is called 'neighbouring'. Thus, the concept of neighbourhood

implies stress on three co-originated terms: Neighbours (the actor), Neighbouring (an activity), and Neighbourhood (a geographic space) (Porteous, 1977).

The concept of neighbouring has been very aptly formulated by the following words spoken by a Chinese sage 2000 years ago: 'Mencius says in his dialogue with Dunn Wan Kung that if a neighbourhood of eight families is formed, the inhabitants will work together, will keep each other company while resting in the evening, will guard their property against trespassers from outside, will look after the sick and help the weak, and attend to their private matters after the communal work is done' (Nabi, 1971). The above concept has narrated the most important characteristic features of social interaction.

It has been suggested by the sociologists that from the history of early civilization social identity and, social relation and bonding played the major role in cohabitation of the people in a particular place. It is said that the pre-historic man formed towns where they found land that would support them in relative safety and comparative permanence. Then shortly they discovered that their shelter if near that of others, would also serve as protection from enemies. Mutual aid in times of danger and co-operation toward a general improvement in their living conditions encouraged the development of the city. Generally desiring the association of others man become a social entity and people with common interests assembled in groups to secure for themselves protection and maximum amenities of life. Thus, it can be assumed that the basic idea of neighbourhood formation came from the necessity of social bonding of the residents (Nabi, 1971).

2.4 Functions of Neighbourhood
The function of a neighbourhood is to support the needs of residents in a way that also furthers such community goals as environmental quality and efficiency in governmental services. Generally neighbourhoods serve the following function (Richman and Chapin, 1977):

1. *Shelter*, encompasses the traditional concern of housing, and basic services (such as water, sewer and electricity, garbage disposal etc).

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2. *Security,* providing a safe, stable, and ordered setting free of danger from traffic, violence, criminal actions, and other physical and psychological hazards

3. *Child-rearing,* facilitating transmission of values through family, neighbours, peer groups, churches, community organizations, schools, and play space.

4. *Symbolic identification,* providing a sense of place, belonging, pride, and satisfaction to the residents.

5. *Social interaction,* providing personal associations through social networks, organizations, and physical facilities.

6. *Leisure,* providing recreation, entertainment, cultural, and educational facilities, and programs and open space.

7. *Accessibility,* providing access to employment, shopping, and personal services required to maintain a household, as well as to regional-scale entertainment and leisure opportunities and job opportunities.

8. *Financial investment,* protecting the large financial stake in the residence, which often serves as an investment for future financial security for the homeowner.

9. *Public efficiency,* minimizing public or societal costs of water and sewer, garbage and trash collection, fire and police services, education, recreation, transportation, and the costs of maintaining public capital improvements such as streets and sidewalks.

2.5 The Concept of Neighbourhood Unit

The concept of neighbourhood unit included in planning thought during the period of post industrial revolution in the nineteenth century. The first full statement of the idea of 'neighbourhood unit' appeared in Clarence Perry's monograph in vol. 7 of the 'Regional Survey of New York' published in 1929. The neighbourhood unit theory that he put forward was aimed at eliminating the shortcomings of residential communities that he observed such as lack of physical identity, lack of community center, enough shops and open space, lack of residential streets to carry through traffic and the lack of environmental condition. The underlying principle of his scheme is that the neighbourhood should be regarded both as a unit of a larger whole and as a distinct

identity in itself. He laid down the functional elements and other aspects on which the neighbourhood unit should be based: size. boundaries. open spaces, institutional sites, local shops and internal road system (Fig-2.1).

Perry's unit was based on the population ordinarily requires for one primary school placed at the center. The area of the unit would depend on population density but the factor of distance was considered. The neighbourhood was to be bounded on all sides by arterial roads wide enough to serve all through traffic. A system of small parks and recreation grounds was to be provided amounting to about 10 percent of the total area of the unit. Shops were to be provided on the edge of the unit, preferably at traffic junctions. Another objective was to make the local circulation easy by a special street system to eliminate through traffic and to segregate pedestrians from moving vehicles. Closely followed by Perry's idea, Clarence Stein and Henry Wright prepared the plan for neighbourhood unit at Radburn in New Jersey between 1924 and 1928 (Fig-2.2). The development of Radburn could not be completed because of economic depression in the United Stated in 1930. But the essential principles were achieved in the small segment that was built (Fig-2.3). It was a great success in serving its objectives of making home and community life more reposeful, pleasant and safe (Gallion, 1950).
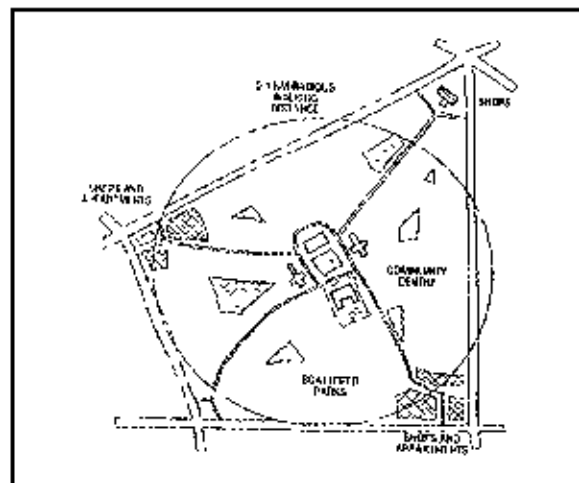
Source: Gallion, 1950

Figure 2.1: The Neighbourhood Unit as Proposed by Clarence Perry in 1929.

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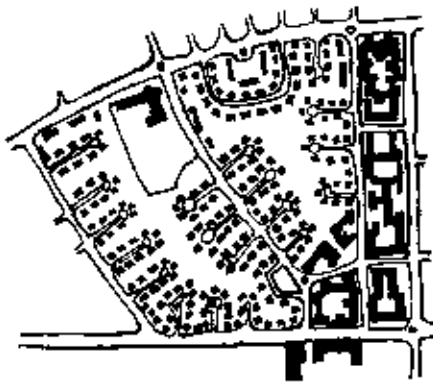
Source: Gallion, 1950.

Figure 2.2: Neighbourhood Unit of Radburn, New Jersey, Planned by Clarence Stein & Henry Wright in 1929

Source: http://www.gmu.edu/library/specialcollections/plancomm.html
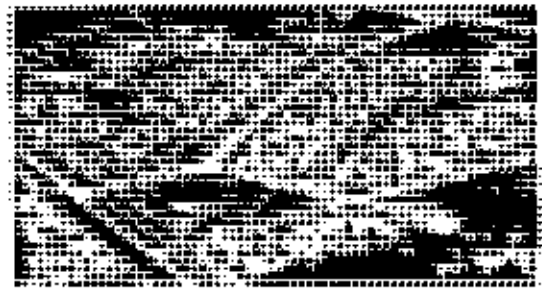
Figure 2.3: Neighbourhood Unit of Radburn, New Jersey, After Construction.

Another outstanding landmark of neighbourhood planning concept was introduced by Le Corbusier in 1922. Neighbourhoods of his Radiant City were designed in relation to the vertical metropolis emerged in the twentieth century He believed that the automobile in combination with express elevator makes possible a rational solution of the modern metropolis. His 'Radiant City' with its skyscrapers in the centre, elevator apartment houses in an inner belt and the lower houses in the periphery is essentially a rationalization of the existing concentric pattern of the typical metropolis (Fig-2.4). Le Corbusier's 'Unite d' Habitation' in Marseilles (started in 1945) was virtually a neighbourhood in one building. It was an eighteen –story block of 337 flats–'a box of homes' as he described it But in fact it was more than that. It was provided with a church and a kindergarten on the roof with a swimming pool and playgrounds for children and a gymnasium, running track and solarium for adults. Within the 8.5 acre site, there was a garage, swimming pool and sports ground. The 'Unite d' was not a complete success and it suggested that it did not provide the best opportunity for efficient socialization and community life (Nabi, 1971).
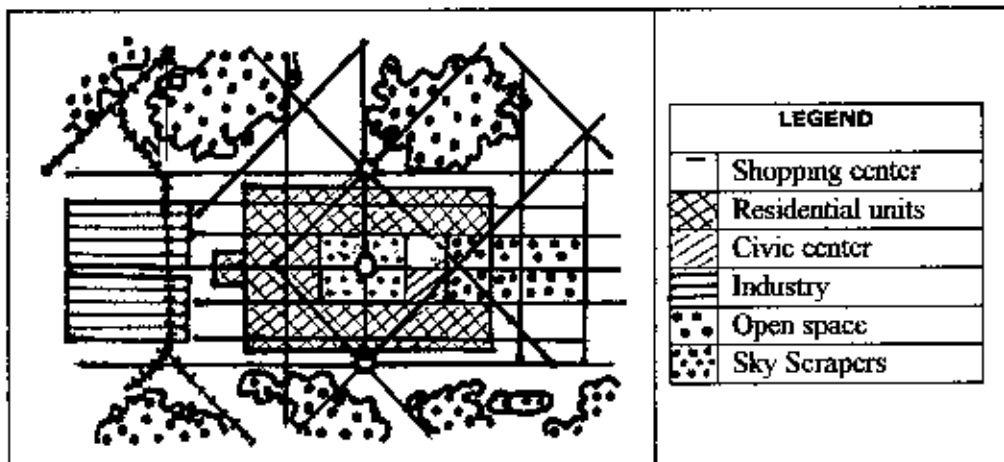
Source: Nabi, (1971)

Figure 2.4: Diagrammatic Plan of Le Corbusier's Radiant City

The neighbourhood idea has been interpreted and practiced in many ways in many layouts and designs Only two of the remarkable designs are discussed in this section to illustrate how neighbourhood lay out is designed to incorporate social relation in different socio-physical contexts of the city.

2.6 Typology of Neighbourhoods

Generally three aspects are considered as important factors for determining neighbourhood boundary of a city such as area, population size and accessibility of service facilities. There are many controversial arguments on the specific requirements of forming a neighbourhood unit. Usually every family knows his immediate surrounding and is most conscious about that. The modern social planner Dennis Chapman observes that the basic and most important social intercourse is that between immediate neighbours two or three families on both sides of the dwelling, mutual visiting, mutual aid in every aspect of domestic life, in sickness and in the care of the children but such groups are too small or too intangible to enter into the planners' calculation He mentions 40 to 100 families as the next level, which is characterized by face-to-face contact (Nabi, 1971). Knox advocates that each neighbourhood is what its inhabitants think it is (Knox, 1996). The planners of the early 19th century tried to identify the group size with economic out

come and therefore. suggested that 5000-10.000 people who form a suitable group to run an elementary school was an optimum size of a neighbourhood (Porteus, 1977). On the other hand, sociologist Kevin Lynch suggests that 30 or 40 families in an area of five square miles may be polarized to make a real neighbourhood. He suggests that true neighbourliness' is concentrated in or the home area extends up to a few streets (Lynch, 1981). In Ladd's study in 1970 for secondary social contact the size of the neighbourhood varied between 5.5 to 518 acres (Nilufar, 1997). In Terence Lee's schema all neighbourhoods are found to be less than half a mile in radius with the majority between 75 to 100 acres (Lee, 1968). The main intention of the neighbourhood unit concept was to design areas where the population was not too large to destroy personal and social contact and too small to fail to afford variety and diversity.

For solving the contradiction between the physical extension of neighbourhoods and extension of social interaction pattern Andrew Blowers (Blowers, 1973) introduced a new form of neighbourhood idea. which has two main concepts physical and social. He classified neighbourhood under the following term:

- Arbitrary neighbourhood: localities with definite name but imprecise limits.
- Physical neighbourhood: distinctive physical unit with clear boundaries.
- Homogenous neighbourhood: specific physical characteristics of the area and specific social characteristics of the inhabitants.
- Functional Neighbourhood: areas united by particular activity pattern like shopping, education, leisure and recreation.
- Community Neighbourhood: contains close-knit groups engaged in primary social contact and commonly called 'Social Neighbourhood'.

'Arbitrary' and 'Physical' neighbourhoods are spatial type; where as the 'Homogenous' neighbourhood type is a territory having distinct physical and social characteristics. 'Functional' and 'Community' types focus on functional and social interaction.

Types	Arbitrary	Physical	Homogenous	Functional	Community
Common Characteristics	Territory				
		Environment			
			Social Group		
				Functional Interaction	
					Social Interaction
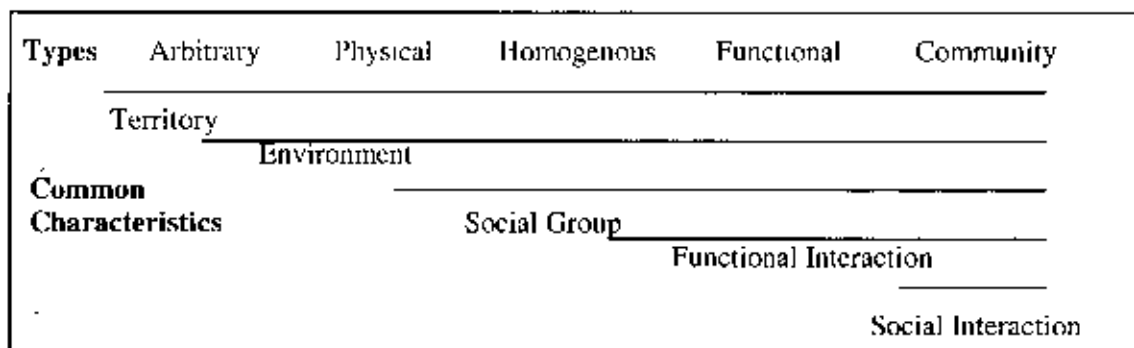
Source: Blowers, 1973.

Figure 2.5: Blower's Neighbourhood Typology

Through time, neighbourhood planners tried to develop of a living environment suited to the nature and desires of the people who are a part of it. Neighbourhood planning is an attempt to plan residential areas so that each neighbourhood will be a distinct physical unit. Within the neighbourhood, internal planning provides for the provision and orderly arrangement of all those facilities, which are shared in common by residents. The facilities are grouped so far as possible, thereby adding to the convenience of the residents, while providing a nucleus for the development of the local social life of the neighbourhood (Brown, 1959). Neighbourhood is thus considered as the nurturing ground of social life and social interaction.

2.7 Neighbourhood Characteristics of Dhaka City

Concept and layout of neighbourhood vary from country to country and culture to culture keeping with the ever-changing needs and requirements of the residents. The neighbourhood concept of our cities has also their own indigenous morphology. To have a better understanding of the growth of neighbourhoods of Dhaka City, it is necessary to take a look in to the history.

2.7.1 Emergence of Neighbourhood Concept in Dhaka

The concept of neighbourhood in urban areas came from the traditional rural society of Bangladesh. In the villages one homestead (*Bari*) usually comprises of three or more houses where members of joint families and/or kin live together. The houses are located around an open space called *Uthan* where residents especially women spend leisure time by talking and gossiping. Every homestead also has a small house at the front side of homestead called *Kachari Ghar* where men from other homestead gather and talk and discuss about various matters of their interest. Thus, each individual homestead becomes the ground for social intercourse. Besides, people of a particular village is connected with each other by attending common market place (*Hat*) and by rural social legal system called *Grameen Shalish* System. In this system, the crimes and disputes made by the villagers are solved by a group of respectable persons under the leadership of an aged and respectable person (*Morol*) (Ahmed, 2001).

The reflection of such type of rural social system was found in the urban areas of medieval Dhaka During this period, the city contained numerous channels within it and boats were the main mode of communication. The socio-cultural sphere of these areas were dominated by rural traditions and as a result, the rural and urban people had similarities in their life style and pattern. The early urban houses were rather a dense version of the rural houses as the urban centers resembles more of a village (Shabin, 1997). Most of the neighbourhoods were built up against a major street with their own set of functions supporting the residents. These neighbourhoods were indigenously known as *mohallas*. *Mohallas* were the natural neighbourhoods, developed in medieval Dhaka primarily on the basis of occupational homogeneity of the people. '*Mohallas* are the settlements of homogeneous group of people of municipal areas' (Urban Area Report, 2005). It has been suggested that the 'natural neighbourhoods' are the essential component of organically developed city' (Rapoport, 1977) People were very familiar with the *mohalla* or *tolas* small neighbourhoods with usually small populations (Hollander and Azam, 1990).

The social lives of the residents were regulated by *Panchayet* system. The *Panchayets* were a local social organization at neighbourhood level (in *mohalla*) among every Muslim community (Kawm) or class of Dhaka through which community leaders regulated the social and religious life of their members (Hollander and Azam, 1990). The *Panchayet* system is quite similar with the rural *Shalis* system. The historic kernel of Dhaka, commonly called 'Old Dhaka', still retains the traditional features it has inherited from the past.

2.7.2 Characteristics of Pre Colonial (1601-1764) Neighbourhoods

Dhaka became the capital of Bengal in 1610 when Islam Khan, Mughal Viceroy of Bengal, shifted his capital from Rajmahal to Dhaka. However, the greatest development of the city took place under Shaiata Khan (1662-1679) when the city stretched for 12 miles in length and 8 miles in breadth and is said to have nearly a million people (Islam, 1991). In its primary stage, the city was consisted of a few market places and localities of craftsmen and traders. According to historians, it was termed as a city of *Bahanna Bazar Teppanno Gali* (fifty two bazaars and fifty three streets) (Mamoon, 1991). According to this, the whole town might be perceived on the perspective of two terms, one is bazaar and the other is *mohalla*. All streets were bazaars since they sold something, goods or services indicating their commercial character. On the other hand, *mohalla* represented a residential entity having a homogenous population, related through occupation, religion and geographical origin or caste membership and represented a closed social enclave (Khan, 1982). The type and occupation of the people inhabiting in these *mohallas* are reflected in their names. For example, *Kasai-tola* (place of the butchers), *Shankari Patti* (the place for ornament makers), *Kumar-tuli* (place of the potters), *Tanti Bazar* (weaver's market), *Bania Nagar* (treader's area, *Jalua Nagar* (fisherman's locality), *Churi Hatta* (bangle market), and *Sanchi Pander* (betel leaf market) etc. (Shabin, 1997).

Historically a *mohalla* was created out of a few houses. 'A *mohalla* is sharply bounded: this house is, part of it, the next is not. Every one knows the boundary (Hollander and Azam, 1990). The morphology of the *mohalla* was formed by a singular row of houses on

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a central street known as the bazaar. Every *mohalla* had a common public space and this space became the popular bazaar streets in *mohallas* with commercial or commodity trade (Khan. 1982). In terms of land use, these neighbourhoods were not purely residential. Normally households used ground floors and the front of the house for business purposes (according to occupation) and upper stairs and backside of the house for residential purposes.
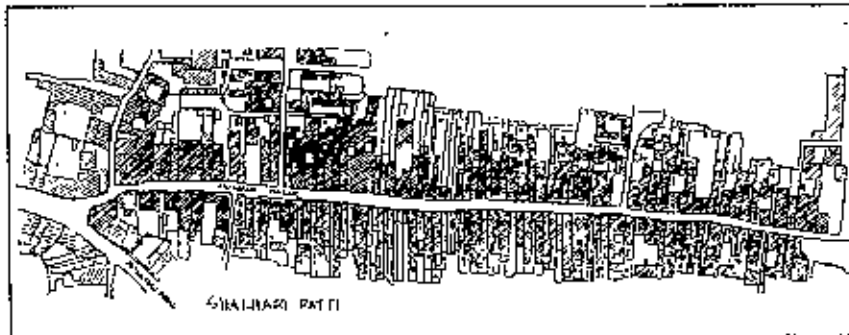
Source: Imammudin. 1993.

Figure 2.6: Shakhari Patti, Linear Neighbourhood of Medieval Dhaka along One Main Bazaar Road

The *mohallas* were in the form of cluster of houses around *chawk* (squares). These *chawks* represented the community space that used to be the most happening place at certain hours of the day. It was the place where both formal and informal social interaction used to take place. People from various profession and age group would gather in the *chawk* and would spend time either in idle gossiping or more meaningful business endeavors. During the Mughal period. Dhaka experienced extensive development and growth. The growth pattern was organic in nature arising mainly out of necessity (Shabin, 1997).

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2.7.3 Characteristics of Colonial (1764-1947) Neighbourhoods

Ever since the Mughal period, the riverbank was a prize location for high-class residences. At the tail end of the Mughal rule and the inception of British power around 1765, Dhaka began to decline in importance and contract in size. Dhaka, by the end of 19th century, was hemmed in between the Burhiganga River and the railway line. The Europeans gradually moved from the riverside to the new residential area 'Ramna'. This movement was initiated not only by the development of the Civil Lines but also by the growing demand of space for commercial purposes. By 1930, the riverfront lost its residential character and was changed into commercial area. The local population developed three upper class residential areas at Gandaria, Wari and Purana Paltan. These areas housed the local government employees, professionals, businessmen and landlords.

The grid pattern of roads was introduced in Dhaka City for the first time in Wari and Ganderia (Islam, 1991). The house types of this period had a distinctive character unlike the pre-colonial periods. There were no intermingling of commercial activities and residential functions in the neighbourhood dwellings. The residential areas were divided into a number of plots of regular shape and of a few varied dimensions. In these plots, houses were built with the sole purpose of living only. No business activities or commercial functions were accommodated within the premises. This separation of work place from living space was due to the change of occupation of significant strata of the society from self-employed craftsman to service holders of various white color jobs under the colonial government. This developed the middle class society in our culture.

With the change of occupation, the design of the houses also went through distinctive changes. A set of well-defined function of spaces (living room, dining spaces, study, bedrooms, varanda etc.) was introduced in the design of the residences. Service areas such as toilets and kitchens were no longer built separately from the main house. Each house was separated from each other by means of low boundary walls that were mainly provided for demarcating the property line and not for security purposes. The low height walls also did not create any visual barrier between houses, which in turn strengthened the community feelings

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Source: PWD

Figure 2.7: Wari Land Use Map, 1912   **Figure 2.8: Wari Land Use Map, 1960**

Besides these planned residential neighbourhoods that were developed for the upper elite class people, organic morphological patterns were also prevalent which have spontaneously developed without any rigid planning proposal. This new generation organic areas are generally developed according to the aspiration of inhabitants who came from various corner of the country for the attraction of new job opportunities created by the enlarging administrative sector of British government (Siddique, 1991). The organic neighbourhoods of New Dhaka called *para* is considered as the descendent of *mohalla* but it gained distinct feature as it became predominantly residential area with scattered location of service facilities. Sharing these service facilities was the main strength of community feelings within these *paras*. Like the *mohallas, paras* also found to develop along the linear streets and usually a *para* was comprised of two or three streets. There was no distinct physical boundary of a *para*. *Para* was the mental construction of resident's social space (Nilufar, 1997).

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2.7.4 Characteristics of Post Colonial (1947-1971) Neighbourhoods

In 1947, Dhaka became the capital of East Pakistan and this provided a boost to its trade and commerce. Different government and private offices relating to trade and commerce were established to cater to the increased population. A number of new shopping centers and food markets were constructed to promote retail activities (Hossain, 1995). The city was expanding northward and the high-class residential areas are constantly endeavoring to keep themselves at the northern periphery of the city (Islam, 1991). All these happened without any formal planning.

Then the government entered into the scene with peace meal planning of the city: an industrial district in Tejgaon, a shopping center in Ajimpur, a stadium at Jinnah Avenue, a commercial area next to the stadium, houses for government employees at Motijheel and Ajimpur and high class residential area for the public in Dhanmondi with greed patterned street layout. Rest of the development was informal and *paras* consist of two or three streets were the dominant features in the morphology of residential neighbourhoods. Meanwhile, Dhaka was becoming more and more unmanageable So a Master Plan was eventually prepared by a foreign firm in 1959. It is doubtable how much of the recommendations have been put to use.

2.7.5 Characteristics of Neighbourhoods in Bangladesh Period (Since 1971)

In 1971, following the war of liberation, Dhaka became the capital of a new nation, Bangladesh. The city emerged as the most important and influential center of all national activities including industry, trade and commerce. After independence, the population showed an exorbitant rise. From a small city in 1947, Dhaka grew into a crowded metropolis over 4 million people by 1987. By the year 2001, the population reached the figure about 6 million. The city's urbanization rate was one of the highest of the world and it is projected that by the year 2010, Dhaka will be the sixth largest city of the world with 18 million populations (Islam, 1991).

Map 2.1: Layout of Dhanmondi Residential Area

Source: http://www.bangladesh.net/maps/dhanmondi.gif
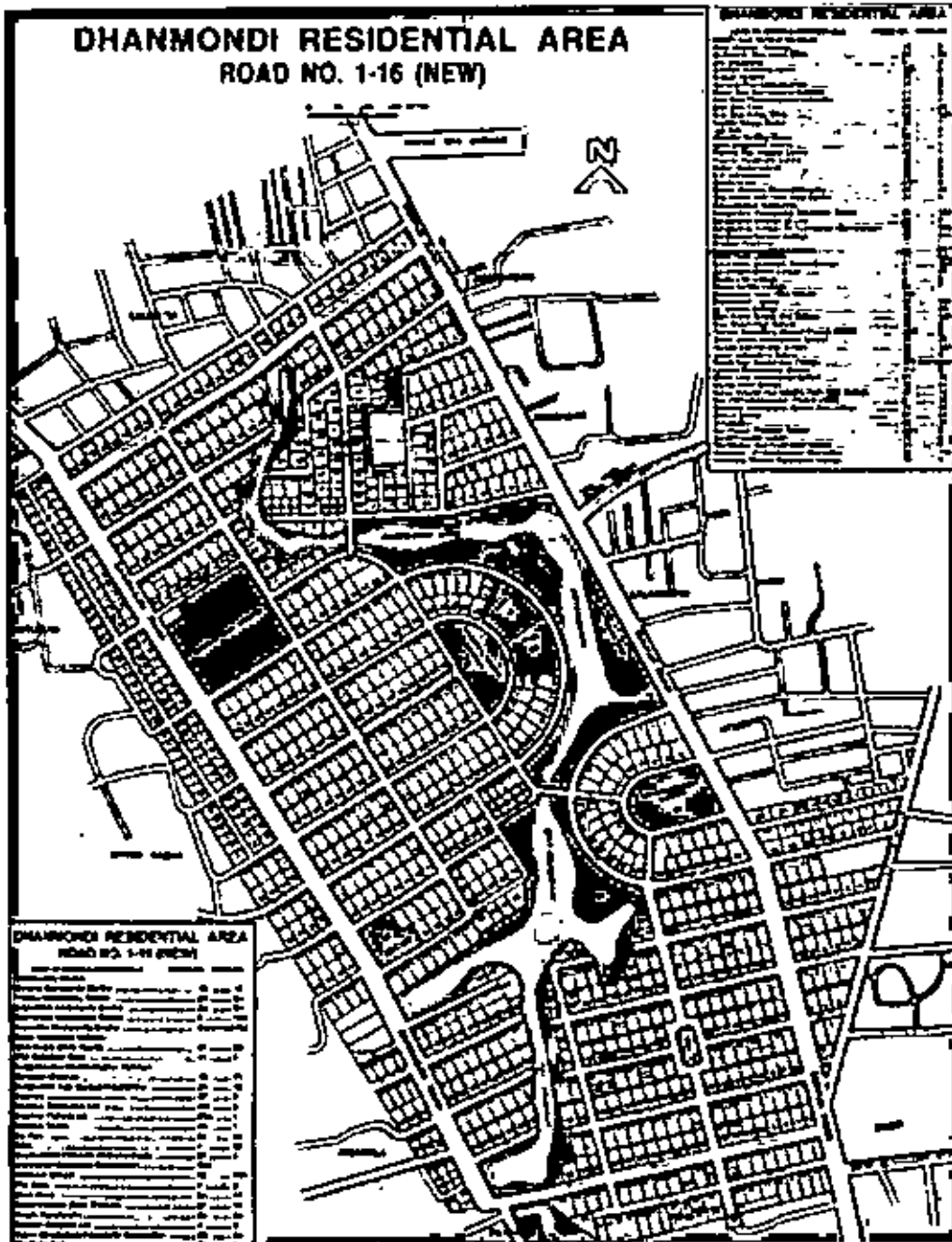
By the middle of 1980's multi storied apartment buildings intrude in the residential areas of Dhaka City in the context of population pressure, shortage of land and ever increasing land price. Picture of residential areas of Dhaka City started to change by the influence of compact high-rise apartment houses. According to the urban sociologists, from this period of time social interaction among residents started to decline (Nilufar, 1997). Replacement of high-rise buildings residing by eight to twelve families in the place of single-family low-rise houses increased the concentration of unstable mobile households having no bonding with the neighbourhood. Compact development of residential areas also decreased open space from the residential neighbourhoods that provided limited opportunity for the residents to gather and spend time with neighbours.

The original look of the planned residential neighbourhoods such as Dhanmondi, Banani, etc. began to change from the early 1980's because of the construction of high-rise apartment buildings by demolishing old houses and also because of establishment of commercial activities in the residential area for providing easy access to the support facilities of the residents in an unplanned way.

When DMDP (Dhaka Metropolitan Development Plan 1995) Structural plan was made, land for residential purposes was selected without any consideration to the essential services and amenities for the running of a neighbourhood. Moreover, no Detail Area Planning was ever made or executed in defining the sites and other services for these residential neighbourhoods. So gradually out of necessity commercial activities established in a scattered manner within the residential areas that destroyed the harmony of residential environment as well the social bond of the residents with their neighbours. In all, the lack of proper planning not only destroyed the physical environment but also the social environment of the residential neighbourhoods of Dhaka City that once observed in medieval Dhaka.

2.7.6 New Concept of High Rise Housing Complex

In the early 1990's apartment housing with basic service facilities within the high-rise buildings introduced vertical neighbourhood in the fabric of Dhaka City. Private developers began to build planned residential areas with necessary support centers such as mosque, indoor playing space for children; meeting hall for residents and even with educational institutions and health care enters inside an apartment housing complex. It somehow resembles the vertical self-contained neighbourhood designed by Le Corbusier (Korinke. 2005). The idea behind building self-contained vertical neighbourhoods was to provide housing for a number of people in a small plot of land in the context of high price and shortage of land in Dhaka City and as well as to enhance social intercourse among residents by providing public places and support centers within the neighbourhood. Presently, high-rise housing complexes are the predominant aspect of newly developed residential areas of Dhaka City. Whether or not these high-rise neighbourhoods could increase social interaction among neighbours is a matter of question but it is an effort to preserve traditional social bonding in the context of contemporary Dhaka.

2.8 Conclusion

In Dhaka City, naturally grown neighbourhoods of Old and New Dhaka. planned residential areas, modern apartment housing exists side by side. In this context, the physical identity of neighbourhoods and differentiation of one neighbourhood from the others becomes difficult in Dhaka City. Here, territorial boundary of neighbourhood, pattern of using support facilities by the residents and pattern of social relation with neighbours occurs in different spatial extents. Thus. Andrew Blower's concept of territorial, functional and community neighbourhoods is some how observed in Dhaka City (Blowers, 1973). Except for Old Dhaka, where the boundary of neighbourhoods or *mohallas* is defined by Dhaka City Corporation, neighbourhoods of other areas are not defined by any city authority. Therefore, neighbourhoods of New Dhaka are considered as mentally constructed areas mainly defined by grouping of streets. houses and service facilities.

CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

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3.1 Introduction

Methodology of the study describes the procedures to be followed to operationalize the research. Identification of problem and formulation of the objectives is the first step of any type of research, which is discussed. in the first chapter. To fulfill the objectives of the study and to have an understanding regarding the existence of the problem regarding social interaction at the neighbourhood level in real life. a preliminary study or pilot survey was conducted in three different areas of Dhaka City Corporation; Lalbag. Shantinagar and Dhanmondi, having different historical background. physical feature and social composition, prior to structuring the principal survey. Pilot interviews suggest that the possible boundaries of the neighbourhoods in the studied areas and indicators of social interaction need to be delineated first before starting the principal survey. Following are the steps of the research method followed in the study (Fig-3.1).

3.2 Defining Neighbourhoods in the Study Area

It was mentioned earlier that Lalbag, Dhanmondi and Shantinagar, these three areas are selected as study area for the present study. It was also mentioned that in Dhaka City neighbourhood is not a planned area with defined boundary and distinct physical characteristics and is not used as a unit of planning or providing basic services by the city authorities. As a result. in Dhaka City. neighbourhood is mainly considered as a grouping of houses comprised of one or two streets or as residing place of a group of people who share common service facilities (Nilufar, 1997). Thus, meaning and characteristics of neighbourhood varies from locality to locality in Dhaka City based on street pattern, housing type, physical features and provision of service facilities. In the present study, the boundary of the neighbourhoods of the three studied areas were defined differently considering the above-mentioned characteristics.

Figure: 3.1 Research Methodologies

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┌─────────────────────┐
│   Topic Selection   │
│  Social Interaction │
└─────────────────────┘
                                    ┌──────────────────────────┐
┌──────────────────────┐            │  Refining the Topic in to│
│ Problem Identification│◄──────────│  More Focused Area (s)   │
└──────────────────────┘            │  Social interaction in the│
                                    │  neighbourhoods of Dhaka City│
┌──────────────────────┐            └──────────────────────────┘
│ Determining Objectives│
└──────────────────────┘

┌──────────────────────┐            ┌──────────────────────────┐
│  Literature Study    │            │   Study Area Selection   │
└──────────────────────┘            │  (Three neighbourhoods of │
                                    │       Dhaka City)         │
┌──────────────────────────┐        └──────────────────────────┘
│ Organization of the Research│
└──────────────────────────┘        ┌──────────────────────────────┐
                                    │ Selecting Indicators of Social Interaction│
                                    └──────────────────────────────┘

                    ┌──────────────────────────┐
                    │   Primary Data Collection │
                    └──────────────────────────┘
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Physical Survey
a. Land use pattern
b. Build environment

Questionnaire Survey to 25% head of households of each neighbourhood
a. Socio-economic and residence characteristics
b. Pattern of social interaction
c. Respondent's suggestion and opinion

Focus Group Discussion
Each group consists of 8 persons (both male & female)
- General information about social interaction pattern

Data Analysis
a. Qualitative Analysis
b. Quantitative Analysis

Findings
a. Land use pattern and physical character of the neighbourhoods
b. Socio-economic and residence character of respondents
c. Status of social interaction in the three neighbourhoods
d. Influencing factors of social interaction

Recommendations

Rasulbag of Lalbag Thana is one of the selected neighbourhoods for the present study. Lalbag is located in Old Dhaka and was developed in the Mughal period (15th century) in a natural way where the same occupational groups used to live in-group and in most cases the same house was used for the factory as well as residence (Karim. 1964). Usually the first floor and the front area of the dwellings were used for commercial purposes and the upstairs and back of the houses was used for residential purposes (Ahsan, 1966). *Mohalla*, the traditional residential neighbourhood, which was the enclaves of craft or caste groups. is still found in Lalbag. But the characteristics of traditional *mohallas* have changed through time by change of resident's characteristics, land use pattern, and physical features (Rahman, 1994) People of different occupations are now living in these *mohallas*. Commercial activities have separated from the residential dwellings and construction of multi-storied buildings now have changed the previous pattern of housing but still the *mohallas* exists with their traditional meaning that is a distinct geographical and social unit of a group of people. In 1991 Dhaka City Corporation recognized these *mohallas* as neighbourhoods and drew neighbourhood boundaries based on streets and house numbers. Rasulbag, one of the *mohallas* of Lalbag areas is thus selected as neighbourhood for this study, which is comprised of house number 158 to 199. located on the both side of the Lalbag Road (Map-3.1).

Dhanmondi was developed as a planned residential area in 1958 with rectangular housing blocks on grid patterned street layout (Nancy, 2004). From reconnaissance survey it is found that residents of Dhanmondi consider each rectangular block as a neighbourhood. Though urban planners and geographers have different opinion about the size of the neighbourhood block, most of them are agreed on the fact that opportunity of social relation and accessibility to the service facilities within walking distance is the most important aspect of any neighbourhood block (Forrest *et al*. 2002). According to Peter Katz, 'Neighbourhood is defined as a distinctive area consists of a center and an edge. optimal size of a quarter mile from center to edge (equivalent to a 5 minute walk), has a balance mix of activities such as dwelling. shopping, working, schooling, worshipping and recreating, fine network of interconnecting streets, and the appropriate location of civic buildings and public spaces' (Katz. 1994). In the western cities, grid patterned residential neighbourhoods is designed in a way that the people can get necessary service facilities such as elementary school, grocery. market. religious center etc. in walking distance (Lynch, 1981). In the present study, a rectangular block of Dhanmondi comprising of Road number 7A and 8A is considered as a neighbourhood that has distinct

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physical identity and has necessary support facilities within a five minutes walking distances (Map-3 2).

Shantinagar, an informally developed area located in the middle part of New Dhaka where drawing neighbourhood boundary is difficult as recent construction of high-rise apartments and apartment complexes transformed its previous appearance and physical features. Shantinagar area transformed from a residential area of low rise buildings to an area of high-rise apartment housing. High-rise housing complexes started to develop since middle of 1990s. This type of housing for large number of families provides infrastructural facilities within a boundary and is a new addition to the fabric of residential area of Shantinagar. To reveal the nature of social interaction in these newly developed housing complexes, 'Eastern Point', a high-rise apartment complex located in the middle of Shantinagar, was considered as a neighbourhood in this study (Map-3.3). The selected neighbourhood fulfils the idea of Dennis Chapman who identified that 'neighbourhood unit consists of 40 to 100 families can enter into the planners' calculation, which is characterized by face-to-face contact. Just as the neighbourhood, a building comprising 6 to 40 families, according to the type of housing such as detached, semi-detached or apartment houses seems to be the most basic unit for successful social intercourse' (Nabi, 1971). On the other hand, Kevin Lynch suggests that 30 or 40 families in an area of five square miles may be polarized to make a real neighbourhood (Lynch, 1981). Both of them gave importance to the concentration of population in a particular area for formation of neighbourhood. As there are four twelve - storied buildings inside the boundary of 'Eastern Point' comprising of 160 flats (40 families living in each building) with car parking, recreation and other support centres inside the boundary, it can be considered as a neighbourhood on the basis of concentration of population within the housing complex.

Thus, the basis of drawing boundary of Rasulbag is street and house numbers, of block of Dhanmondi, is the pattern of street and accessibility to the support centers and of Eastern Point, is the grouping and number of families within a defined boundary with necessary service facilities.

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Map3.1 : Location of Rasulbag Neighbourhood

Rasulbag

LALBAG THANA

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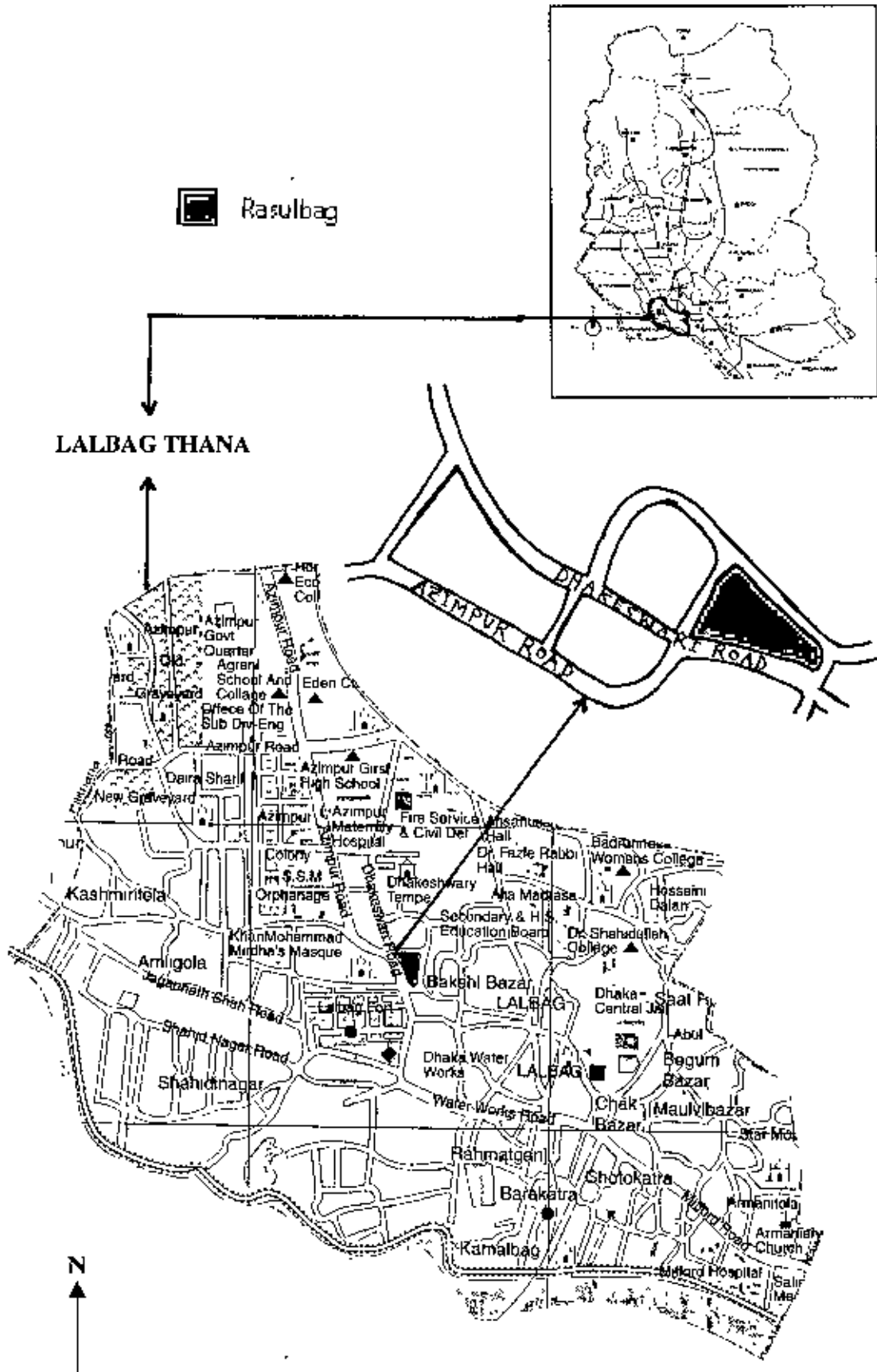
MaP3.2 : Location of Block of Dhanmondi

Block of Dhanmondi

ROAD 8A

ROAD 7A

DHANMONDI THANA
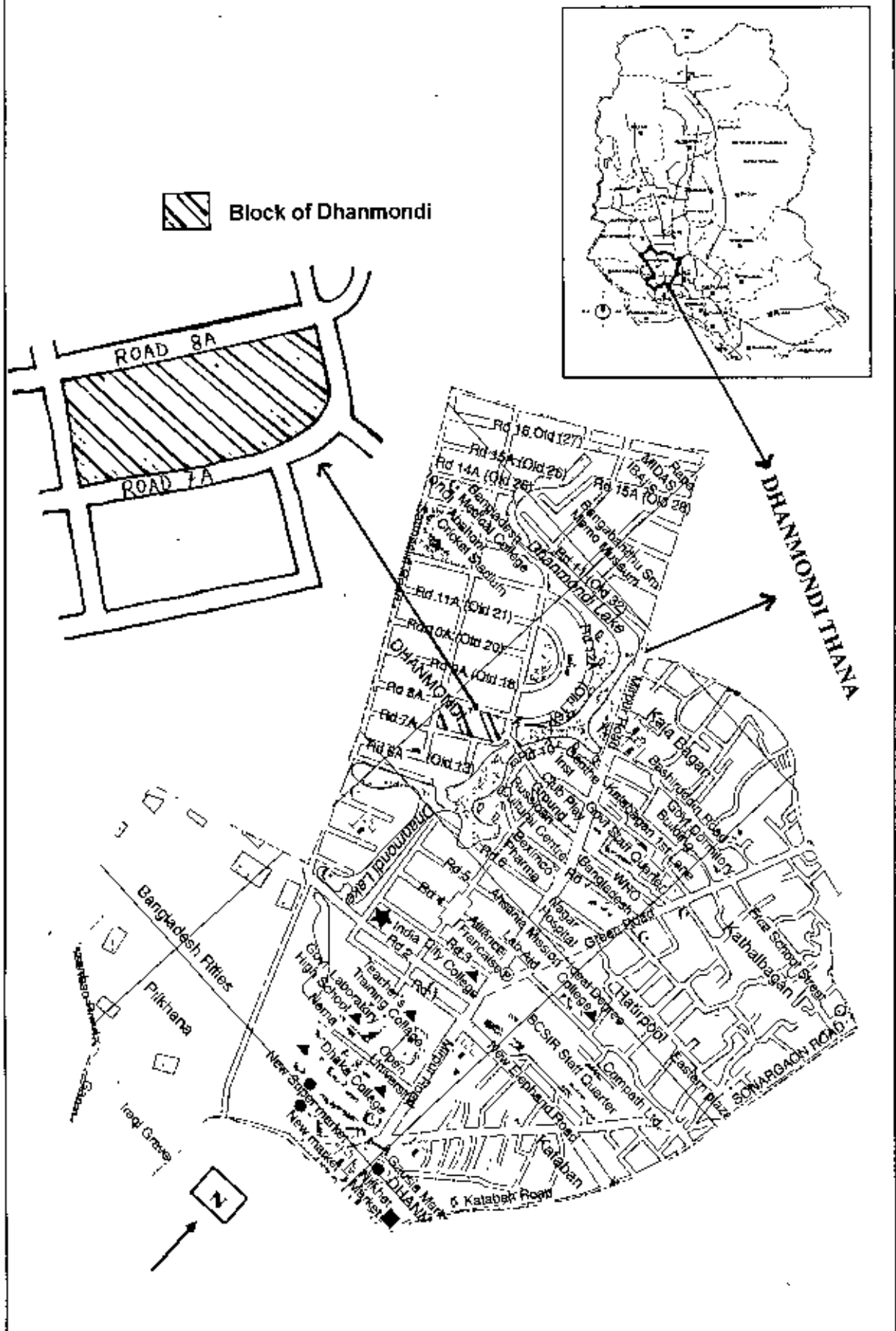
Source : Field Survey, 2005

Map 3.3 : Location of Eastern Point Housing Complex

Eastern Point

RAMNA THANA
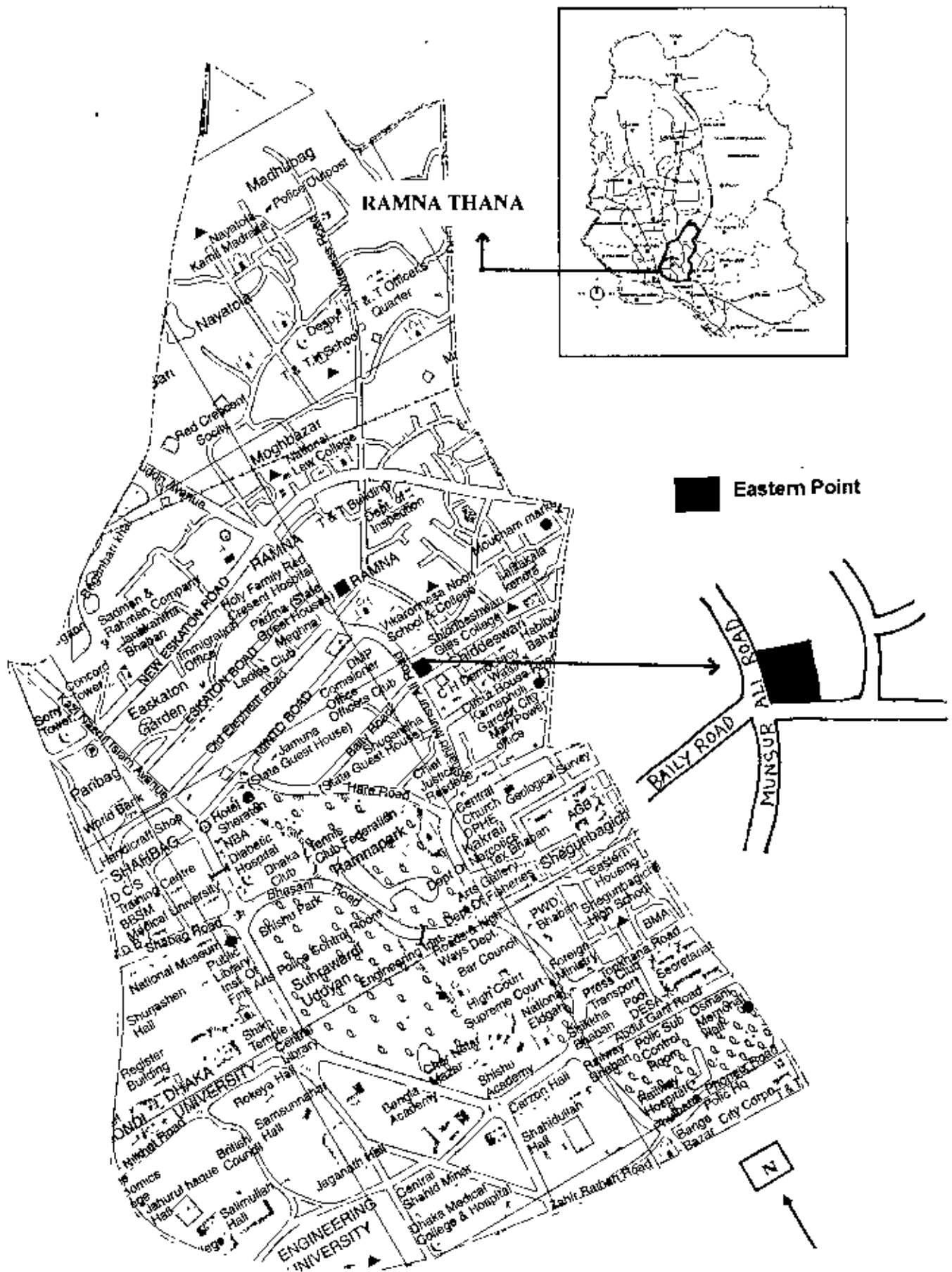
Source : Field Survey, 2005

3.3 Contrasting Nature of Selected Neighbourhoods

In the present study, selected neighbourhoods possess different characteristics in terms of background of establishment, housing type and physical layout (Figure-3.2).
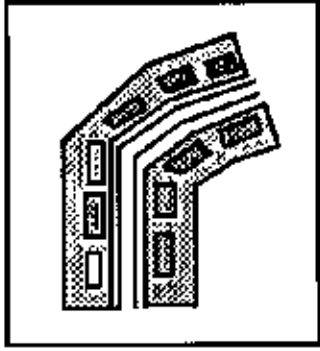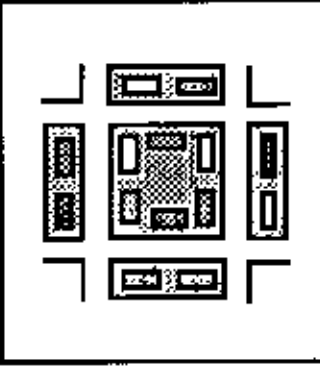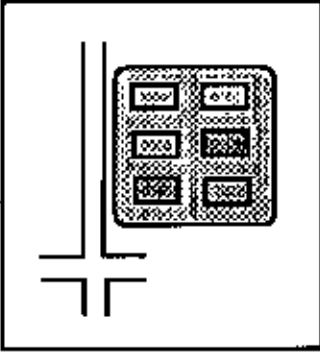
1. Rasulbag is a formerly developed *mohalla*, a naturally grown residential neighbourhood of Old Dhaka. The neighbourhood experienced limited physical transformation and there are no apartment buildings here. Physical layout of Rasulbag is linear comprising of houses on the both sides of the curvilinear Lalbag Street.

2. The block of Dhanmondi is a part of a planned residential area, which has gone through redevelopment in the last decades by construction of apartment building in place of old one or two stories buildings. Thus, most of the buildings in the selected block of Dhanmondi are apartment buildings and this neighbourhood has a rectilinear grid pattern comprising of houses on the both sides of the grid-patterned streets.

3. 'Eastern Point' of Shantinagar is an apartment complex comprising of four apartment buildings within a boundary. It is a new type of housing resulting from rapid housing redevelopment process in Shantinagar area. This neighbourhood shows cluster pattern with grouping of high-rise buildings on the one side of Shantinagar Road.

Thus, the study attempted to reveal the comparative status of social interaction of three neighbourhoods having different housing environment, physical form and likely to have different social profiles.

3.4 Criteria for Describing Neighbourhood Characteristics

It is suggested that both socio-economic criteria of the residents living in a neighbourhood and physical characteristics of that neighbourhood has direct and indirect influences in shaping the pattern of social relation and interaction among the

neighbourhoods (Hart *et al*, 2002). Thus, it is important to understand the physical and social environment of the studied neighbourhoods to understand what type of social interaction occurs in different socio-environmental settings.

	Linear Pattern of Rasulbag Neighborhood of Lalbag
	Rectilinear Grid Pattern of Neighborhood Block of Dhanmondi
	Cluster Pattern of Eastern Point Neighborhood of Shantinagar within a Boundary

Source. Field Survey. 2005.

Figure 3.2: Physical Layout of Studied Neighborhoods

Various criteria were used by different researchers for describing neighbourhood characteristics to relate neighbourhood environment with the pattern of social interaction of the residents. Murtagh (2000) found relation of age and occupation of residents with the pattern of their involvement in social activities in Northern Ireland. Forrest and Ngai-ming (2004) used age, income, education, occupation and presence of children in a family as socio-economic aspects of the residents and type of housing tenure, length of residing, residential mobility and extensive housing redevelopment as housing characteristics of the residents to evaluate factors influencing social interaction at the neighbourhoods of Guangzhou City of China. Similar indicators were used to relate level of social interaction with socio-physical aspects of neighbourhoods of contemporary Hong Kong (Forrest *et al*, 2002).

In Bangladesh, Nabi (1971) gave emphasis on the physical characteristics of the neighbourhoods such as grouping of houses, housing environment, street layout, use of vehicles inside the neighbourhood, location of service facilities and support centers like school, bazaar, shopping centers, park and open space etc. and aesthetic qualities as the pre conditions for having social interactions among the residents of the neighbourhoods of Dhaka City. Nilufar (1997) identified that differences in socio-economic aspects (income, occupation, education, possession of car, religious and ethnic status, family structure, family size, number of children, women in work), differences in housing characteristics (housing size and type, residential stability tenure type) and differences in physical characteristics (location of school, mosque, daily bazaar, shopping, community center) results difference in the pattern of social behavior and social interaction in different neighbourhoods of Dhaka City. Similar criteria were used in the neighbourhood perception and community involvement study of United Kingdom (Coulthard *et al*. 2000). Following the ideas of the above mentioned studies and considering the context of the present study, characteristics of selected neighbourhoods of Dhaka City are described here under three major criteria: a) socio-economic status of household, b) physical characteristics of the neighbourhoods and c) characteristics of residence. The socio-physical aspects of these criteria are illustrated in the following table (Table-3.1):

Table 3.1: Aspects of Neighbourhood Characteristics

Neighbourhood Characteristics		Aspects of Neighbourhood Characteristics
1	Socio-economic status of households	• Age of the respondents • Education of the respondents • Monthly income • Employment pattern • Presence of children • Women in work
2	Physical characteristics of neighbourhoods	• Land use pattern • Street design • Type of housing • Location of support centers • Park and open space
3	Characteristics of residence	• Type of residence • Type of tenure • Length of residing • Satisfaction towards residence • Problems of residents

The class status of the households is an important factor for evaluating the status of social interaction at neighbourhood level. Class status of people of a society is difficult to determine. The common indicators of the social class of a population, which are invariably used in sociological research, are their occupation, income and education (Nilufar, 1997). In 2002, Center for Urban Studies defined social class of the people of contemporary Dhaka based on monthly income of the head of household, which is followed in this study. Thus, in this study class status of household is determined in the following manner:

Table 3.2: Class Status of Households Based on Monthly Income

Income of the head of the households (Monthly)	Class of households
Below 7000	Lower middle class
7000-<15,000	Middle class
15,000-<20,000	Upper middle class
Above 20,000	Upper class

Source: CUS, 2002.

3.5 Determining Indicators of Social Interaction

The indicators used in the present study for describing the status of social interactions are selected on the basis of the previous research conducted for evaluating status of social interactions in different cities of the world including Dhaka City. Forrest and Ngai-ming (2004) described mental perceptions and belongingness of the residents towards their neighbourhood, nature of neighborly contact and pattern of mutual help to analyze aspects of local social relation in the Guangzhou City of contemporary China. For describing the nature of social relations of the people in the neighbourhoods of both old and New Dhaka, Farida Nilufar (1997) evaluated the pattern of primary (face-to-face) social interaction and secondary or organized social interactions. In her study neighbourliness pattern and pattern of social network were evaluated under primary social interactions and pattern of using service facilities like school, mosque, grocery, daily bazaar etc. was evaluated under secondary social interactions. In the study of people's perceptions of neighbourhood and community involvement in United Kingdom, pattern of neighbourliness, social network and social support was described (Coulthard *et al.* 2000).

In the light of the above mentioned studies and considering the socio-cultural context of the selected neighbourhoods of Dhaka City, the indicators of social interactions are discussed in the present study under three broad criteria: a) mental association of the residents with the neighbourhoods, b) pattern of primary social interaction or face-to-face relationships and c) pattern of secondary social interactions or organized social behavior. Status of these indicators for studied neighbourhoods is described on the basis of comparative condition of the three neighbourhoods.

a) Mental Association of the Residents with the Neighbourhoods

Mental association of the residents with their neighbourhoods is discussed here in terms of residents' perceptions towards the neighbourhood boundary, class composition according to monthly income, preferred significant features and level of social interaction in the neighbourhood to understand residents' mental construction of the socio-physical environment of the neighbourhoods. Residents' mental relation to the neighbourhood is

also described by their sense of belonging to the neighbourhood that is, their willingness to live in the neighbourhood and by their community feelings that is their companionship with fellow neighbours.

b) Pattern of Primary Social Interaction

Characteristics of primary social interactions among neighbours are discussed in terms of nature and spatial extent of neighbourly contact with each other in the neighbourhood and it is described by knowledge of neighbours and visiting pattern to neighbours house. Social interaction of women and children, mutual assistance in doing favors, lending and borrowing and mutual visit in sickness and pattern of primary and secondary social network are also discussed under primary social interaction. Friendship and kinship patterns with neighbours are described as primary social network and participation and involvement with the neighbourhood organizations is described as secondary social network of the neighbourhood.

c) Pattern of Secondary Social Interactions

The pattern of using service facilities and support centres such as religious centers, kutcha bazaar, grocery, educational institutions, shopping centers, cultural centers, open spaces and parks exists in the neighbourhoods is discussed as organized social behavior or secondary social interactions.

The primary or face-to-face social contact with the neighbours helps to define the existence of 'community neighbourhoods'. On the other hand, organized social contact generated by the use of different day-to-day functions helps to define the 'functional neighbourhoods'. 'Community neighbourhood is a set of people having regular social interactions (primary or face-to-face) on the basis of co-residence in a physical area. Functional neighbourhood is an area in which a group of people are united by particular activity patterns such as using common services like shopping, education, worship, leisure and recreation' (Blowers, 1973). The selected indicators and sub indicators in the present study for describing the status of social interactions among residents of Rasulbag, Block of Dhanmondi and Eastern Point are illustrated in the Table-3.3.

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Table 3.3: Indicators of Social Interaction in the Neighbourhoods

Selected Indicators and Sub Indicators for Evaluating the Status of Social Interaction		
Mental association with the neighbourhood	Perception of residents towards neighbourhood	Perception of neighbourhood boundary.
		Perception towards own and neighbours social class status.
		Preferred significant features of the neighbourhood.
		Perception towards status of social interaction in the neighbourhood.
	Sense of belonging	Sense of belonging to the neighbourhood.
		Bondage with the neighbours.
Primary social interactions (Face-to-face relations)	Neighbourly contact among residents	Neighbourliness pattern (knowledge of neighbours and visiting pattern) and Spatial extent of immediate neighbourhood.
		Pattern of neighbourly interaction of women and children
	Mutual assistance among neighbours	Doing and taking favors.
		Borrowing and lending money and other things.
		Mutual visit in sickness.
	Pattern of social network	Primary social network: Kinship and Friendship network in the neighbourhood
		Secondary social network: Involvement with neighbourhood organizations.
Secondary social interactions (Organized social activities)	Use of neighbourhood support centers	Pattern of using religious centers, kutcha bazaar, grocery, educational institutions, shopping centers, cultural centers, open spaces and parks of the neighbourhoods by the residents.

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3.6 Collection of Information

Both primary and secondary sources are used in the study for collecting information to evaluate the status of social interactions and to identify the influencing factors of social interaction in the selected neighbourhoods.

3.6.1 Primary Data Collection

Primary data for the present study is collected through Physical Survey, Questionnaire Survey and Focus Group Discussion.

3.6.1.1 Physical Survey

Physical survey is conducted to understand the land use pattern and over all physical scenario of the selected neighbourhoods.

3.6.1.2 Questionnaire Survey

A semi-structured questionnaire is designed for collecting information about existing socio-economic characteristics of the residents, use of service facilities and support centers of the neighbourhoods and characteristics of social interaction in terms of selected criteria from the residents of the selected three neighbourhoods. Head of the households of 25% of the total households of each neighbourhood is selected randomly for questionnaire survey. The head of the household here means the main male earning member of a household, as male earning members are generally holds the status of a family in our social context (Nilufar, 1997). The total number of households of Rasulbag, block of Dhanmondi and Eastern Point is 210, 172 and 160 respectably. Thus, data are collected through questionnaire survey from 52, 43 and 40 households of Rasulbag, block of Dhanmondi and Eastern Point of Shantinagar respectably.

3.6.1.3 Focus Group Discussion

To collect qualitative information regarding history and characteristics of neighbourhoods, nature of social interaction pattern of people of different age, profession, class and gender, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was conducted. FGD acts as a parallel source of specific information. The FGD are usually held with people of identical age,

sex and socio-economic background depending on the objective of the study and in an ideal FGD the number of participants should be limited to between six and twelve (Gupta, 1989).

In the present study, total three FGD was held, one in each neighbourhood. Each focus group was comprised of eight persons. To understand the social interaction pattern of both men and women, equal representative of men and women were included in the FGD. That is, each group was comprised of four men and four women. The age range of the members of focus group was 35-45 that represents the middle-aged residents of a neighbourhood. The members were identical in profession that is in each focus group, all the male members were businessmen and all the female members were housewives. Businessmen were selected as the representative of dominant occupation of the neighbourhoods. Housewives were selected as they assumed to have more idea about the nature of social interaction among neighbours than the professional women who remain busy with their own work. In all, focus groups of the three neighbourhoods were formed in a manner that the findings would come from residents having homogenous socio-economic characteristics and therefore, findings would be comparable for three neighbourhoods. The characteristics of focus groups are summarized in the following table (Table-3.4)

Table 3.4: Composition of Focus Group in the Three Neighbourhoods

Characteristics of Focus Group	Rasulbag	Block of Dhanmondi	Eastern Point
Total No. of members in a focus group	8	8	8
No. of male members	4	4	4
Profession of male members	Business	Business	Business
No. of female members	4	4	4
Profession of male members	Housewives	Housewives	Housewives
Age range of the male and female members.	35-45	35-45	35-45

Source: Field Survey, 2005.

3.6.2 Secondary Data Collection

Extensive literature review was conducted from both national and international empirical research, books, journals, reports, and thesis to build up the theoretical and

methodological background of the present study. Maps of Dhaka Metropolitan and Dhaka City Corporation were collected from Master Plan of Dhaka City (DMDP). Besides these relevant reports of news papers and magazines were also used as secondary sources to understand the present scenario of social interaction in Dhaka City.

3.7 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data and information collected from literature review and other secondary sources were used to develop theoretical support and methodological framework of the present study. Based on physical survey, physical characteristics and land use pattern of the neighbourhoods were described and mapped. Information on socio-economic and housing characteristics of the residents collected through questionnaire survey was analyzed by percentile distribution and calculation of central tendency and dispersion (mean and standard deviation) of the variables and the results then compared for the three neighbourhoods to identify differences of the resident's socio-economic and housing characteristics. Information on indicators of social interaction is analyzed in the following manner:

3.7.1 Evaluating the Status of Neighbourhood Perception, Sense of Belonging and Pattern of Mutual Assistance

For evaluating the status of social interactions in the neighbourhoods, various methods, which are also used in other relevant research, are followed in this study for describing different indicators of social interactions. Percentile distribution of the opinion of the respondents regarding their mental association with the neighbourhood (perception of residents towards their neighbourhood and sense of belonging) and pattern of mutual assistance is discussed and compared for three studied neighbourhoods. Considering the nature of opinion of the respondents, certain type of opinion is considered as the positive attributes of social interaction such as resident's perceptual boundary is similar to the actual boundary of neighbourhood, resident's preferred features are located inside their neighbourhoods, residents visit their neighbours in their sickness, residents possess community feelings in the neighbourhood etc. To evaluate the status of the neighbourhood perception, sense of belonging and mutual assistance pattern of the

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residents, the percentage of positive opinions of the respondents is given weight by the following method:

Table 3.5: Distribution of Weight for Indicators of Social Interactions

Positive opinion towards the social interaction (%)	Weight given for each range	Status of social interaction
90 and above	10	Extremely High
80 - <90	9	High
70 - <80	8	
60 - <70	7	
50 - <60	6	Medium
40 - <50	5	
30 - <40	4	Low
20 - <30	3	
10 - <20	2	
0 - <10	1	Extremely low

Source: Forrest and Ngai-ming, 2004.

After giving weights, the total score of positive opinion regarding neighbourhood perception, sense of belonging and mutual assistance was evaluated. The neighbourhood that got the highest score is considered as the neighbourhood having better perception, more sense of belonging and mutual assistance with the neighbours. Then, based on the average score of the above-mentioned indicators the status of social interaction is determined by the following manner:

Table 3.6: Average Score and Status of Social Interaction

Range of average score	Status of social interaction
9.1 - 10	Extremely high
6.1 – 9	High
4.1 – 6	Medium
1.1 - 4	Low
0- 1	Extremely low
Note. Average score of an indicator = Total score (weight) of sub-indicators of that indicator / Number of Sub-indicators of that indicator (Forrest and Ngai-ming, 2004)	

Source: Forrest and Ngai-ming, 2004.

3.7.2 Measuring the Status of Neighborly Contact

To examine the pattern of neighbourly contact among residents of the studied neighbourhoods, the number of households involved in social interaction in the neighbourhoods and the extent to which neighbourly relation exists is evaluated. In her study, Farida Nilufar (1997) used schematic map of twenty contiguous houses to determine each respondent's immediate neighbourhood but as both vertical and horizontal neighbourhood is studied in the present study, the respondents are given the schematic map of the whole neighbourhood to identify those houses where they know the name of family head (N), occupation of the family head (O), visit occasionally by invitation (I) and informal visit (V). Simple addition of number of houses involved in knowing and visiting neighbours of each neighbourhood gives a generalized picture of neighbourly contact (X) in each neighbourhood: $X = N + O + I + V$ (Wallin, 1953). Percent of number of houses in relation to the total number of houses of the neighbourhoods then evaluated and the neighbourhood that gets the highest percentage is considered as having the highest status of neighbourly contact among residents of the neighbourhood.

The morphology of immediate neighbourhood is evaluated by the extent of regular visit to neighbours' houses, the most significant sign of neighbourliness, by household heads. The location of houses regularly visited by the respondents collected through schematic map and questionnaire survey is presented here through percentile distribution and graphic illustration of spatial extent of regular visit to neighbours' houses in each neighbourhood.

3.7.3 Describing Interaction Pattern of Women and Children

The characteristics of social interaction of women and children are described in terms of common view of the women of selected focus group about the nature of their interaction with the other women and the nature of interaction of their children with the other children of the neighbourhood.

3.7.4 Evaluating the Pattern of Social Network

For describing primary social network, kinship and friendship pattern of the residents in their neighborhoods are discussed both in terms of number of families having their kin and friends living in the same neighbourhood. Secondary social network or involvement with the neighbourhood organization is described in terms of membership in the organizations and level of participation (in percent) of the residents of studied neighbourhoods in the activities of the organization and types of contribution they made to enhance the activities of the organizations (Murtagh, 2000).

3.7.5 Describing Secondary Social Interaction

Secondary social interaction indicates spatial bondage of the residents to their neighbourhood. For describing organized social activities of the people, the pattern of using daily bazaar, grocery, school, religious centres, shopping centres, cultural centres, health clinics, open spaces and parks are discussed in terms of percentile distribution. The number of respondents (percent) who use the above mentioned neighbourhood support centers are given weight and thus, status of secondary social interactions of the three neighbourhoods is evaluated by average score (Table 3.5 and Table 3.6) of the use of the support centres by the residents.

3.7.6 Identifying Factors Influencing Social Interaction

After evaluating the status of social interactions of the neighbourhoods, the factors that influence the status of social interaction are described in terms of the respondent's opinion, FGD and the relation of existing socio-economic and residing characteristics and physical features of the neighbourhoods to the status of social interaction. For this purpose, general principles and particular socio-physical characteristics are discussed in the context of studied neighbourhoods (Nabi, 1971, Korinke, 2005).

3.8 Presentation of Data Analysis

In the present study, descriptive literature, mathematical calculation, figures, diagrams, tables, chats, maps and photographs are used to present analysis and interpretation of data and information. For mapping GIS (Arc View) and Adobe Illustrator and for statistical analysis, Excel and SPSS program is used.

3.9 Providing Recommendations

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the status of social relation and interaction among residents in the neighbourhoods of Dhaka City so that appropriate actions can be suggested for increasing social interaction where needed. Thus, based on the findings of the study and examples of other countries relevant recommendations are provided in this study for enhancing the status of social interaction at the neighbourhood level of Dhaka City.

PROFILE OF THE SELECTED NEIGHBOURHOODS

CHAPTER 4
PROFILE OF THE SELECTED NEIGHBOURHOODS

4.1 Introduction

Present study explores socio-economic, physical and residential characteristics in the three study neighbourhoods through physical survey and questionnaire survey to the head of the households residing in the selected neighbourhoods of Lalbag, Dhanmondi and Shantinagar area. In this section, a comparative picture of the three neighbourhoods is discussed in terms of land use pattern, physical characteristics, socio-economic status and nature of residents.

4.2 Physical Characteristics of the Neighbourhoods

4.2.1 Rasulbag Neighbourhood of Lalbag
4.2.1.1 Background of Rasulbag

Rasulbag neighbourhood is situated in Lalbag area of Old Dhaka and located on the both side of the Lalbag Road which is a narrow street with nine feet width and resembles with the traditional narrow and curved street pattern of Old Dhaka. Rasulbag was developed as a residential area or *mohalla* in the 16th century in the premise of Lalbag Fort. Muslims predominantly inhabited this place and community leaders regulated religious and social life of the people under *panchayet* system (Akramuzzaman, 1966). This *panchayet* system is still exists in this neighbourhood in different form. Presently, respectable persons of the neighbourhood gather for resolving problems like shortage of service facilities, household chaos, robbery etc. The traditional look of this *mohalla* or neighbourhood is transformed by the redevelopment process and housing reforms through passing of time but still, compact land use pattern along the narrow streets seems as a reminder of the traditional neighbourhood of Old Dhaka (Islam, 1996).

4.2.1.2 Present Neighbourhood Boundary and Physical Features

Presently Rasulbag is a linear patterned neighbourhood with compact settlement where 89.36 percent area (floor space of buildings) is used for residential purposes (Table-4.1). Most of the houses are non-apartment multistoried buildings and average building height is equal to 2.5 storied buildings (Ahsan, 1966). There is no greenery in the neighbourhood because of the absence of park and garden. There is a playground in the North-West end of Rasulbag. Local people called it 'Rasulbug Park'. There are no trees and no infrastructure of any kind of sports

and amusement in this park. There are two mosques and a government primary school in Rasulbag. Commercial activities include *kutcha* bazaar, grocery shops, tea stalls, patty industries, drug stores etc (Map-4.1). People residing here can get their daily necessities like food, medicine etc. within walking distances.

Table 4.1: Distribution of Use of Floor Spaces in Rasulbag

	F	(%)
No. of floor space used for residential purposes	210	89.36
No. of floor space used for commercial and other purposes	25	10.64
Total No. of floor Space	235	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005.

The streets of neighbourhood are broken down in many places and household garbage is found scattered here and there on the street. Though, City Corporation is responsible for collecting garbage from this neighbourhood, most of the garbage always remains on the street. Besides, open drains along the streets make the neighbourhood environment unhealthy for inhabitants. The situation becomes worse in the rainy season because of water logging especially during flood. People of Rasulbag do not take any initiatives for solving waterlogging problems and for waste management yet but for security of the neighbourhood, they initiated for night watch/foot patrol by themselves. There is a community club named *Rasulbag Samaj Unnayan Santha* established by the local people of Rasulbag.

Map 4.1 : Landuse Pattern of Rasulbag.

LALBAG ROAD

ANIMPUR ROAD

N

LEGEND

- Residence
- Rasulbag Part
- Petty Industry & grocery Shops
- Tea stall
- Primary School
- Mosque
- Road
- Drug Store

Source : Field Survey, 2005.
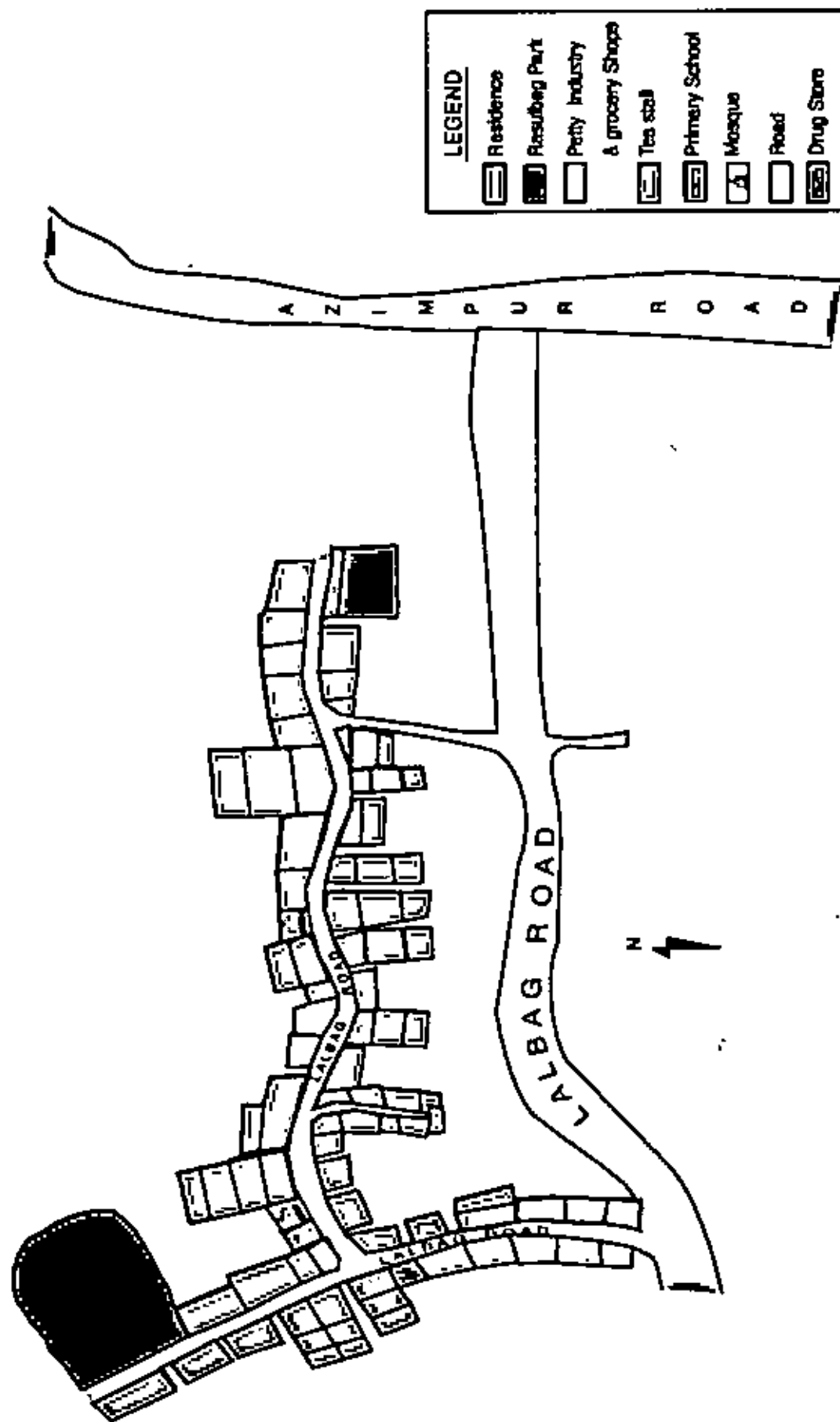
A Portion of Rasulbag
Neighbourhood

Old Two Storied Buildings of Rasulbag

New Multi Storied
Buildings of Rasulbag

Small Grocery Shop of Rasulbag

Road Side Stationary Shop of Rasulbag

Rasulbag Primary School

Rasulbag Playground

Narrow Street with no Sunlight

Open Sewerage Line and
Open Manholes

Photo Gallery 1: Features of Rasulbag Neighbourhood

4.2.2 Neighbourhood of Dhanmondi

4.2.2.1 Background of Dhanmondi Residential Area

Dhanmondi residential area was planned in the style of site and service scheme with a regular system of roads to provide residential accommodation for the high and higher-middle income group during the early 1950's. This area has gridiron pattern of street network. The project area was subdivided into 1083 plots. The size of the plot was originally ranging from 15 to 33 decimal (Hasem, 2001). According to the original plan the building height was restricted up to three storied. Serviced plots of Dhanmondi were allocated to the Government officials for their accommodation. By 1970's the area became the most prestigious residential area of Dhaka City inhabited by highly educated government officials. The area is located within five kilometers from Motijheel, CBD of Dhaka Metropolitan City. Total amount of the site including water bodies, roads etc. is about 485.9 acres. It is the first designed residential area in Dhaka city, designed by Public Works Department, Government of the then East Pakistan.

4.2.2.2 Transformation of Dhanmondi Area

Subdivision of Plots and Construction of High-Rise Apartments:

Most of the present plot owners of Dhanmondi are the second or third generation of original owners. About one fifth of the original plots are now physically subdivided. These subdivisions are due to transfer by selling of land or due to multiple numbers of successors. The number of plots now increases from 1083 to 1328 (Hasem, 2001). Increase in the number of subdivisions increases the intensity of built structure.

Besides subdivision of plots, intrusion of high-rise apartments increased density of built structure as well as density of population in Dhanmondi. From Focus Group Discussion, it is revealed that, with the passing of time a significant number of families lived in Dhanmondi residential area sent their children to the foreign countries for higher education and they settled there. Many of them took their parents abroad to live with them. So these households sold their land to the developers for building apartment in exchange of substantial amount of cash money and two or three flats of the apartment. By the mid 80's construction of high-rise apartment buildings began appeared as a popular trend in Dhaka and a significant portion of one or two storied single houses of Dhanmondi was replaced by six storied apartment buildings.

Subdivision regulation applied to Dhanmondi also act as an important factor. Legally it is not allowed to subdivide a five *Kutha* parcel of land to small parcels as a result, construction of six-story apartment is a viable option for the heir of original owners of Dhanmondi. Obviously involvement of the developers in the process made it easier. In the course of time, Dhanmondi attracted apartment buyers from different localities of Dhaka and outside. Thus, people other than government officials started to live in Dhanmondi and the essence of prestigious residential area started to get changed.

Intrusion of Commercial Activities:

Originally Dhanmondi residential areas was developed without the provision of any supporting facilities necessary for running a neighbourhood. So gradually out of necessity, small-scale commercial endeavors such as, grocery shops, laundries, stationary shops, pharmacies etc. were coming up in a haphazard manner within the neighbourhood. The lack of no hard or fast rules from the concerned authorities even increased this scattered development of commercial centers. Some influential persons also took advantage of the situation by establishing larger scale shopping malls. Eventually, real state developers came forward in this profit making business through conversion of residential plots into commercial structures. From the conversion of the land use pattern, both the absentee land owners and the real estate developers became the beneficiaries. But, social, physical and environmental problems resulted from commercialization gradually deteriorated the serene environment and livability of the Dhanmondi residential area (Nancy, 2004).

4.2.2.3 Physical Characteristic of Studied Block of Dhanmondi

The studied neighbourhood block of Dhanmondi consists of street 7A and 8A, located just beside the Dhanmondi Lake and Park. So this neighbourhood enjoys the most beautiful natural environment in Dhanmondi but there is no open space and playground inside the neighbourhood. Presently apartment housing is the predominant feature of this neighbourhood. The grid-patterned streets are approximately twenty feet wide and except few places, there found no garbage on the streets of the neighbourhood.

In this neighbourhood block, there is a mosque, four private schools for children, two private colleges and two private universities. The dominance of educational institutions is an important characteristic of this neighbourhood. The Iranian Cultural Center is situated in this block. There is also a community center, a private hospital and two diagnostic centers in the neighbourhood. Two beauty parlors are also located here (Map-4.2). Most of the apartment buildings have no indoor playing space for children. There is no *kutcha* bazaar here. Residents need to go to the modern grocery shops located outside the neighbourhood even for fish and meet. Members of focus group told that most of the residents do not feel the need of *kutcha* bazaar, as there are many modern grocery shops located in the surrounding area within short distances. Every apartment and non- apartment building has its own day-night security system. None is allowed to enter in the building without informing the households. There is no neighbourhood based association or organization in this neighbourhood block of Dhanmondi. In total, there are 172 households residing in the neighbourhood. Of the total floor space of the neighbourhood, 83.09 percent is used for residential purposes (Table-4.2). The average building height of the neighbourhood is 6.5.

Table 4.2: Distribution of Use of Floor Spaces in Block of Dhanmondi

	F	(%)
No. of floor space used for residential purposes	172	83.09
No. of floor space used for commercial and other purposes	35	16.91
Total No. of floor Space	207	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005.

Map 4.2: Land Use Pattern of Block of Dhanmondi.

Rd. 8A

Rd. 7A

Park

Dhanmondi

Lake
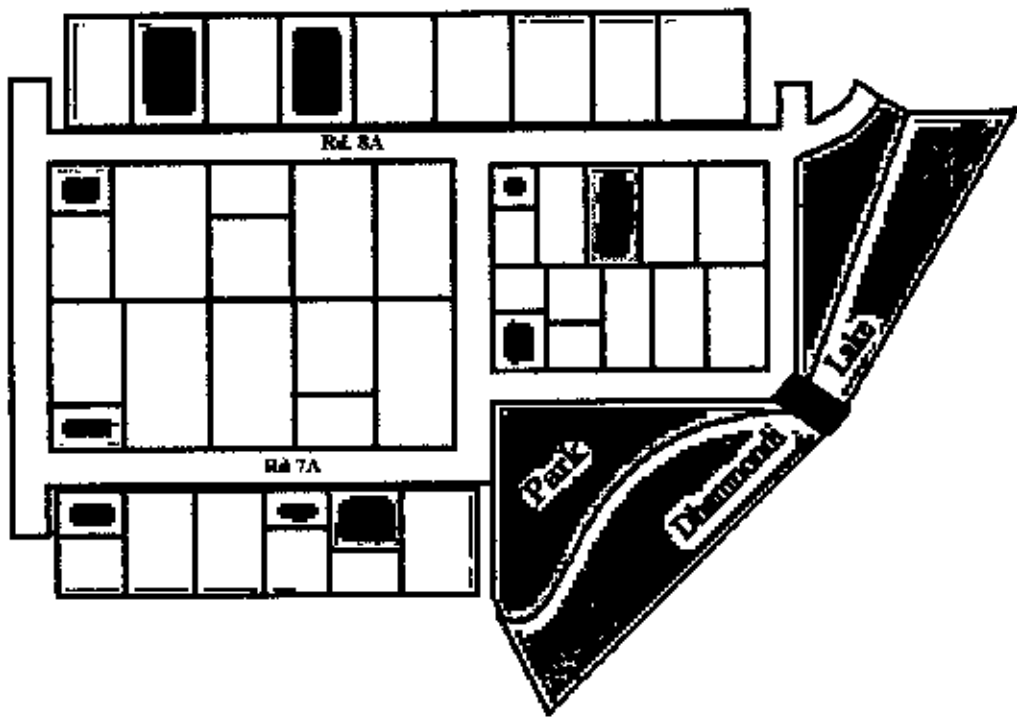
LEGEND

☐ Residence
☐ Masjid
☐ School
☐ Health Clinic and Diagnostic Center
☐ Community Center
☐ Iranian Cultural Center
☐ Beauty Parlor

N
↑

A Portion of Block of Dhanmondi

Apartment Buildings Side by Side

An Old Three Storied
Building

Wide Street of Block of Dhanmondi

Commercial Activities in the Ground
Floor of a Residence

One of the Six Educational
Institutions

Community Center of Block of
Dhanmondi

Cultural Center of Block of
Dhanmondi

Clinic and Diagnostic
Center

Beauty Parlor

Dhanmondi Lake

Public Gathering in the
Lake and Park

Photo Gallery 2: Features of Block of Dhanmondi

4.2.3 Eastern Point of Shantinagar

4.2.3.1 Background of Eastern Point Housing Complex

In the booming period of construction of apartment buildings in Dhaka City in the mid of 1980s, several real estate companies planned to build massive housing complexes comprised of three to ten apartment buildings with necessary service facilities within the housing complex. The ultimate plan was to build a self-contained residential area extended vertically to ensure the optimum use of land. In confrontation with increasing land value and shortage of land this attempt was considered as an appropriate solution for supplying housing stock to the city people (Islam, 1996). These apartment complexes create a new kind of neighbourhoods in Dhaka City, residing by the upper class people. 'Eastern Point' was one such apartment complexes. which was constructed by the 'Eastern Group' in Shantinagar area at the beginning of 1990s.

4.2.3.2 Physical Characteristic of Eastern Point

There are four twelve - storied apartment buildings inside the boundary of Eastern Point. Total 160 families (40 families living in each building) reside in the apartment complex. The ground and first floor of this apartment is used for parking besides, there is space in the ground floor for parking for the visitors. There are a mosque, a community center named 'Eastern Point Housing Society Association'. indoor playing space and park for children, security management center. separate meeting place for women and men, a library. open space for walking and exercising in this apartment complex. Internal staff is engaged for repairing electrical or technical faults, collecting garbage and fixing other problems complained by the residents.

Of the total floor space, 83.33 percent is used for residential purposes and 16.67 percent is used for service centres (Table-4 3). Because of the absence of commercial activities inside the housing complex, residents of eastern Point are dependent on the nearby *kutcha* bazaar, grocery, shopping centers, health clinic and other places for meeting their daily necessities. Most of these facilities are available within walking distances. Eastern Point is located on the eastern side of Shantinagar road, which has several locational advantages because number of reputed schools, colleges, universities, clinics, hospitals and shopping centers are close to this place. Shantinagar *kutcha* bazaar is located just beside the housing complex.

Table 4.3: Distribution of Use of Floor Spaces in Eastern Point

	F	(%)
No. of floor space used for residential purposes	160	83.33
No. of floor space used for service facilities and support centers	32	16.67
Total No. of floor Space	192	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005.

Absence of open space and park is one of the back draws of this vertically compact neighbourhood. During the monsoon, residents have to face water logging problem as whole Shantinagar area goes under water even after little amount of rainfall. As a whole, Eastern Point is the pioneer of a new type of neighbourhood, which is now a predominant feature of the residential areas of Dhaka City.

Map 4.3 : Land Use Pattern of Eastern Point Housing Complex

LEGEND

- ☐ Residence
- ■ Parking Lot
- ■ Guest Parking
- ■ Garden
- ■ Information center
- ☐ Shops
- ■ Shantinagar Bazaar

Kakrail Road

Bally Road

Maitbag Road

Shantinagar Road

N
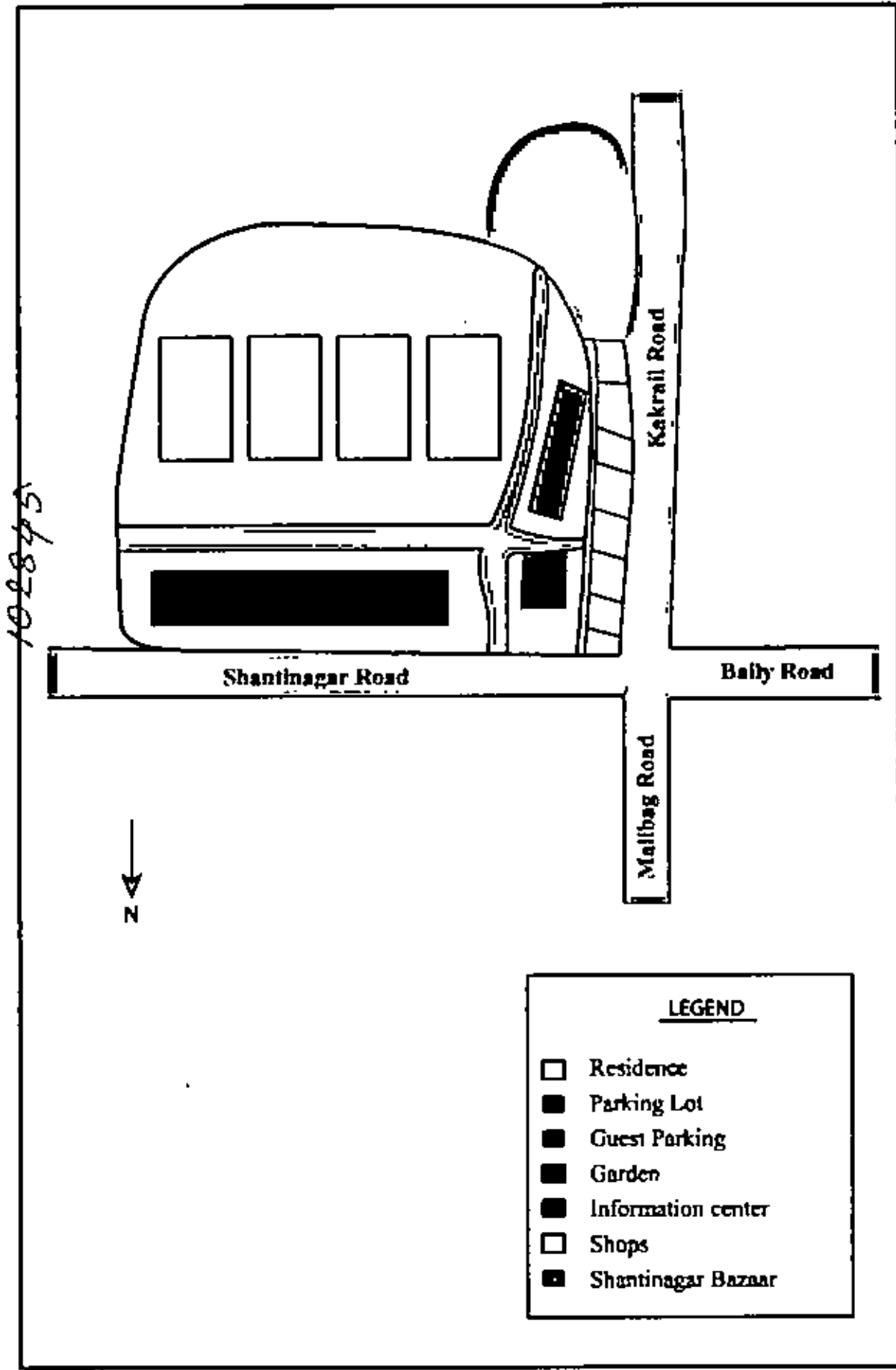
Eastern Point Housing complex

Eastern Point Housing complex

Wide and clean street inside
Eastern Point

Corridor between Two Flats

Space Allocated for Mosque

Meeting Hall for the residents

Two Storied Parking Lot

Parking Space for Guests

Library for Residents

Play Area

Indoor Park

Service Management Office

Photo Gallery 3: Features of Eastern Point

4.3 Socio-economic Characteristics of the Neighbourhoods

There are 210, 172 and 160 households in Rasulbag, Block of Dhanmondi and Eastern Point respectably. Of the total households, 52, 43 and 40 head of the households of Rasulbag, Block of Dhanmondi and Eastern Point respectably is interviewed through questionnaire survey for collecting information on their socio-economic and housing characteristics, which represents 25% of the total heads of the households of the studied neighbourhoods.

4.3.1 Age Structure of the Respondents

Form the figure of age structure, it is found that the heads of the households of Rasulbag are much younger than Dhanmondi and Eastern Point. Age of 63.46 percent respondents of Rasulbag is below 45, on the other hand, this figure is 23.26 percent and 22.5 percent for block of Dhanmondi and Eastern Point respectably. In fact, age of more than half of the respondents (63.46%) of Rasulbag is found below 45. It is also noticed that the proportion of aged people, age more than 65, is found lower in all the three neighbourhoods. The Standard Deviation of age of the three neighbourhoods suggests that block of Dhanmondi and Eastern Point represents a greater dispersion of the distribution of age in comparison to Rasulbag and thus, suggesting a considerable degree of heterogeneity in the age of the respondents. On the other hand, Standard Deviation of age of respondents of Rasulbag suggests less diversity in terms of age among the respondents (Table-4.4 and Fig-4.1). All these evidence leads towards the conclusion that relatively younger and homogenous people resides in Rasulbag than the block of Dhanmondi and Eastern Point.

Table 4.4: Age Structure of the Respondents

Neighbourhoods	Mean and St. Dev.		Frequency Distribution of Age in % under Five Categories				
	Mean	St. Dev	<35	35 -<45	45 -<55	55 -<65	65 and above
Rasulbag	41.79	7.53	11.54	51.92	30.77	1.92	3.85
Block of Dhanmondi	50.09	8.32	4.65	18.61	46.51	25.58	4.65
Eastern Point	52.63	8.76	7.5	15	20	52.5	5
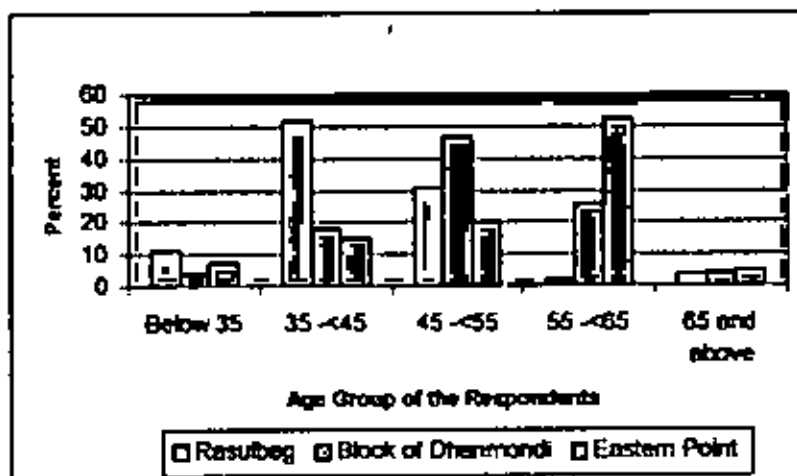
Source: Field Survey, 2005

Figure 4.1: Age Structure of the Respondents

4.3.2 Educational Status of the Respondents

Education level of the respondents of Rasulbag is found much lower than the respondents of other two neighbourhoods. All the respondent of Eastern Point and significant number of respondents (93.02%) of block of Dhanmondi have graduation and Master's degree level education while the figure is only 30.78% in Rasulbag. In Rasulbag, education level of 72.22 percent respondents is below graduation level and most of the respondents (40.38%) have higher secondary level education. It is also found that most of the respondents of Dhanmondi (55.81%) are graduates and most of the respondents of Eastern Point (82.5%) are Master's degree holders (Fig-4.2). However, a socio-economic study of household heads showed that only 10.3 percent of the household heads were literate in Dhaka City in 1984-91 whereas, 23 percent had passed their SSC/HSC and 30.7 percent were graduates, Master's degree and professional/diploma holders (Siddique, 1991). This figure shows greater agreement with the respondents of Rasulbag. In conclusion, it can be said that the people of Eastern Point are highly educated followed by Dhanmondi and people of Rasulbag are less educated.

Educational Status of the Respondents

Percent

100
80
60
40
20
0

Rasulbag   Block of   Eastern Point
            Dhanmondi

Neighbourhoods

□ Below primary □ Primary □ SSC □ HSC □ Graduate □ Above graduation
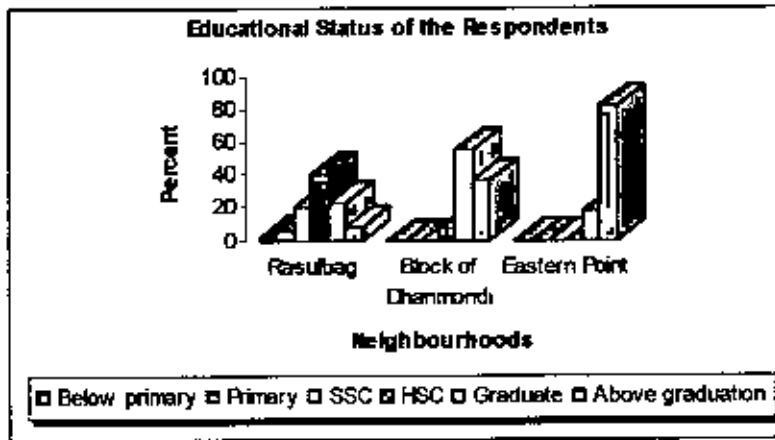
Source: Field Survey, 2005.

Figure 4.2: Educational Status of the Respondents

4.3.3 Occupation Pattern

In urban areas, people are normally engaged in non-agricultural jobs. A comparison of the national data with that of Dhaka City shows that the majority in Dhaka are either engaged in business or employed in services (Rahman, 1994). The census data (BBS, 1997) on occupation illustrate that in a major section of Old Dhaka, population are engaged in business activities, where as in the newer area, a large groups are service holders. From the occupation pattern of the respondents, it is found that business is dominant in the occupation profile of the studied neighbourhoods. Most of the businessmen of Rasulbag are owner of shops and most of the businessmen of Eastern Point and block of Dhanmondi are either owner of industries or owner of shops. Though business is the prime occupation of the respondents of the three neighbourhoods, it is found comparatively lower in Eastern Point, where 70 percent is occupied in professions other than business and this figure is 55.77 percent and 53.49 percent in Rasulbag and Dhanmondi respectably. It is also noticed that most of the service holders (32.69 percent) of Rasulbag are engaged in managerial and administrative activities whilst most of the service holders of block of Dhanmondi and Eastern Point are engineers, doctors, lawyers, bankers, teachers etc. (Table-4.5).

Thus, it can be inferred from the occupation pattern that the majority of the people of Rasulbag and block of Dhanmondi are engaged in business on the other hand, majority of the people of Eastern Point are service holders. Of the service holders, most people of Rasulbag are engaged in

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low category activities whilst service holders of Eastern Point and block of Dhanmondi are engaged in high category activities in terms of pay scale and work skills

Sector wise distribution of employment pattern of the respondents reveals that most of the respondents of block of Dhanmondi and Rasulbag are self-employed whilst most of the respondents of Eastern Point work in the non-government organizations. Over all, proportion of employment in the government institutions found comparatively lower in the three neighbourhoods (Fig-4.3).

Table 4.5: Occupation of the Respondents

Occupation of the Respondents	Rasulbag		Dhanmondi		Eastern Point	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Business	23	44.23	20	46.51	12	30
Banker	3	5.77	1	2.33	2	5
Doctor	2	3.85	6	13.95	9	22.5
Teacher	5	9.62	0	0	1	2.5
Lawyer	1	1.92	3	6.98	1	2.5
Engineer	1	1.92	8	18.60	8	20
Managerial and administrative work	17	32.69	5	11.63	7	17.5
Total	52	100	43	100	40	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005.
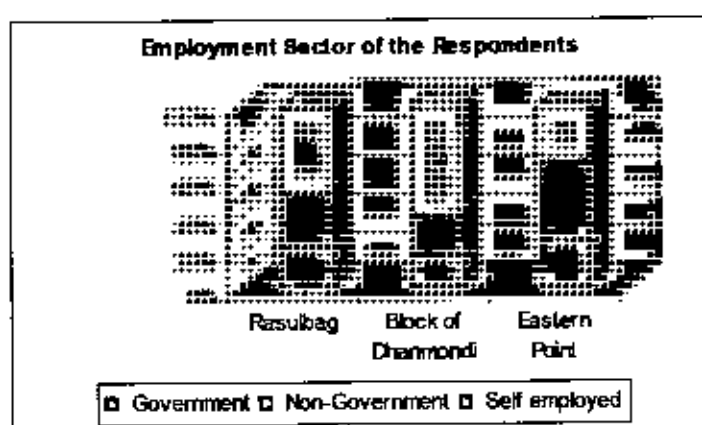
Source: Field Survey, 2005.

Figure 4.3: Employment Sector of the Respondents

4.3.4 Income Status

According to national statistics. the average population of the urban areas of Bangladesh belongs to low and lower-middle income groups. where as the majority of the population of Dhaka City belongs to the middle-income group (BBS, 1997). The results of the present study indicate that people within the middle income category are the dominant group in the Rasulbag of Old Dhaka as most of the respondents belong to middle class in terms of monthly income whilst in Eastern Point and block of Dhanmondi most of the people belong to upper class. Thus, income level is found quite contrasting between Rasulbag and the other two neighbourhoods. Although respondents of Rasulbag are predominantly middle class. the Standard Deviation of income data represents a greater dispersion of the distribution of income in comparison to the other neighbourhoods and thus, suggesting a considerable degree of heterogeneity within the population. This means a mixture of both rich and poor resides in Rasulbag. However, frequency distribution and Standard Deviation of income data illustrates that in block of Dhanmondi and Eastern Point, most of the people are rich and has less dispersion in terms of monthly income and it indicates homogeneity in income pattern that is presence of only well-off people in the neighbourhood (Table-4.6). Thus, it can be inferred that relatively richer people live in Eastern Point and block of Dhanmondi of New Dhaka whilst Rasulbag of Old Dhaka is inhabited predominantly by middle class people.

Table 4.6: Income of the Respondents

Neighbourhoods	Mean and St. Dev. of Income		Frequency Distribution of Monthly Income in % under Four Categories			
	Mean	St. Dev	Below 7000 (Lower middle class)	7000-<15,000 (Middle class)	15,000-<20,000 (Upper middle class)	Above 20,000 (Upper class)
Rasulbag	10,442.31	11,507.51	30.77	53. 85	5.77	9.62
Dhanmondi	27,151.16	6,781.71	0	4.65	20.93	74 42
Eastern Point	22.237.5	6,365 99	0	22.5	25	52 5

Source· Field Survey, 2005.

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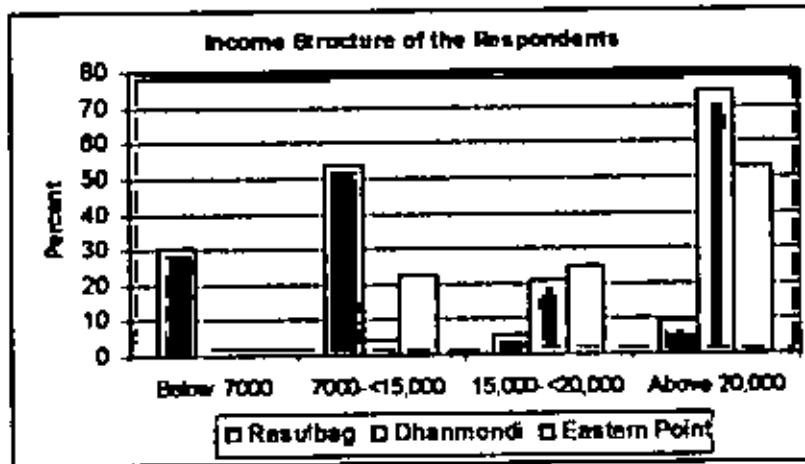
Source: Field Survey, 2005.

Figure 4.4: Income Structure of the Respondents

4.3.5 Family Status:

According to national statistics (BBS, 1997), nuclear families and joint families are the two dominant groups in the urban areas of Bangladesh. In the socio-cultural situation of Bangladesh, the nuclear families are formed with unmarried children. The extended families are formed with members from three generations and the joint families are formed with the brothers/sisters (married or unmarried) of the household head or other relatives (Rahman, 1994).

Findings of the present study indicated that nuclear families are predominant in the studied neighbourhoods. Only 21.15, 6.98 and 5 percent families are either extended or joint families in the Rasulbag, block of Dhanmondi and Eastern Point respectably. It is noticed that comparatively higher number of joint and extended families are found in Rasulbag of Old Dhaka (Fig-4.5).

In Dhaka, the average size of family is close to 5.6 in 1991 (BBS, 1997). The present investigation shows that, including the extended, joint and nuclear families, the average family size varies between 4 to 7 members. In Rasulbag families are rather bigger than block of Dhanmondi and Eastern point (Table-4.7). On average, the family size of Rasulbag is 6.1, whilst it is 4.4 and 4.8 in Eastern point and block of Dhanmondi respectably. The mean number of children is more or less same in the studied three neighbourhoods, that is 2-3 and it is very similar to the socio-economic study, which shows that there are on average 2.87 children per

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married household head in Dhaka (Siddique, 1991). In the present study, households have young children aged below 15 is found comparatively lower in block of Dhanmondi.

Table 4.7: Family Structure

Family structure of respondents	Rasulbag		Dhanmondi		Eastern Point	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Households have children (Age below 15)	31	59.62	18	41.86	22	55
Joint and extended family	11	21.15	3	6.98	8	5
Women in work	5	5.77	6	13.95	4	10
Average household size	6.1		4.8		4.4	

Source: Field Survey, 2005.
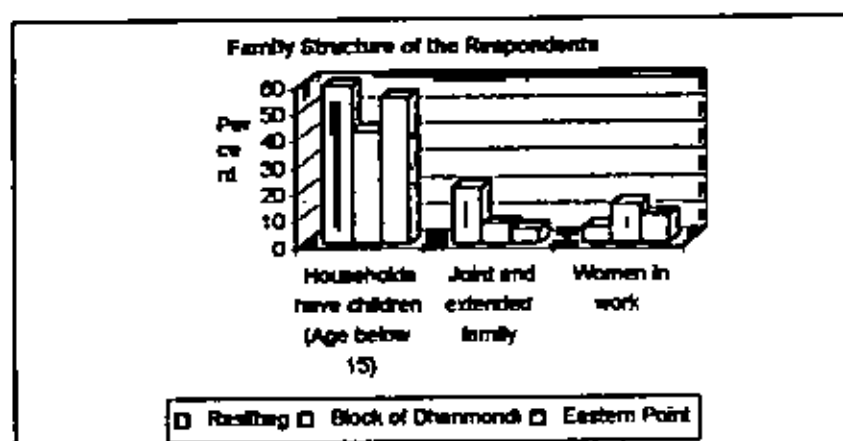
Source: Field Survey, 2005.

Figure 4.5: Family Structure of the Respondents

The proportion of the female members engaged in work or earning outside the home is very low in the society of Dhaka. In 1991 the crude economic participation by the female population of total Dhaka district and its urban areas were respectably 13.96% and 15.04% (BBS, 1997) It is found from the present study that comparatively lower number, only 5.77 percent women (wives of the respondents) in Rasulbag engaged in work whereas this figure is 13.95 and 15 percent in block of Dhanmondi and Eastern Point respectably.

4.4 Housing Characteristics

4.4.1 Type of Housing

Except Eastern Point apartment complex, where all of the respondents live in apartment buildings, contrasting nature is found in terms of housing type in block of Dhanmondi and Rasulbag. Most of the people live in apartment houses in block of Dhanmondi on the other hand,

most of the respondents live in non apartment buildings in Rasulbag. In both of these neighbourhoods presence of less number of single family houses is found. A few respondents of Rasulbag found living in one-storied shared houses, where three to five families including the owner of the house live together and share kitchen, toilet, living and dining room (Fig-4.6) The findings of socio-economic survey of Dhaka in 1985-90 showed that majority of houses in Dhaka belonged to medium sizes (250 – 1,500 sq. ft.) (Siddique, 1991) In the present study, it is found that house size of Rasulbag varies from 100 to 2,000 sq. ft. that is quite similar to the previous socio-economic survey. On the other hand, size of each apartment house of Eastern Point and block Dhanmondi varies from 2000 – 3500 sq. ft. Thus, it can be inferred that Rasulbag has mixed type of housing ranging from lower income category (100 to 500 sq. ft.) to higher income category (2000 sq. ft.) and houses of block of Dhanmondi and Eastern Point are quite homogenous and are mostly belong to higher income category.
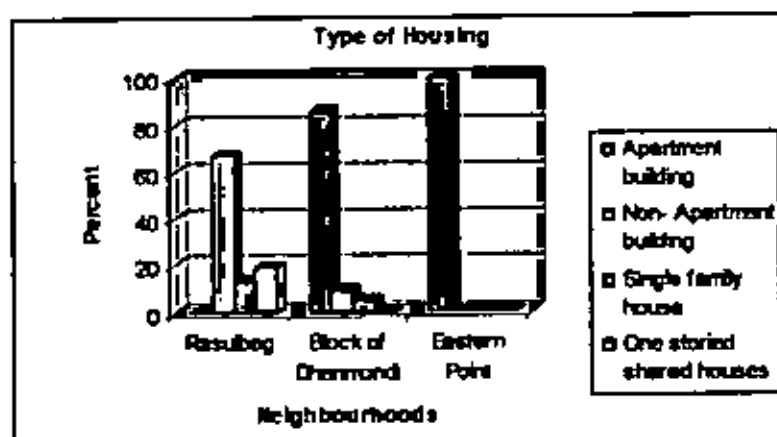
Source: Field Survey, 2005.

Figure 4.6: Type of Housing

4.4.2 Type of Tenure

The findings of the socio-economic survey in 1985-90 revealed that 55 percent of the households of Dhaka City were living in their own houses and other 44.1 percent were living in rented houses (Siddique, 1991). However, according to the 1991 census only 24.53 percent live in their own houses in Dhaka Municipality. Unlike the city averages, the findings of the present survey reveal that rented-occupiers are dominating in the three neighbourhoods (Fig-4.7).

Source: Field Survey, 2005

Figure 4.7: Type of Tenure
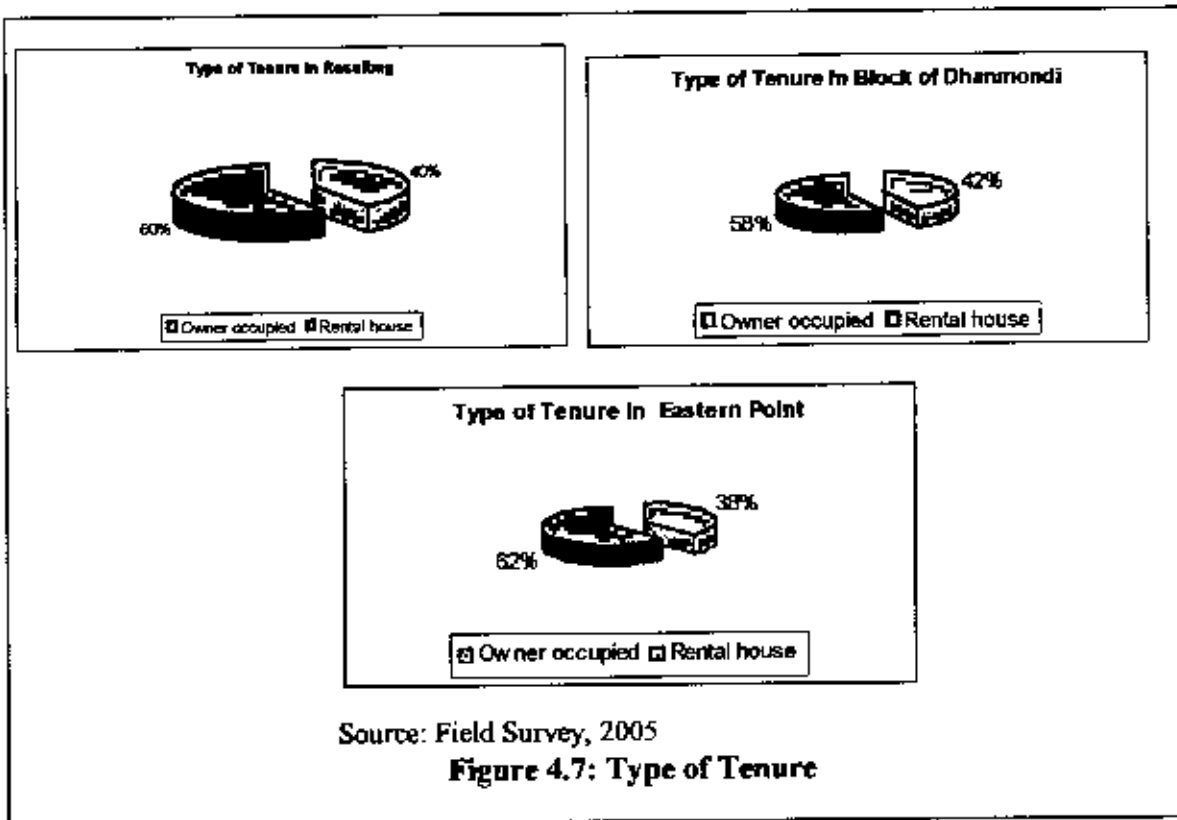
4.4.3 Length of residing in the house

Length of residing in the present house of the respondents of studied neighbourhoods reveals that most of the residents of both Eastern Point (72.5%) and block of Dhanmondi (72.09%) are living in their present house for less than ten years and this figure is 51.93 percent in Rasulbag. Higher number of respondents are found living in their present house for more than 20 years in Rasulbag than block of Dhanmondi and as Eastern Point was contracted in the mid of 90s, no one here found living for more than 14 years (Table-4.8 and Fig-4 8).

Average length of stay in the same house and percentile figure shows that residents of Rasulbag are staying in their houses for longer years than the other two neighbourhoods but, Standard Deviation of length of residing shows that Rasulbag represents a greater dispersion of the length of staying in the present houses in comparison to the block of Dhanmondi and Eastern Point. This suggests a considerable degree of heterogeneity within the staying period. Thus, mixture of residents with different length of staying in their present houses are found in Rasulbag whilst

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frequency distribution and Standard Deviation illustrates that in general, length of residing is found homogenous in block of Dhanmondi and Eastern Point where most of the people found staying in their present houses for 2 to 9 years.

Table 4.8: Length of Residing

Neighbourhoods	Mean and St. Dev of Length of Residing		Frequency Distribution of Length of Residing in % under Five Categories				
	Mean	St. Dev	2-<5 years	5-<10 years	10-<15 years	15 -<20 years	20 years and above
Rasulbag	11.62	8.68	23.08	28.85	25	5.77	17.30
Block of Dhanmondi	8.84	6.25	30.23	41.86	13.95	2.33	11.63
Eastern Point	7.05	3.63	32.5	40	27.5	0	0

Source: Field Survey, 2005.
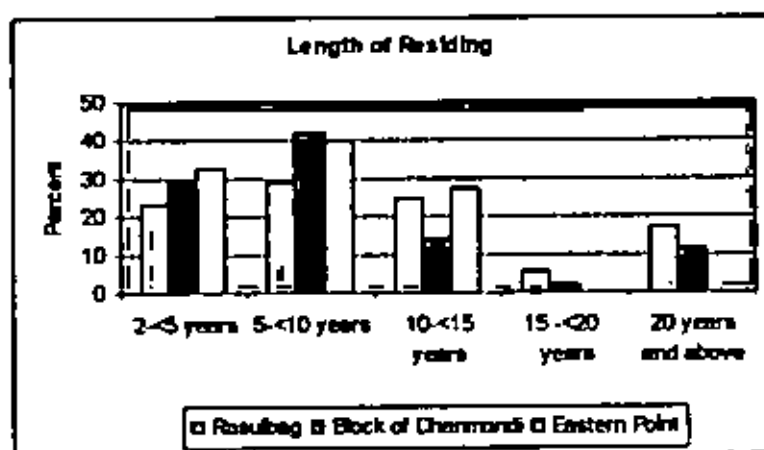
Source: Field Survey, 2005.

Figure 4.8: Type of Tenure of the Residents

4.4.4 Reasons for Living in the Present House

From the survey results, it is noticed that home ownership and nearness to the educational institutions and working places from the house are the main reason of residing in the present house of the residents of studied neighbourhoods. Besides, in Rasulbag, comparatively less house rent, in block of Dhanmondi, good natural environment and in Eastern Point, well service facilities and security system are considered as the reason for residing in the present house by the

respondents. Respondents of three neighbourhoods are also indicated good social environment as the positive aspect of their housing environment and by social environment they meant the friendly attitude of the neighbours (Table-4.9). Less number of respondents of block of Dhanmondi opined that social environment of neighbourhood was the reason for living in their present house than the respondents of Rasulbag and Eastern Point. This means social environment or neighbours' attitude is less important for residents of block of Dhanmondi.

Table 4.9: Reasons for Living in the Present House

Reasons for living in the present house	Rasulbag		Dhanmondi		Eastern Point	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Owner of the house	14	20.29	18	40	25	28.74
Nearness of children's school/college	15	21.74	9	20	14	16.09
Nearness of the office/working place	17	24.64	4	8.89	10	11.49
Less rent than other areas	11	15.94	0	0	0	0
Good social environment	8	11.59	2	4.44	12	13.79
Good natural environment	0	0	10	22.23	0	0
No particular reason	4	5.8	2	4.44	0	0
Well service facilities and security system	0	0	0	0	22	25.29
Nearness of katcha bazaar and shopping centers	0	0	0	0	4	4.60
Total	69	100	45	100	87	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005.
Note: Multiple answers counted.

4.5 Problems of the Neighbourhood

According to the result of the survey it is found that respondents of Rasulbag identified more problems of their neighbourhood than the respondents of other two neighbourhoods. Congested housing, narrow and broken street, absence of park and open spaces, traffic jam. shortage of water and electricity supply and lack of security are identified by the respondents as the major problems of Rasulbag. The major problems of block of Dhanmondi are commercial activities in the residential area, traffic jam, and lack of security and gathering of people in Dhanmondi Lake To the residents of Eastern Point. water logging, traffic jam in the Shantinagar area and absence of open space and park in the housing complex are the major problems of their neighbourhood (Table-4.10). It is observed that noise pollution, traffic jam and lack of security are common problems in all the three neighbourhoods and it is also observed that respondents of Dhanmondi feel more insecure in their neighbourhood than the respondents of other two neighbourhoods and

more respondents of Eastern Point suffer from traffic jam and noise pollution than the other two neighborhoods.

Table 4.10: Problems of Neighbourhood

Problems of the Neighbourhood	Rasulbag		Dhanmondi		Eastern Point	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Congested housing/lack of air and sunlight	32	18.71	0	0	0	0
Narrow and broken streets	21	12 28	0	0	0	0
Flood water/water logging	16	9.35	0	0	25	26.32
Absence of open spaces and park	19	11.11	0	0	20	21.05
Shortage of water and electricity supply	18	10 53	0	0	0	0
Commercial activities	0	0	26	21.49	0	0
Traffic jam	18	10.53	25	20.66	25	26 32
Noise pollution	14	8.19	12	9.92	11	11.57
Lack of security	18	10.53	25	20.66	10	10 53
Gathering of people in the park	0	0	21	17.35	0	0
Others	15	8.77	12	9.92	4	4 21
Total	171	100	121	100	95	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005.
Note: Multiple answers counted.

4.6 Conclusion

From the discussion of physical, socio-economic and housing characteristics of the respondents of Rasulbag, block of Dhanmondi and Eastern Point, it is found that head of households in Rasulbag are much younger, less educated, have lower income and have less home ownership than the respondents of block of Dhanmondi and Eastern Point. Besides, higher number of extended families and less number of working women are found in Rasulbag. But the residents of Rasulbag are more stable (length of residing) in their neighbourhood than the other two neighbourhoods. Though people of Eastern Point and Dhanmondi enjoy better service facilities than people of Rasulbag, local people of Rasulbag formed an organization to discuss and take initiatives for solving the existing problems of the neighborhood, which is a positive phenomenon in terms of socialization.

STATUS OF SOCIAL INTERACTION IN THE NEIGHBOURHOODS

CHAPTER 5

STATUS OF SOCIAL INTERACTION IN THE NEIGHBOURHOODS

5.1 Introduction

The present condition of social interaction in the studied neighbourhoods of Dhaka City is described in this section in relation to the selected indicators of social interaction which are discussed under three broad criteria: a) mental association of the residents with the neighbourhoods, b) pattern of primary social interaction or face-to-face relationships and c) pattern of secondary social interaction or organized social behavior. The opinion of 25% of total heads of the households of three neighbourhoods regarding various aspects of these indicators is discussed and compared by percentile distribution and by scoring method that are adjusted to the context of measurement of social interaction.

5.2 Mental Association of the Residents with the Neighbourhoods

Residents' mental association with their neighbourhood is discussed under two categories such as a) perception of the residents towards their neighbourhood and b) sense of belonging of residents to their neighbourhood.

5.2.1 Perception of the Residents towards their Neighbourhoods

Based on mental perception, neighbourhood is experienced and constructed by the people. Residents use the facilities of the neighbourhoods according to their mental understanding to the structure of service facilities of the neighbourhood (Nilufar, 1997). It is necessary to understand the notion of the residents, how they understand neighbourhood's structure and how they arrange themselves in the neighbourhood. Neighbourhood perception of the residents is discussed under four sub-indicators, these are (a) perception of neighbourhood boundary, (b) perception of own and neighbours' class status, (c) perception of significant features of neighbourhood and (d) perception about status of social interaction in the neighbourhoods.

5.2.1.1 Perception of Neighbourhood Boundary

In the present study, an initial question concerned whether the physical boundaries of the neighbourhood were perceived in different ways reflecting differences in the selected neighbourhoods. It is found that the strongest contrast exists between the Eastern Point and block of Dhanmondi. In Eastern Point, higher number of respondents has strong sense of their neighbourhood boundary and perceives their neighbourhood as the whole apartment complex. On the other hand, in the block of Dhanmondi, less number of respondents has identified the selected block as their neighbourhood and here, most of the (69.76 percent) respondents think that the building/apartment they live in, is their neighbourhood. Rasulbag is in the middle position where half of the respondents have accurate knowledge of their neighbourhood boundary that is marked by DCC according to the house number (Fig-5.1).

A portion of respondents in the three neighbourhoods think that their neighbourhood is limited to the near by two or three buildings from their own house and it is also found that a number of respondents in the three neighbourhoods do not have any idea about the boundary of the neighbourhood and they are comparatively new residents living in the rental houses. Over all, it can be inferred that the residents of Eastern Point have the highest sense of physical boundary of their neighbourhood and then comes Rasulbag but the residents of Dhanmondi have the lowest sense about their physical boundary of neighbourhood moreover here most of the residents perception of neighbourhood is the smallest area limited to their own apartment building.
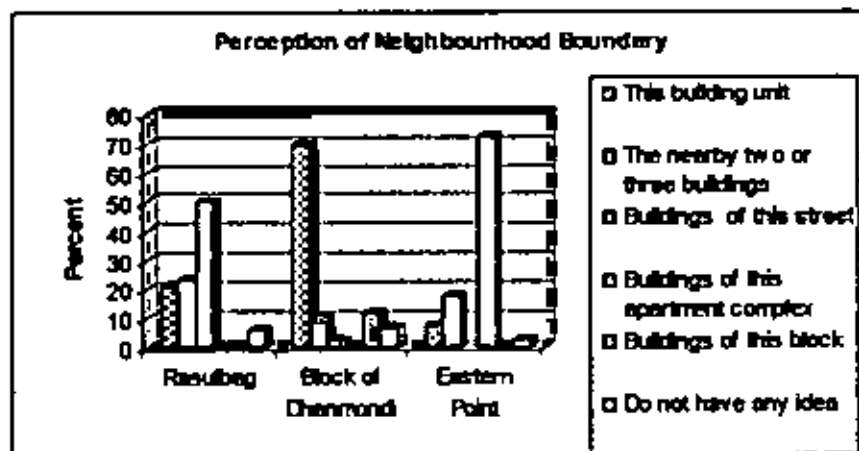
Source: Field Survey, 2005.
Figure 5.1: Perception towards Neighbourhood Boundary

5.2.1.2 Perception towards Own Class and Class Status of Neighbours

Class distinction is a very important aspect in any society for people to get along together. Normally people like to mingle with the people of same social class and status (Coulthard *et al*. 2000). Thus, perception neighbours' social status is very important as it helps a person to determine whether or not he belongs to the same class of his neighbours and can have relationship with them. Perception again varies according to how people define social status and class. It is found that respondents of the studied neighbourhoods perceive social class on the basis of combination of income, education and possession of resources of household members. When asked about the status of own class and class status of the neighbours, quite contrasting opinion found from the respondents.

Though most of the respondents of Eastern Point and block of Dhanmondi perceive their neighbours as upper class people, most of them perceive themselves as middle class. In both neighbourhoods, no one perceive their neighbours or themselves as lower class, which is quite similar to the class status of respondents, based on monthly income (Table-4.6). In Rasulbag, where most of the residents belong to lower middle and middle class according to monthly income, most of the respondents perceive both their neighbours and themselves as middle class people. No one here perceives themselves or their neighbours as high class people. Thus, it can be inferred that residents of all the three neighbourhoods have a tendency to perceive them as middle class people (Table-5.1). Of

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the three neighbourhoods, respondents of Rasulbag are more consistent about class perception where nearly equal number of respondents perceives both them and their neighbours having same social status that is middle class people. It is also found that a portion of respondents in the three neighbourhoods did not give any definite opinion about their own and neighbours' class status.

Table 5.1: Perception towards Own Class and Class Composition of Neighbourhood

Neighbourhood	Perception of respondents	High Class (%)	Middle Class (%)	Low Class (%)	No Answer (%)
Rasulbag	Class status of most of the neighbours	0	86.54	5.77	7.69
	Perception of own class	0	82.69	3.85	13 46
Dhanmondi	Class status of most of the neighbours	51.16	25.58	0	23 26
	Perception of own class	25.58	58.14	0	16.28
Eastern Point	Class status of most of the neighbours	67.5	27.5	0	5
	Perception of own class	47 5	52.5	0	0

Source: Field Survey. 2005.

5.2.1.3 Significant Features of Neighbourhood

The features of neighbourhood which are liked and preferred by its residents is another important point of neighbourhood perception which differs from person to person based on their differences in choosing significant features. The preferred features actually symbolize the neighbourhood to the residents (Forrest and Ngai-ming, 2004) When asked about the favorite features of their neighbourhood, more typically, people referred to the physical attributes rather than non-physical. Respondents of each neighbourhood referred to physical features that are distinct for that neighbourhood. In Rasulbag, respondents mentioned playground and neighbourhood mosque as their favorite features and in block of Dhanmondi, respondents choose Dhanmondi Lake and Park (32.83 percent). planned street design, sunlight and air and security from unwanted visitors and in Eastern Point, the distinct favorite features preferred by the respondents are good service facilities and security from unwanted visitors. Over all, 50.68 percent, 80.91 percent and 70.93 percent respondents of Rasulbag, block of Dhanmondi and Eastern Point respectably choose physical attributes of the neighbourhood as their favorite

features. Of the non-physical features, good relationship with neighbours took an important place but it is found lower in block of Dhanmondi than Eastern Point and Rasulbag. In Rasulbag, essence of old town and in neighbourhood of Dhanmondi, residential area with status and prestige are the other non-physical favorite features (Table-5.2). Thus, it can be understood that most of the people of neighbourhoods of Dhaka City perceive their neighbourhood according to the physical characteristics of the neighbourhoods.

Another interesting point is that a number of people choose educational institutions and shopping centers as significant features of neighbourhood, which are not located inside their neighbourhood. It is found that 16.44 percent, 20.93 percent and 21.37 percent respondents of Rasulbag, Eastern Point and Dhanmondi respectably chose preferred features of neighbourhood, which are not located inside their neighbourhood.

Table 5.2: Significant Features of Neighbourhood

Significant features of Neighbourhood	Rasulbag		Dhanmondi		Eastern Point	
	F	Percent	F	Percent	F	Percent
Essence of old town	10	13.7				
Good relationship with neighbours	16	21.92	5	3.82	20	23.26
Educational institutions	12	16.44	13	9.92	12	13.95
Mosque of the neighbourhood	8	10.95				
Playground	17	23.29				
Planned street design			16	12.21		
Residential area with status and prestige			20	15.27		
Lake and park			43	32.83		
Shopping centers			15	11.45	6	6.98
Secured and protected from unwanted visitors			9	6.87	17	19.77
Enough sunlight and air			10	7.63		
Good internal service supply facilities					26	30.23
No significant features	10	13.7			5	5.81
Total	73	100	131	100	86	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005.
Multiple answers counted.

5.2.1.4 Perception towards Status of Social Interaction

How residents perceive about the existing status of social relation and interaction among neighbours is very important as it inspires them to act in the same way. When residents think that their neighbours have good relation with one another they also feel responsible to make good relation with neighbours and the opposite happens if they think negatively about the relationship of the neighbours (Hart *et al*. 2002). In the studied areas 65 percent respondents of Eastern Point and 32.69 percent respondents of Rasulbag opined that they had satisfactory level of social interaction among neighbours. On the other hand, no one is satisfied about the status of social interaction in the block of Dhanmondi and most of the respondents think that there is less or no interaction in this neighbourhood. Of the respondents, 28.85 percent, 25.58 percent and 20 percent of Rasulbag, Dhanmondi and Eastern point respectably opined that social interaction was medium in the neighbourhood (Fig-5.2).
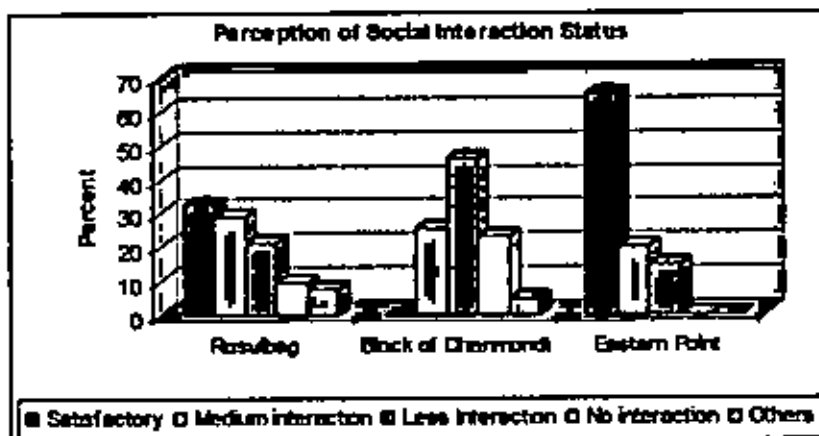
Source: Field Survey, 2005.
Figure 5.2: Perception towards Status of Social Interaction

5.2.2 Status of Neighbourhood Perception of Respondents

In case of neighbourhood perception, four types of opinions are considered as positive attitude which in term act as positive attitude for social interaction at the neighbourhood level such as (a) perception of neighbourhood boundary that is similar to the actual boundary, (b) favorite features located inside the neighbourhood, (c) perception of own class similar to their perceived class status of the neighbours and (d) perception of

medium to satisfactory social interaction in the neighbourhood. After given weight to the percentile figure of the positive answers it is noticed that individual score and status of sub-indicators varies for three neighbourhoods (Table-5.3). Eastern Point gains higher score in perception of neighbourhood boundary than the respondents of the other two neighbourhoods. Rasulbag gets highest score in choosing significant features located inside the neighbourhood and in similarity of own and neighbours' class perception. Eastern Point gets highest score in satisfaction towards the level of social interaction in the neighbourhood. By summing up the score of sub-indicators of perception of residents towards their neighbourhood, it is found that Rasulbag gains the highest score (31) then comes Eastern Point (30), and block of Dhanmondi gets the lowest score (16). By evaluating average score, it is found that over all respondents of Rasulbag and Eastern Point have High Status and respondents of neighbourhood of Dhanmondi have Low Status regarding perception towards neighbourhood.

Table 5.3: Status of Positive Aspects of Neighbourhood Perception

Sub-indicators of perception towards neighbourhood		Positive opinion towards neighbourhood perception	Rasulbag		Block of Dhanmondi		Eastern Point	
			Percent	Weight & Status	Percent	Weight & Status	Percent	Weight & Status
1.	Perception towards neighbourhood boundary	Respondents' perceived boundary is similar to the real neighbourhood boundary	50	6 (M)	11 63	2 (L)	72 5	8 (H)
2.	Perception of own class and class status of the neighbours	Respondents' perception of own class similar to the perceived class status of the neighbours	82.69	9 (H)	25 58	3 (L)	47 5	5 (M)
3.	Significant features of neighbourhood	Respondents' chosen features located inside the neighbourhood	83 56	9 (H)	78 63	8 (H)	79.07	8 (H)
4.	Perception towards existing status of social interaction in the neighbourhood	Respondents who think existing status of social interaction is medium to satisfactory	61 54	7 (H)	25.58	3 (L)	85	9 (H)
Total Score			31		16		30	
Average Score			7.75		4		7.5	
Status of Neighbourhood Perception			High		Low		High	
Symbol: H= High, M= Medium, L= Low								

Source: Field Survey, 2005.

5.2.3 Sense of Belonging

It has often been suggested that people attached to an area form a type of community with a territorial extent based on either social or functional relations, which is generally known as 'neighbourhood' or 'local community'. People share a common sense of identity in that neighbourhood (Nilufar, 1997). In the present study, sense of belonging is described by two sub-indicators and these are (a) sense of belonging to the neighbourhood, (b) bondage with the neighbours. Residents' sense of belonging to their neighbourhood can give a good impression of their mental and physical involvement with the place they live in. In the present study, sense of belonging to the neighbourhood is analyzed by respondents' willingness to stay in the neighbourhood even if they get chance to change their residence. Bondage with the neighbours is described in terms of sense of companionship with the fellow people living in the same locality that is feeling personal bond with the neighbours.

5.2.3.1 Sense of Belonging to the Neighbourhood

To assess the sense of belongingness to the neighbourhood, respondents are asked whether they would leave their neighbourhood if they get chance. It is found that 77.5 percent respondents of Eastern Point and 67.31 percent respondents of Rasulbag said that they would not leave their neighbourhood. Which indicates that they have strong sense of belongingness to the neighbourhood. In comparison, 55.49 percent respondents of Dhanmondi said that they would not leave their neighbourhood for a better opportunity (Table-5.4). In all, it is observed that respondents of Eastern Point and Rasulbag have more sense of belonging to their neighbourhood than the respondents of Dhanmondi. Thus, it is interesting to note that residents of a more planned and well off residential area showed less attachment with their neighbourhood

5.2.3.2 Bondage with the Neighbours

In this study, an inquiry is performed to reveal whether the respondents possess community feelings with their fellow neighbours in the neighbourhood. It is found from the inquiry that the higher number of respondents of both Rasulbag and Eastern Point possess feelings of bondage with their fellow neighbours than the respondents of

Dhanmondi (Table-5.4). It is notable that residents of a planned neighbourhood possess less bondage with their neighbours.

Table 5.4: Sense of Belonging of the Residents

Sense of Belonging	Neighbourhood	Opinion (%)		
		Agreed	Disagreed	Do not Know
Respondents feel that they belong to the neighbourhood	Rasulbag	67.31	26.92	5 77
	Dhanmondi	53.49	27.91	18.60
	Eastern Point	77.5	0	22.5
Respondents feel sense of bondage with the neighbours	Rasulbag	78.85	5.77	15.38
	Dhanmondi	34.88	48.84	16.28
	Eastern Point	77 5	10	12.5

Source: Field survey. 2005

5.2.4 Status of Sense of Belonging of the Residents

In terms of sense of belonging, two types of opinions are considered as positive attitude towards social interaction such as respondents' (a) willingness to reside in the neighbourhood and (b) feelings of bondage with the neighbours. After given weight to the percentile figure of the positive answers it is noticed that individual score and status of sub-indicators varies for three neighbourhoods (Table-5.5). Eastern Point gains higher score in sense of belongingness than the respondents of the other two neighbourhoods. In case of feelings of bondage with the neighbours, both Eastern Point and Rasulbag gain higher score. At last, summing up the scores of sub-indicators, it is found that Eastern Point gains the highest score (16) then is Rasulbag (15) and block of Dhanmondi gets the lowest score (10). By evaluating average score, it is found that respondents of both Rasulbag and Eastern Point have High Status and respondents of block of Dhanmondi have Medium Status towards sense of belongings to the neighbourhood

Table 5.5: Status of Positive Aspects of Sense of Belonging

Sub-indicators of sense of belonging		Positive opinion towards sense of belonging	Rasulbag		Block of Dhanmondi		Eastern Point	
			Percent	Weight & Status	Percent	Weight & Status	Percent	Weight & Status
1.	Sense of belonging to the neighbourhood	Respondents feel sense of belonging to the neighbourhood	67 31	7 (H)	53.49	6 (M)	77.5	8 (H)
2	Bondage with the neighbours	Respondents feel bondage with the neighbours	78.85	8 (H)	34 88	4 (L)	77.5	8 (H)
Total Score			15		10		16	
Average Score			7.5		5		8	
Status of sense of belonging			High		Medium		High	

Source. Field Survey, 2005.
Symbol H= High, M= Medium, L= Low.

5.3 Primary Social Interaction in the Neighbonrhood

Primary or face-to-face social interaction is the basis of forming social neighbourhood or community neighbourhood and it is considered as the real form of relationship with each other in a neighbourhood (Nilufar, 1997). In the present study, primary social interaction is discussed under three criteria such as: a) neighbourly contact among residents, b) mutual assistance among neighbours and c) pattern of social network.

5.3.1 Neighbourly Contact among Residents

Neighbourly contact among residents is measured by the extent of their knowledge about neighbours and visiting pattern to the neighbours' house. Knowledge of neighbours is described by knowing name and knowing occupation of the heads of households and visiting pattern is described by visit by invitation and informal visit to the neighbours' house. Respondents are supplied a schematic map of the neighbourhood and asked to identify the houses they know the name and occupation of the heads of households and those houses they visit by invitation and visit informally. The number of houses involved in knowing and visiting is assumed to have neighborly contact within a neighbourhood. Neighbourly contact thus, measured by simple addition of average number of houses involved in knowing and visiting by the respondents of each neighbourhood. From the ·

percentile figure of number of houses engaged in neighbourly contact in relation to the total number of houses in the neighbourhoods, it is found that neighbourly contact is comparatively much higher in Eastern Point and Rasulbag than in block of Dhanmondi. The highest neighbourly contact is observed in Eastern Point (Table-5.6 and Fig-5.3).

Table 5.6: Status of Neighbourly Contact among Residents

Neighbourhoods	Average No. of Neighbours Known by the Respondents (on following aspect)		Average No. of Neighbours by Category of Visit		Total of Average No of Houses Engaged in Neighbourly Contact (X)	Percent of No of Houses Engaged in Neighbourly Contact
	Name of the Household Head (N)	Occupation of the Household Head (O)	Visit by invitation (I)	Informal Visit (V)		
Rasulbag	30.29	30.10	15.17	10 04	85.6	40.76
Block of Dhanmondi	8.12	8.16	5.14	3.30	24.72	14.37
Eastern Point	30.33	35.1	16.93	6.13	88.49	55.31

Note: Total No. of houses in Rasulbag is 210, Block of Dhanmondi is 172 and Eastern Point is 160.
Number of respondents in Rasulbag is 52, Block of Dhanmondi is 43 and Eastern Point is 40.
In each neighbourhood (X) = (N + O+ I + V).
Percent of No. of Houses Engaged in Neighbourly Contact = X/Total no. of house hold in each neighbourhood × 100

Source: Field Survey, 2005.
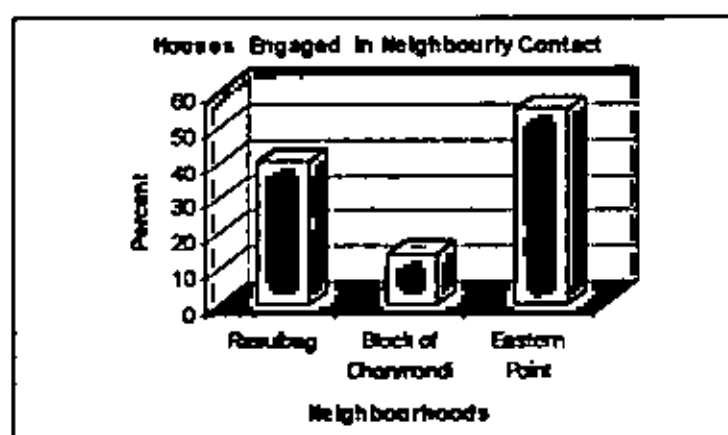
Source: Field Survey, 2005.

Figure 5.3: Houses Engaged in Neighbourly Contact

It is found that most neighbourly visiting and mutual help takes place within a section of adjacent houses facing each other on the street (Gans, 1962). To discover the spatial extent of acquaintance and socialization within the studied neighbourhoods, the spatial

pattern of informal visit, the most significant sign of neighbourliness is evaluated which is termed here as the 'immediate neighbourhood'. Distance of the houses involved in informal visit from the houses of the respondents' shows similarity with Drake and Drake's statement that is, the likelihood of interaction between neighbours is inversely proportional to the distance between them (Drake & Drake, 1969). However, the spread of neighbourly contact varies in studied neighbourhoods. Rasulbag shows the maximum horizontal spread and Eastern Point shows the maximum vertical and minimum horizontal spread of informal visits in the neighbourhood (Fig-5.4). It is important to mention that Eastern Point shows highest neighbourly contact but, as it is a vertically extended neighbourhood, residents have limited opportunity to spread informal visit horizontally. And here, most of the informal visits take place vertically in the same apartment building and within 1 to 3 apartment buildings in the both sides of the respondents' house. Respondents of block of Dhanmondi also show concentration of informal visit in the same building where limitation of horizontal spread is not applicable.
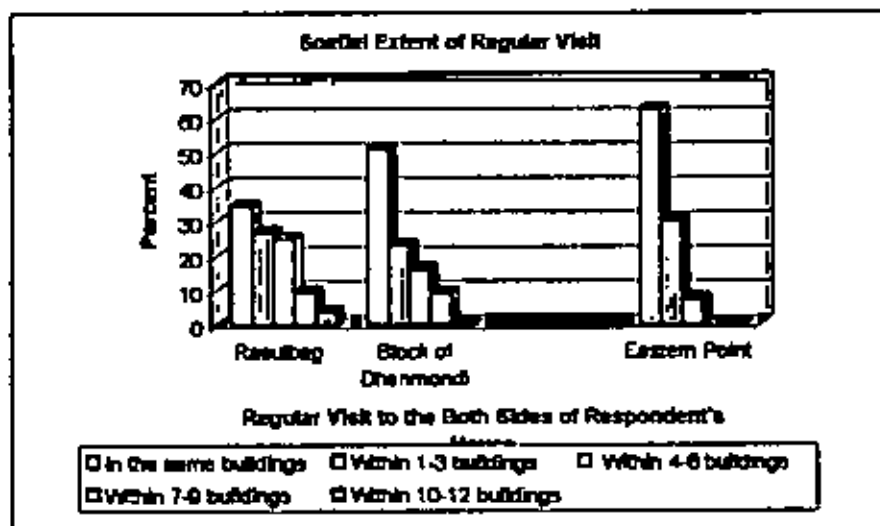
Source: Field Survey, 2005.

Figure 5.4: Spatial Extent of Regular Visit to Neighbours' House

5.3.2 Neighbourly Interaction of Women and Children

The nature of social interaction of women and children is described here on the basis of information collected from Focus Group Discussion. Focus group of each neighbourhood is comprised of eight members, four male and four female (Table-34). From the discussions, it is revealed that the nature of neighbourly interaction of women is quite different from that of men. Women express their relationship by exchanging food and other domestic materials, by spending leisure time in neighbours' house, by talking through phone etc. It is found that in Rasulbag, women do have neighbourly relation with each other but this relation is prominent among local women, who permanently live in the neighbourhood. The women of the rental houses usually do not interact with the other women and same scenario is observed in the interaction of the children. Locally stable families send their children to 'Rasulbag Playground' to play with the other children but children of families living in rental houses usually do not play with the other children of the neighbourhood.

In Eastern Point, most of the women do meet with each other regularly in the community center as they participate in the activities of neighbourhood organization. They also visit neighbours in their houses. Exchanging food and other household materials is also practiced here but children are found comparatively less communicative. Most of the children spend time inside their house, play video games though there is an indoor playing space for children in the housing complex.

The women of block of Dhanmondi also have neighbourly contact with the other women but their relation is limited within the same building. They usually prefer to talk and spend time together in Dhanmondi Lake rather in the houses of neighbours'. Children of block of Dhanmondi possess less neighbourly relation with the other children.

Members of focus group of all the three neighbourhoods opined that working women maintain less relation with neighbours and comparatively educated women do not want to mingle with the less educated one. From the discussions, it can be concluded that women of Rasulbag and Eastern Point possess more intimate relation with the neighbours than

the women of Dhanmondi and children of Rasulbag are found having more neighbourly relation with the other children of the neighbourhood.

5.3.3 Mutual Assistance among Neighbours

Primary interactions with neighbours depend on mutual interest of the residents. Social interactions continue when there is two-way relationships exist between neighbours (Forrest and Ming, 2004). In the present study, three types of mutual interaction is analyzed such as a) doing and taking favor, b) mutual visit in sickness, c) borrowing and lending money and other things.

5.3.3.1 Doing and Taking Favor

Doing and taking favor enhance relationship among neighbours. In the present study, doing favors means watching the house when neighbours go away for a while, looking after the children if needed, providing advice and assistance in time of crisis etc. It is found that higher number of respondents in Rasulbag agreed that they regularly/sometimes do favor to their neighbours and their neighbours also do the same for them than the other two neighbourhoods. Significant portion of respondents in Eastern Point also expressed positively about mutual favor and assistance. In Dhanmondi, majority of the respondents opined negatively about mutual favor. A portion of respondents (shown in others category) in all the three neighbourhoods opined that they do favor to their neighbours but neighbours do not do the same for them (Table-5.7).

5.3.3.2 Mutual Visit in Sickness

People need assistance and sympathy in sickness. It is somehow a moral and social duty to visit neighbours in their sickness and this visit should be mutual (Forrest and Ngai-ming, 2004). Mutual visit in sickness can be termed as latent neighbourliness, which is characterized by favorable attributes to neighbours resulting in positive action in case of need especially in times of crisis or emergency (Mann, 1954). In the present study, an inquiry is conducted on this matter to understand whether or not this is practiced in the studied neighbourhoods. In Rasulbag, higher number of respondents opined that they visit their neighbours in sickness and this visit is mutual. This is opposite for block of

Dhanmondi where less number of respondents opined positively about mutual visiting in time of sickness (Table-5.7). A significant number of respondents in Eastern Point agreed that they practice mutual visit in time of sickness. A number of respondents of three neighbourhoods could not say anything definite about mutual visiting in period of sickness. According to them, they did not face such situation yet.

5.3.3.3 Lending and Borrowing Money and Other Things

Borrowing and lending money and household materials is a traditional behavior among neighbours in our society. But, this culture is now disappearing from the lives of neighbourhood people (Forrest and Ngai-ming, 2004). In this study, it is observed that higher mutual assistance in terms of borrowing and lending money and other things exists in Rasulbag than Eastern point and block of Dhanmondi. Higher number of respondents of Eastern Point and block of Dhanmondi opined that they do not lend household things to the neighbours, as neighbours do not come for anything to them. Similarly they do not borrow anything from their neighbours (Table-5 7).

Table 5.7: Pattern of Mutual Assistance among Neighbours

Pattern of Mutual Assistance	Neighbourhood	Opinion (%)		
		Agreed	Disagreed	No Answer
Regularly/sometimes do favor and take favor from neighbours	Rasulbag	48.08	26.92	25
	Dhanmondi	23.26	58.14	18.60
	Eastern Point	37 5	47.5	15
Mutually visit neighbours in sickness	Rasulbag	67 31	7 69	25
	Dhanmondi	25 58	48.84	25.58
	Eastern Point	57.5	7.5	35
Mutually lend and borrow things	Rasulbag	38.46	34.62	26.92
	Dhanmondi	11.63	53.49	34.88
	Eastern Point	15	70	15

Source: Field survey, 2005.

5.3.4 Status of Mutual Assistance in the Neighbourhoods

The answers. which are considered as the positive opinion towards mutual assistance, are regularly/sometimes a) do favors to and take favors from neighbours, b) visit neighbours and visited by neighbours in time of sickness, c) borrow money and other things from and

lend money and other things to neighbours. After giving weight, it is found that Rasulbag gets higher score in mutual favor (jointly with Eastern Point), mutual visit in sickness and mutual lending and borrowing (Table-5.8). It is also noticed that Rasulbag and block of Dhanmondi shows contrasting nature in terms of mutual assistance in the neighbourhoods. At last summing up the scores of sub-indicators, it is found that Rasulbag gains the highest score (16) then is Eastern Point (13) and block of Dhanmondi gets the lowest score (8). By evaluating average score, it is found that respondents of Rasulbag and Eastern Point have Medium Status and respondents of block of Dhanmondi have Low Status towards mutual assistance among neighbours.

Table 5.8: Score of Positive Aspects of Mutual Assistance among Neighbours

Sub-indicators of Mutual Assistance		Positive opinion towards social interaction	Rasulbag		Block of Dhanmondi		Eastern Point	
			Percent	Weight & Status	Percent	Weight & Status	Percent	Weight & Status
1	Doing and taking favors	Respondents regularly/sometimes do to and take favors from neighbours	48.08	5 (M)	23.26	3 (L)	47.5	5 (M)
2	Mutual visit in sickness	Respondents regularly/sometimes visit neighbours and visited by neighbours in times of sickness	67.31	7 (H)	25.58	3 (L)	57.5	6 (M)
3	Lending and borrowing money and other things	Respondents regularly/sometimes borrow and lend money and other things	38 46	4 (L)	11.63	2 (L)	15	2 (L)
Total Score			16		8		13	
Average Score			5 33		2 66		4.33	
Status of Mutual Assistance			Medium		Low		Medium	
Symbol. H= High. M= Medium, L= Low								

Source: Field Survey. 2005

5.4 Pattern of Social Network

Social network indicates a specific set of linkages among a defined set of persons, these linkages interpret the social behaviour of the persons involved (Mitchell, 1969). It is believed that a family does not live directly in a total society or in a local community.

The effective social environment of a family is its network of friends, neighbours, relatives and particular social institutions such as clubs, shops, place of work etc. These are external relationship of a family in its immediate environment (Nilufar, 1997). The term 'network' is used to describe a set of social relationships that defines the social field where one person is linked to some others (Bott, 1971).

In the present study, primary social network is described by kinship and friendship network within the neighborhood that is the presence of respondent's kin and friends in their neighbourhood. And secondary social network in the neighbourhood is described by the level of participation of the respondents in the activities of the neighbourhood-based organizations. According to Rapoport, social networks develop by the participation in voluntary organizations generate both 'intensive' (space bound) and 'extensive' (non-space bound) social actions (Rapoport, 1977).

5.4.1 Kinship and Friendship Network

The socio-economic study of Dhaka City shows that 60 to 70 percent of families of Dhaka have their close relatives living in the same area (Siddique, 1991). However, these areas are more extended than the limit of neighbourhoods under the present study. The higher number of joint and extended families in Rasulbag indicates having higher kinship than the other two neighbourhoods. But, two or more sisters and other kins are found higher in Dhanmondi and Eastern Point than Rasulbag. In all, 26.92 percent, 25 percent, 18.60 percent respondents of Rasulbag, Eastern Point and block of Dhanmondi have kins (joint and extended families and other kins) within the neighbourhood.

Friendship develops among relatively homogenous type of people, but functional proximity also played an important role in making friendship (Brown, 1973). The statement is quite appropriate for Rasulbag. Here, people living in close proximity possess friendly relation with each other besides, there is friendship bond within the local residents of Rasulbag. People of block of Dhanmondi and Eastern Point possess fewer friends inside the neighbourhood and homogeneity in income and social status plays an important role in selecting friends in Eastern Point and block of Dhanmondi.

5.4.2 Involvement with the Neighbourhood Organizations

The ultimate nature of bonding with the neighbourhood can be understood by the concerns of the residents towards problems of neighbourhood and initiatives taken by them for solving these problems and for upgrading the over all socio-environmental condition of the neighbourhood. Residents of a neighbourhood usually do these activities by forming a neighbourhood based club or organization (Coulthard *et al.* 2000). In the studied neighbourhoods, this type of organization is found in Rasulbag and Eastern Point but, in the block of Dhanmondi, there is no such club or organization. In Rasulbag, *Rasulbag Samaj Unnayan Santha* and in Eastern Point, 'Eastern Point Housing Society Association' is established by the residents of the people of the neighbourhood.

It is found that only 25 percent respondents have membership with the neighbourhood organization in Rasulbag on the other hand 70 percent respondents of Eastern Point have membership with the neighbourhood organization (Table-5.9). In Rasulbag families live in rental houses do not have provision for membership in the club and as 73.08 percent respondents are living here on rental basis, the number of member in neighbourhood organization is lower in Rasulbag than Eastern Point where all residents have provision in the neighbourhood organization. In Rasulbag, women also do not have provision of membership in the club but it in Eastern Point women hold nearly 30 percent of the membership in the club.

In Rasulbag, members of the club meet once or twice in a month and discuss about the problems they are facing in the neighbourhood. Settlement of various problems, quarrel among neighbours, preventing local robbery etc. initiated by this club. Members of the *'Rasulbag Samaj Unnayan Santha'* discuss about the existing problems of neighbourhood and they lobby in various departments of the Government and local authorities to improve the condition of the neighbourhood. Within the past six months from the interview period. they complained WASA about shortage of water supply and they repaired broken man whole of the streets This association also arranges social events such as, *Eid Jamat, Janaja* of dead and other cultural events like sports, musical concert, mina bazaar etc. One month before the *Eid*, local young boys collect money from the

households and in the *Eid* day one person is selected by lottery and he gets all the money. It is an interesting event for the neighbourhood people. Only 25 percent respondents regularly participate in these activities by their physical presence and by donating money and 53.85 percent sometimes participate. But. 21.15 percent do not participate in these cultural and social activities (Fig-5 5). As, families of rental houses. do not have provision of membership, they feel alienated in the neighbourhood and rarely participate in the activities in the neighbourhood club.

In Eastern Point, members of 'Housing Society Association' meet once in a month and talk about the problems they are facing in the neighbourhood. Every problem is noted to take proper initiatives. This association also arranges cultural programs in various occasions. If some one dies in a family, neighbourhood association sends letters to all the families and after burial, sessions of prayers and condolence meetings are organized. The association takes initiatives to visit the family of the diseased. The housing society also arranges family day when students of the families are awarded for their academic performances. Good foods are cooked with money collected from donations and residents organize cultural functions where they sing songs and dance. Of the respondents, 62.5 percent regularly attend in the activities of the association and 32.5 percent sometimes. when they are not busy attend in the programs and 5 percent do not attend in these programs (Fig-5.5).

The residents of block of Dhanmondi are also concerned about the physical and social environmental degradation of Dhanmondi Lake area, hijacking on the streets especially after dark, increasing commercial activities in the area and resulting traffic jam and noise pollution etc. There are few organizations in Dhanmondi which are formed by the residents of Dhanmondi to address and discuss above mentioned issues. The residents are also concerned about the trend of decreasing social relation among the neighbours. But as they do not have any neighbourhood-based association (association of people living in proximity), they cannot take initiatives for enhancing social relation with neighbours. It is observed in the neighbourhood that almost every apartment building has own committee comprising of one member of every household to discuss about the problems and issues

of that building such as problems of water supply, garbage cleaning, security system etc. But, real form of social interaction is absent because of the absence of association at the neighbourhood level.

Table 5.9: Involvement with the Neighbourhood Organizations

Involvement with the neighbourhood association	Neighbourhood	Opinion (percent)		
		Yes	No	Others
You have membership in the neighbourhood organization	Rasulbag	25	61.54	13.46
	Eastern Point	70	15	15
	Dhanmondi	No association in the selected block		
Regularly/sometimes participate in the activities of the neighbourhood organization	Rasulbag	78.85	21.15	0
	Eastern Point	95	0	5
	Dhanmondi	No association in the selected block		

Source: Field Survey, 2005.

Source: Field Survey, 2005.
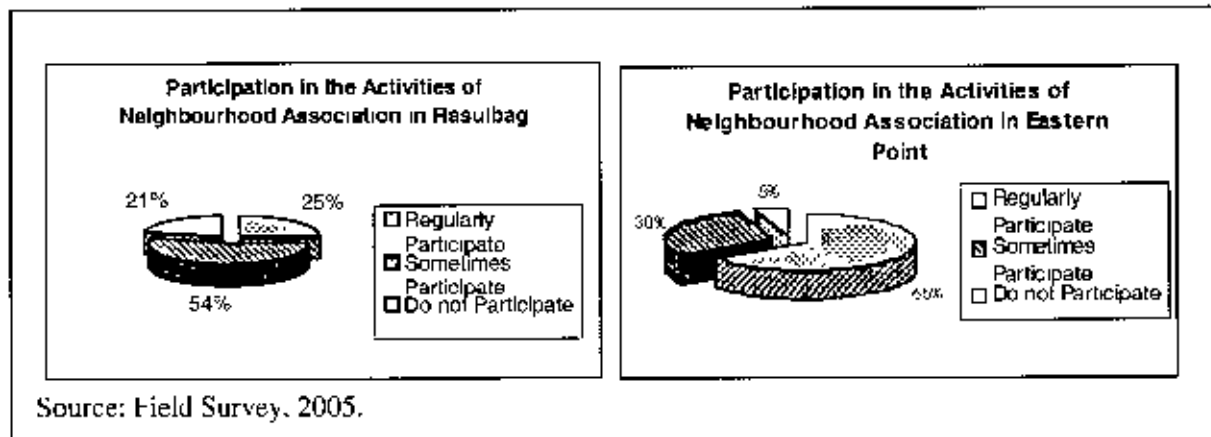
Figure 5.5: Pattern of Participation in the Activities of Neighbourhood Association

5.5 Secondary Social Interaction

For describing secondary social interaction in the studied neighbourhoods, organized social activities that is the pattern of using service facilities and support centers exists in the neighbourhoods is discussed. The daily bazaar, grocery, primary/secondary school, mosque, shopping center, play ground, cultural center, park and open space etc. are considered as service centers in the studied neighbourhoods. The use of these support centers by the people of a neighbourhood indicates the spatial bonding of the people to their neighbourhood and thereby can suggest the presence of neighbourhood based social

system in reality (Nilufar, 1997). In the present study, support centers that located inside the neighbourhood are considered for determining pattern of secondary social interaction. Regular use of these support centers is considered as the positive aspect of organized social activities. It is found that both Rasulbag and Dhanmondi possess six types and Eastern Point possesses only three types of neighbourhood support centers. From the average score of using neighbourhood support centres, it is found that both Rasulbag and Eastern Point gets High Status and block of Dhanmondi gets Medium Status in secondary social interaction or organized social activities (Table-5.10). The interesting point is that though Eastern Point possesses less number of support centers, it gains High Status in using support centers and that means most of the residents of Eastern Point use these support centers. Finally, it can be concluded that people of Eastern Point and Rasulbag possess more bonding with the neighbourhood than the people of block of Dhanmondi.

Table 5.10: Score of Positive Aspects of Using Neighbourhood Support Centers

Positive opinion towards using neighbourhood support centers	Rasulbag		Block of Dhanmondi		Eastern Point	
	Percent	Weight & Status	Percent	Weight & Status	Percent	Weight & Status
Respondents regularly use neighbourhood katcha bazaar	80.77	9	A		A	
Respondents regularly use grocery shops	76.92	8	46.51	5	A	
Respondents send their children to neighbourhood school	34.62	4	37.20	4	A	
Respondents regularly goes to neighbourhood religious center	96.15	10	93.02	10	100	10
Respondents regularly goes to neighbourhood shopping center	23.08	3	23.26	3	A	
Children of respondents play in the indoor and outdoor playground of neighbourhood	28.85	3	37.21	4	45	5
Respondents regularly goes to neighbourhood cultural center	A		13	2	75	8
Respondents regularly goes to neighbourhood park and open space	A		A		A	
Total Score	37		28		23	
Average Score	37/6 = 6.17		28/6=4.67		23/3=7.67	
Status of Mutual Assistance	High		Medium		High	
Symbol: H= High, M= Medium, L= Low, A = Absent in the neighbourhood						

Source: Field Survey, 2005.

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5.6 Conclusion

From comparative analysis of status of mental association with the neighbourhood and, status of primary and secondary social interaction, it is understood that people of both Rasulbag and Eastern Point, two different types of neighbourhood in terms of location, physical features and socio-economic characteristics, possess higher level of social interaction than the neighbourhood of Dhanmondi, a planned residential area of Dhaka City.

FACTORS INFLUENCING SOCIAL INTERACTION

CHAPTER 6

FACTORS INFLUENCING SOCIAL INTERACTION

6.1 Introduction

Social interaction in neighbourhood is based on residential stability, identification with the neighbourhood, the contacts between the local residents and the quality of social relation, the willingness of the local residents to help one another, the social participation of the residents and their political self confidence. Apart from social characteristics, the environment in which people live also always displays physical characteristics such as form, pattern, services, housing type, street design, trees and open space, park and garden, markets and commercial corners (Hart *et al*, 2002). Thus, in achieving a model sustainable neighbourhood, focus should be given on both physical forms and on the relations and interaction between people. People's relation and interaction is crucial as it directly relates to the very purpose of any created physical form: what does it serves or whom is it intended to serve. In the present study, an attempt is initiated to reveal the influence of physical, socio-economic and housing characteristics of the studied neighbourhoods on the status of social interaction to identify the factors that have significant influence on the aspects of social interaction. The identification of factors of social interaction is based on the findings of the questionnaire survey, FGD and general principles that are usually considered as factors of social interaction at the neighbourhood level.

6.2 Influence of Socio-economic and Housing Characteristics

As the studied neighbourhoods possess contrasting nature in terms of socio-economic and housing characteristics and also show variations in the status of social interaction, the influence of socio-economic characteristics such as age, income, household size, family type, presence of children and number of women in work, and housing characteristics such as housing type, type of tenure, length of residing etc. on the status of social interaction are discussed in detail in this section.

6.2.1 Age and Educational Status

Social interaction normally seems higher in middle-aged population and among less educated people (Forrest and Ngai-ming, 2002). Present study shows that, of the three neighbourhoods, high social interaction is found both in Rasulbag that has higher number of young people and in Eastern Point that has higher number of aged people (Figure-4.1). Thus, in the studied neighbourhoods, status of social interaction has no correspondence with age group of the people.

But, from FGD, it is revealed that, aged people of all the three neighbourhoods are more interested in making social contact with their neighbours and always come forward to help the neighbours. In contrast, younger people are self-concentric and remain busy with their own life. Even in the studied block of Dhanmondi, where comparatively low status of social interaction found, older people possess interest in making relationship with their neighbours. In Rasulbag, aged people especially those who are retired from their work and spend all the time in their houses are very friendly with their neighbours and pass most of the time by watching neighbours and talking with the other aged people and with the children of the neighbourhood. In Eastern Point, aged people seem to participate more in the activities of the neighbourhood organization than the younger people. Therefore, older people interact with neighbours mainly in order to pass their spare time.

In case of educational status, high social contact is found in both highly educated (Eastern Point) and less educated society (Rasulbag). But, according to FGD, social relation like visiting neighbours' house, lending and borrowing things are normally seen among comparatively less educated people of the neighbourhoods and this is similar to the findings of Forrest and Ngai-ming (2002). It is also revealed that (through FGD) educated women rarely interact with the neighbours and they are very selective about choosing friends in the neighbourhood.

Therefore, it can be concluded that social interaction exists in the neighbourhood comprising of people having different age structure and educational status as both younger, less educated people of Rasulbag and older, highly educated people of Eastern

Point shows higher status of social interaction. But, according to FGD, within each neighbourhood, aged people and less educated people are found more interactive with their neighbours.

6.2.2 Income Status

Income status is an important element as it determines social class of the people. It is believed that people with a fairly similar culture and economic status tend to live together more happily than the very diverse one (Keeble, 1964). This statement is applicable to Rasulbag and Eastern Point. Both Rasulbag, where most of the respondents belong to middle income class and Eastern Point, where most of the people belong to higher income class shows comparatively higher social interaction (Table-4.6). In these two neighbourhoods, residents' perception of own and neighbours' class status shows similarity. In Rasulbag, most of the residents perceive them and their neighbours as middle class people and in Eastern Point, most of the residents perceive them and their neighbours as high class people (Table-5.1). Thus, though these two neighbourhoods are contrasting in terms of income status of the residents, homogeneity in income status and perceptual homogeneity regarding economic class of the residents' results high level of social interaction. But, good relation among people having similar income status is not observed in the studied block of Dhanmondi and here most of the residents perceive themselves as middle class people and their neighbours as high class people. Thus, perceptual differences create social distance among neighbours of block of Dhanmondi.

Besides the general scenario, members of focus group of all the three neighbourhoods mentioned that the richer people especially high officials maintain less contact with their neighbours. Richer people rarely visit neighbours house and participate in the activities neighbourhood association. They are also selective in making friends in the neighbourhood.

Thus, in conclusion, it can be said that homogeneity in income status of the residents (both actual and perceptual) increases social interaction and within each neighborhood richer people found less interactive with their neighbours.

6.2.3 Family Structure

Family Size and Type

Family structure such as family size, family type, number of children and working women (mother) etc. has significant influence on the indicators of social interaction. Generally bigger families have higher movement within the neighbourhood for different types of activities that increases their idea about the physical and social phenomena of the neighbourhood and also increases social relation with the neighbours (Hart *et al*, 2002). This statement is applicable to Rasulbag, where comparatively bigger family size and high social interaction is found. In Rasulbag, bigger family size somehow results from the presence of higher number of joint and extended families (Table-4.7). Members of a joint and extended family learn to co-operate with each other, to take care of kith and kins and eventually they practice these attitudes with their neighbours. According to FGD, joint and extended families of all the three neighbourhoods are found more connected with their neighbours.

Presence of Children

Presence of children shows significant correspondence with the status of social interaction and the more the number of children the higher the social interactions exists in the neighbourhood (Forrest and Ngai-ming, 2002). Social relation among residents of a neighbourhood is stimulated especially by the children as they seem connected, mentally and physically, with the neighbourhood surroundings and encourage their parents to mingle with the neighbours. In case of block of Dhanmondi, low social interaction can easily be relate to the presence of less number of children (aged below 15) in the neighbourhood. On the other hand, higher number of children in the neighbourhood plays a positive role in enhancing social intercourse among neighbours in Rasulbag and Eastern Point.

But from FGD, it is revealed that many parents are concerned about their children's security and safety and they do not permit their children to go outside and play with the other children of the neighbourhood. This attitude is observed especially in the non-local families of Rasulbag, highly educated and wealthy families of Eastern Point and most of

the families of block of Dhanmondi. Thus, safety issues of children in the neighbourhood are identified as an important element of social interaction.

Presence of Working Mother

It is found that presence of working mothers has negative influence on the status of social interaction and neighbourhood with higher number of working mother have less social interaction. This can be analyzed by the fact that presence of working women in a family reduces the use of daily necessities from the neighbourhood support centers and have less leisure to mingle with the neighbours and they also influences family members to become self-centric and thus. decreases the opportunity of having better social relation with the neighbours (Coulthard *et al*, 2002). Of the three neighbourhoods, block of Dhanmondi has comparatively higher number of working mother and eventually it shows low status of social interaction and according to FGD, working mothers of Dhanmondi remain so occupied with their work that they can not spend time even with their children. And this matter is also true for working mothers of Rasulbag and Eastern Point. Thus, neighbourhoods having comparatively less number of working mothers (Rasulbag and Eastern Point respectably) eventually shows high social interaction.

In conclusion, it can be said that bigger family size, presence of children and less number of working mother increases social interaction in the neighbourhoods.

6.2.4 Housing Characteristics

Type of Tenure

Generally. ownership of houses and residential stability in a place increases neighbourly relation in the neighbourhoods (Forrest and Ming, 2002). As the home owners are permanent local residents in a neighbourhood, they are more interested in maintaining neighbourly relation with the other residents and their commitment and sense of belonging encourages them to think about enhancing the quality of living environment of the neighbourhood Home owners feel more associated with the well being of their neighbourhood But. all the three neighbourhoods of the present study are pre-

dominantly occupied by rental people (Fig-4.7). Thus, residential instability is a common occurrence in these neighbourhoods. Still, type of tenure of the residents has influence on social interaction pattern of the studied neighbourhoods.

In case of Rasulbag, home owners are mainly local people who inhabit here for generations. According to FGD, these local people are very conscious about the well being of their neighbourhood. Strong sense of belonging to the neighbourhood and social bonding exists among theses households. To regulate social life, local people (mainly home owners) of Rasulbag formed a neighbourhood based association that plays an important role in solving neighbourhood problems and enhancing social intercourse. But, rental households of Rasulbag do not have provision in the association and thus, ownership of home can be considered as a strong factor for enhancing social interaction in Rasulbag.

In Eastern Point, there is no preservation for households in participating neighbourhood association. Here, home owners are not necessarily the local people who have been living here for generations. Both home owners and rental people have come from different places and cohabiting side by side in apartment houses of Eastern Point. Thus, residents of Eastern Point mingle with neighbours not considering the type of tenure but as the rental people are mobile and instable in the neighbourhood, strong sense of belonging and close relationships exists among the home owners of the neighbourhood (according to FGD).

In Studied block of Dhanmondi, there found two types of home owners. One type of home owners are those who reside on the government allocated plot and the other type is those who are the owner of one or two flats of apartment houses. According to FGD, there is a social distance between theses two groups as the families of government officials who live on the allocated plot do not mingle with the apartment owners who came later in the area. On the other hand, rental people that constitute the most part of the residents do not possess bonding with the neighbourhood and with the neighbours. Thus, in block of Dhanmondi, social interaction such as visiting neighbours' house, mutual

assistance, friendship etc. found higher among families of government officials (home owners) than among apartment owners and rental occupiers.

In all, home ownership acts as a positive factor for social interaction but, it is more applicable for Rasulbag and Eastern Point as a portion of home owners (apartment owners) in block of Dhanmondi does not possess neighbourly contact with the other households.

Length of Residing

It is generally argued that length of residence and localized kinship does something to create a network of local attachment. Residing in a particular place for a long time creates sense of belonging to that place and develops community feelings to the neighbours. It is mentioned earlier that residential instability is a common scenario in the studied neighbourhoods as most of the households of these neighbourhoods are residing in the rental houses. It is found that a significant number of households of the three neighbourhoods have been residing in the neighbourhoods for less than five years (Table-4.8). These households are found less interested in neighbourhood and less interactive with the neighbours as they do not know whether or not they are going to live here in the coming years.

It is revealed from FGD that besides home owners, non home owners or rental households who live in the same neighbourhood for more than five/six years have good relationship with the neighbours. These types of households are more prominent in Eastern Point where households who have been living here for more than five years are found very intimate with the neighbours. In Rasulbag and block of Dhanmondi there are a number of rental households who have been residing in the same house for more than ten years and these households maintain social relation with their neighbours. Thus, for all the three neighbourhoods, residential stability acts as a positive factor for enhancing social interaction

6.3 Influence of Physical Characteristics of the Neighbourhood

Physical characteristics of neighbourhood play an important role in regulating social life within the neighbourhood. Physical aspects such as, street lay out, building densities, nature of housing stock, types and location of public places, aesthetic qualities etc. are considered as the major consideration in neighbourhood planning and designing (Hart *et al.* 2002). It is said that a good neighbourhood should be designed to address a set of functions: Offer security, Offer privacy, Enhance residential feelings of identity, Satisfy resident's needs for diversity and a sense of community (Korinke, 2005). As physical residential environment of the neighbourhoods of Dhaka City is the out come of both natural or informal development and of creation of the professional designers, it is necessary to justify whether or not these different types of physical environment in planned, unplanned and naturally grown neighbourhoods of Dhaka City reflects the resident's desires, and plays significant roles in influencing social relation among residents in a neighbourhood. Findings of such investigations can be incorporated to the future attempt of neighbourhood planning and development projects

It is mentioned earlier that present study is conducted on three neighbourhoods of Dhaka city with contrasting physical characteristics. Block of Dhanmondi is selected as a planned residential neighbourhood with grid patterned street layout and with better service facilities, Eastern Point is taken as an example of recent high-rise compact housing development and Rasulbag is selected as a part of naturally grown unplanned neighbourhood in the Old Dhaka. These three neighbourhoods also possess contrasting nature in terms of socio-economic and residence characteristics and the status of social interaction. In this section, the general principles of physical planning that encourages social relation and friendly environment in the neighbourhood and physical characteristics of studied neighbourhoods of Dhaka city and their influence on the status of social interaction is discussed.

6.3.1 Building Characteristics

Generally low-rise buildings spacing face-to-face along linear or rectangular street is considered as an effective aspect for regulating social intercourse among residents in a neighbourhood cause it has been observed that typically in a neighborhood every family knows his immediate surrounding and is most conscious about the fact that he is a part of that smaller group of people who live along the same street. The families, face one another across the street, are neighbours in the closest sense (Korinke, 2005). It is also suggested to place buildings entries, balconies, porches etc. face to the street to encourage observation by nearby residents. Eyes on the street promote safety and a feeling of ownership of and identification with the surrounding street space (Sucher, 1996).

In the present study, Rasulbag of Old Dhaka shows both low-rise buildings and face-to-face spacing of buildings along a linear street. Here entries, balconies are found in front of the buildings facing to the street. Thus, according to general principle, Rasulbag possess building characteristics that is encouraging for social intercourse.

In the present study, Eastern Point a high-rise (12 storied buildings) apartment complex shows significant social relation and interaction among residents where there is little opportunity of the residents to have eye contact with the fellow neighbours. Presently vertical neighbourhood is becoming popular as a form of compact development in the cities of the developed countries to create walkable distance, to increase pedestrian activity, to promote less automobile use and to make neighbourhood more economic with less infrastructural cost and to increase park area and open space. But, the height of the buildings suggested to be kept under human scale (four to five storied) to regulate social activities (Korinke, 2005). Though the height of Eastern Point is beyond human scale, grouping of buildings within a defined boundary, pedestrian friendly environment within the apartment complex brings residents closer to each other.

The qualities of ideal vertical neighbourhood is observed in the studied block of Dhanmondi especially in terms of building height (average building height 6.5) but residents of block of Dhanmondi showed less social interaction with the fellow

neighbours than Eastern Point and Rasulbag. A block of Dhanmondi that is considered as a neighbourhood is actually a part of a big residential area where one block is not a distinct residential unit and is connected to the other blocks in four directions. Sometimes residents are confused to realize in which block they belong. Thus, this neighbourhood does not show particular grouping of buildings and distinct identity which is a major constraint in regulating social intercourse among residents.

6.3.2 Characteristics of Neighbourhood Streets

Street pattern of a neighbourhood critically shapes the housing blocks and places, provides access and views of special locations and overlays the whole site with a network that is crucial to how people will perceive their environment. It is always suggested to design layout of the street network within a neighbourhood that encourage non-automobile modes to travel and provide a pedestrian-oriented environment. Penetration of moving vehicles within the residential areas brings its own particular penalties of anxiety, noise, fumes, vibration and dirt and visual intrusion on a vast scale. On the other hand, fewer automobiles will lessen the traffic noise and increases the quality of social interaction as people free from traffic spend more time by walking and looking around.

Such type of street lay out is not found in any of the studied neighbourhoods. Street condition is found worst in Rasulbag where narrow streets, motorized and non-motorized vehicles, open sewerage system makes the streets unsuitable for pedestrian movement and there is no way that people can spend time by walking and talking on the streets of Rasulbag. People of Rasulbag also identified narrow and broken street as one of the major problems in their neighbourhood (Table-4.10) and they think that if the street condition improves the people will feel more connected to the neighbourhood.

Same opinion is found from the respondents of Eastern Point. Though there is no street network inside the neighborhood, respondents opine that they would feel more connected to the neighbourhood if the traffic congestion and water logging problem surrounding the housing complex become solved. Though the block of Dhanmondi possess planned greed patterned street lay out, traffic congestion on the streets makes the street unsuitable for

walking. Establishment of education institutions and increasing commercial activities and Dhanmondi Lake and Park that located beside the studied block increase traffic congestion. According to the residents of the studied block, the streets are not safe and secure for them and especially for their children. Thus, planned and wide street pattern of this neighbourhood failed to encourage social intercourse among residents.

In all, street conditions of all the three neighbourhoods are not encouraging for social interaction. Moreover, street characteristics of the studied neighbourhoods are acting as a negative factor for social interaction.

6.3.3 Public Spaces

'The overriding criterion by which cities and towns should be judged is the nature of their public realm! The public realm can simply be defined as all the places to which the public has physical and visual access: streets and squares, footpaths, parks and open spaces, civic buildings... etc. (Tibbalds, 1992). Public places can increase importance and contribute to social climate of our neighbourhood. In the present study, meeting places of the residents such as religious center, park, open space, cultural center, community centers, play ground etc. are considered as public spaces.

In Rasulbag, there found no park, community center and cultural center. Rasulbag play ground, the only open space of Rasulbag, found having no infrastructural facilities for playing or using it as a meeting place of the residents and it is not located at the central part of the neighbourhood. In spite of all these problems, this open place is used as playing ground for neighbourhood children, meeting place for the neighbourhood association and place of social and cultural events. Members of the focus group of Rasulbag identified lack of public spaces as one of negative factor of enhancing social contact among neighbours.

Lack of public spaces for residents is also observed in the block of Dhanmondi. As Dhanmondi Lake and Park located beside the neighbourhood, people of this neighbourhood sometimes spend leisure time in the park but it does not encourage

neighbourhood based relationship. The cultural center and community center of the neighbourhood is a common place and mainly used by the people of different areas. Thus, this neighbourhood also does not have any particular meeting place for the residents of the neighbourhood.

The scenario is quite different in Eastern Point. Here residents have their own Masjid, community center, library, meeting place and indoor playing space. The presence of public spaces is one of the main factors that creates social interaction friendly environment within this vertical neighbourhood. Thus, it is revealed that normal social life can be restored even in the multistoried apartment houses by incorporating enough public spaces for men, women and children.

Therefore, providing a variety of public spaces in proper locations is necessary for enhancing social interaction in the studied neighbourhoods.

6.3.4 Quality of Local Services

An individual's well being may be significantly affected by the availability and quality of services that are delivered at the neighbourhood level (Ellen and Turner, 1997) A good neighbourhood should satisfy our basic social needs and learn to better relate to other people (Korinke. 2005). In the present study, local services means utility services such as water, electricity and gas supply, sanitation and sewerage system and waste management. and support centers such as educational centres, religious centres, bazaar, grocery. shopping centers etc. It is found that residents of Eastern Point are satisfied with utility services provided and managed by the housing authority and they also feel relieved to have good quality support centers within a short distance from their house This sense of satisfaction encourages the residents to become stable in the neighbourhood.

Though residents of Rasulbag complained about irregular supply of electricity and water, they feel happy to have school, kutcha bazaar, and shopping centers within walking distances. People of block of Dhanmondi also pleased to have better utility services and

support facilities and residents of this neighbourhood are highly satisfied towards the physical environment of the neighbourhood (Appendix I: Table-2).

From the above discussion, it can be said that better quality of service facilities increases residential stability of the people, sense of satisfaction and belongingness to the neighbourhood and it is important to have local facilities accessible to all and within a walkable distances.

6.4 Other Factors of Social Interaction
6.4.1 Neighbourhood Based Association

Neighbourhood organization is the most effective aspect in enhancing and encouraging social intercourse. It was found that the residents of two neighbourhoods, Rasulbag and Eastern Point, has an association of their own and respondents of these neighbourhoods showed higher social interaction than the block of Dhanmondi where no association comprising of neighbours exists. Thus, absence of neighbourhood based association is one of the major factor in regulating social interaction and relation in the neighbourhoods. Through the activities of the association residents of both Rasulbag and Eastern Point meet with each other, discuss neighbourhood problems, and arrange various social, religious and cultural programs. These events provide opportunity of the residents to mingle with each other and share common goals especially in terms of neighbourhood development.

Between Rasulbag and Eastern Point, activities of neighbourhood association found stronger in Eastern Point. In Rasulbag, all the members of the neighbourhood association are local people and that is why the rate of participation of the people living in rented houses is lower in the activities of the association is lower than Eastern Point. On the other hand, all residents of Eastern Point have provision in neighbourhood association moreover, women comprise 30 percent of the members. Thus, incorporation of women members and taking various initiatives to regulate social relation through neighbourhood association is the main factor in creating social bond of the residents of this high-rise apartment complex. In contrast, according to FGD, absence of local association was

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identified as the main reason of not having social contact among neighbours by the residents of the block of Dhanmondi.

6.4.2 Human Psychology and Attitude

Residents of all the three neighbourhoods opined that people's negative attitude towards social relation is one of the important reasons of decreasing social interaction friendly environment in the neighbourhood (Appendix-J, Table-5). People are more self-conscious, busy to improve their own personal lives. Effort of vertical mobility that is inclination from one (lower) class to another (upper) becomes the main focus of the people that makes them self-oriented and isolated from their surroundings. Class differentiation and class consciousness is another reason of loosen social ties among people. There is a strong tendency for the better off to separate them from the poorer. The rich people have little to do with the poor even if they live in close proximity (Nabi, 1971). Present study also revealed that within each neighbourhood, comparatively reach and educated people are less interactive with the neighbours and selective in choosing friends in the neighbourhood.

Though the people of the neighbourhoods of Dhaka City want to live peacefully, want safety and security, friendly environment in their neighbourhood but they don't value the need for social ties among neighbours to make the neighbourhood friendly and safe for themselves and for their children.

6.4.3 Interrelationships of Indicators of Social Interactions

The indicators of social interaction shows significant relationship with each other and thus, higher neighbourhood perception, higher sense of belonging, higher neighbourly contact and higher organized social activities co-exists in the studied neighbourhoods. Therefore, it can be inferred that residents who possess better neighbourhood perception also possess higher sense of belonging to the neighbourhood and neighbourly contact seems higher and more spatially extended among those residents and those residents are more spatially bounded to the neighbourhood for using support facilities. Because of the interrelationship of the indicators, Rasulbag and Eastern Point get comparatively higher

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status in all the indicators of social interaction than block of Dhanmondi. Thus, it can be assumed that one aspect of social interaction influences other aspects and having social relation with the neighbours is the most effective way to increase social relation and interaction at the neighbourhood level.

6.5 Conclusion

It is found from the above discussions that combination of physical, economical, social, psychological factors are influencing the status of social interaction in the neighbourhoods of Dhaka City. Some factors are working as positive force and some are as negative force and the influence of these factors also varies from one neighbourhood to another. For example, it is observed that though studied block of Dhanmondi possess well designed street lay out, good service facilities, planned building location and access to Dhanmondi Lake and Park, residents of these area has less social interaction than Rasulbag where exists several problems like narrow and broken streets, shortage of water and electricity supply, water logging etc.

It can be understood by the over all analysis and discussion that residents of Rasulbag practice social interaction because of their own interest which they inherited from the past as this neighbourhood is a previous *mohalla* that was established based on social bonding in medieval Dhaka. Residents of Eastern Point possess social contact with their neighbours because of the influence of housing environment that offers them various public places and events to promote social relationship with each other. And lastly residents of block of Dhanmondi possess less social interaction with fellow neighbours because of the absence of interest of the residents and absence of encouraging factors like neighbourhood meeting places and neighbourhood based organizations etc.

Therefore, it can be concluded that as the studied neighbourhoods of Dhaka City have distinct identities, possess distinct socio-physical-cultural criteria, the factors of social interaction varies from one neighbourhood to another and these factors need to be analyzed separately for each neighbourhood of Dhaka City.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Summary of Findings

A. Socio-economic Characteristics of the Respondents

· Form the figure of age structure, it is found that the head of the households of Rasulbag are much younger than Dhanmondi and Eastern Point. The Standard Deviation of age data suggests a considerable degree of heterogeneity in the age of the residents of block of Dhanmondi and Eastern Point. On the other hand, less variance of age of the respondents of Rasulbag suggests less diversity in terms of age among the respondents.

From the distribution of education status, it is found that people of Eastern Point are highly educated followed by Dhanmondi and people of Rasulbag are less educated.

▶ From the occupation pattern of the respondents. it is found that business is dominant in the occupation profile of three neighbourhoods. Sector wise distribution of employment pattern of the respondents reveals that the majority of the respondents of block of Dhanmondi and Rasulbag are self-employed whilst majority of the respondents of Eastern Point work in the non-government organizations.

▶ Frequency distribution of monthly income data illustrates that in block of Dhanmondi and Eastern Point. most of the people belong to upper class and Standard Deviation of income data illustrates homogeneity in terms of monthly income in block of Dhanmondi and Eastern Point. On the other hand, it is found that most of the people of Rasulbag belong to middle class and there exists diversity (heterogeneity) in distribution of income of the people.

▶ Comparatively higher number of joint and extended families is found in Rasulbag and lower number is found in Eastern Point. Family size is found bigger in Rasulbag than Eastern Point and block of Dhanmondi. Number of households has young children aged

below 15. is found higher in Rasulbag and lower in block of Dhanmondi. Number of working women found higher in Eastern Point and block of Dhanmondi than in Rasulbag.

B. Housing Characteristics of the Respodents

▶ Rasulbag has mixed type of housing ranging from lower income category (100 to 500 sq. ft.) to higher income category (2000 sq. ft.) and houses of block of Dhanmondi and Eastern Point are quite homogenous and mostly belong to higher income category.

▶ Rented-occupiers are dominating in the Rasulbag, block of Dhanmondi and Eastern Point.

According to average length of residing, it is found that residents of Rasulbag are living in their houses for longer years than the other two neighbourhoods. But, variance of length of residing shows that mixture of residents with various length of residing is found in the Rasulbag whilst general length of residing is found homogenous in block of Dhanmondi and Eastern Point where most of the people found staying in their present houses for 2 to 9 years.

▶ Home ownership and nearness to the educational institutions and work places from the residence are the main reasons of residing in the present house of the residents of studied neighbourhoods. Besides, in Rasulbag, comparatively less house rent, in block of Dhanmondi, good natural environment and in Eastern Point, well service facilities and security system are indicated as the reason for residing in the present house by the respondents.

▶ Respondents of Rasulbag identified more problems of their neighbourhood than the respondents of other two neighbourhoods. Congested housing, narrow and broken streets, absence of parks and open spaces, traffic jam, shortage of water and electricity supply and lack of security are identified by the respondents as the major problems of Rasulbag. The major problems of block of Dhanmondi are commercial activities in the residential

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area, traffic jam, and lack of security and gathering of people in the premise of the Dhanmondi Lake. To the residents of Eastern Point, water logging, traffic jam in the Shantinagar area and absence of open spaces and parks within the housing complex are the major problems of their neighbourhood. It is observed that noise pollution, traffic jam and lack of security are common problems in all the three neighbourhoods

C. Status of Social Interaction in the Neighbourhoods
1. Perception of Neighbourhood

► Residents of Eastern Point and Rasulbag have more sense of physical boundary of their neighbourhood than block of Dhanmondi.

► Residents of all the three neighbourhoods have a tendency to perceive them as middle class people. Of the three neighbourhoods. respondents of Rasulbag are more consistent about class perception where nearly equal number of respondents perceives both them and their neighbours having same social status that is middle class people.

Most of the residents of the three neighbourhoods choose physical attributes as their favorite features in the neighbourhood. Of the non-physical features, good relationship with neighbours took an important place but it is found lower in neighbourhood of Dhanmondi than Eastern Point and Rasulbag.

► It is found that respondents of Eastern Point are more satisfied about the status of social interaction than the other two neighbourhoods

By evaluating average weight, it is found that, respondents of Rasulbag and Eastern Point have High Status and respondents of block of Dhanmondi have Low Status regarding perception towards neighbourhood.

2. Sense of Belonging to the Neighbourhoods

Respondents of Eastern Point and Rasulbag have more sense of belonging to their neighbourhood and possess more community feelings with fellow neighbours than the respondents of Dhanmondi. Eventually, respondents of Rasulbag and Eastern Point have High Status and respondents of Neighbourhood of Dhanmondi have Medium Status towards sense of belongings to their neighbourhood.

3. Neighbourly Contact among Residents

► Percentage of houses engaged in neighbourly contact is comparatively much higher in Eastern Point and Rasulbag than in block of Dhanmondi. The highest neighbourly contact is observed in Eastern Point.

► Residents of Rasulbag are more socially involved and here, spatial extent of relationship is comparatively higher than other neighbourhoods. The people of Eastern Point also show significant neighbourly contact and here, vertical extent of neighbourly contact is observed, as it is a vertical neighbourhood. Finally, the people of Dhanmondi possess least neighbourly contact with the residents and least spatial extent of neighbourly relation with the residents of the neighbourhood.

It is found that local women of Rasulbag have neighbourly relation with each other but they do not have neighbourly relation with women of rented households. Children of rented families also keep aloof them from local children. Women of Dhanmondi and Eastern Point have good relationships with neighbours but their relationships are limited to the households of same buildings or nearby one or two buildings. Children of these two neighbourhoods are found less interactive to the other children of the neighbourhood.

4. Mutual Assistance among Neighbours

Respondents of both Rasulbag and Eastern Point shows higher mutual assistance in terms of doing mutual favor, mutual visiting in sickness and mutual borrowing and lending than respondents of Dhanmondi.

By evaluating average weight, it is found that respondents of Rasulbag and Eastern Point have Medium Status and respondents of block of Dhanmondi have Low Status towards mutual assistance among neighbours

5. Social Network

Nearly equal number of kinship network is found in the three neighbourhoods. But, people of block of Dhanmondi and Eastern Point have less number of friends inside the neighbourhood than Rasulbag. Homogeneity in income and social status plays an important role in selecting friends in Eastern Point and block of Dhanmondi.

Both Rasulbag and Eastern Point has neighbourhood based association and residents are very much engaged with the activities of the organizations and social network of these neighbourhoods are stronger than block of Dhanmondi where there is no neighbourhood based association to address the problems and issues of the neighbourhood.

6. Use of Support Centers of the Neighbourhoods

Both Rasulbag and block of Dhanmondi has six types and Eastern Point has only three types of neighbourhood support centers inside the neighbourhood. In terms of average score, both Rasulbag and Eastern Point gets high status and block of Dhanmondi gets Medium status in using neighbourhood support centers. Thus, it can be said that people of Eastern Point and Rasulbag possess more bounding with the neighbourhood than the people of block of Dhanmondi.

D. Factors Influencing Social Interaction
Factors Related to Socio-economic and Housing Characteristics

1. Generally, social interaction does not have correspondence to age structure and educational status of the residents as both younger, less educated people of Rasulbag and older, highly educated people of Eastern Point shows higher status of social interaction. But, within each neighbourhood, aged people and less educated people are found more interactive with their neighbours.

2. In general, homogeneity in income status of the residents (both actual and perceptual) increases social interaction and within each studied neighborhood, richer people found less interactive with their neighbours.

3. Bigger families and joint and extended families of all the three neighbourhoods are found more connected with their neighbours.

4. Higher number of children in Rasulbag and Eastern Point plays a positive role in enhancing social intercourse among neighbours. On the other hand, low social interaction in block of Dhanmondi can easily be related to the presence of less number of children.

5. Neighbourhoods having comparatively less number of working mothers (Rasulbag and Eastern Point) eventually shows high social interaction.

6. Home ownership acts as a positive factor for social interaction but, it is more applicable for Rasulbag and Eastern Point because a portion of home owners (apartment owners) in block of Dhanmondi possesses less neighbourly contact with the other households.

7. In the studied neighbourhoods, residential stability acts as a positive factor for enhancing social interaction.

Factors Related to Physical Characteristics:

1. Low-rise buildings, spacing face-to-face along linear or rectangular street is considered as an effective aspect for regulating social intercourse among residents.

2. Buildings entries. balconies. and porches etc. need to be faced to the street to encourage observation by nearby residents. Visual barriers in front of the buildings discourage social interaction.

3. High-rise apartment complexes having open space, play ground, park, meeting hall etc. within the premise of housing increases social interaction among residents.

4. Grouping of buildings of a neighbourhood need to have distinct identity so that residents can know that they are a part of a particular residential environment.

5. Narrow and broken streets, traffic congestion on the street, lack of foot path for pedestrians, open sewerage drain, water logging etc. discourages people to walk and talk on the street.

6. Lack of public places like parks, gardens, open spaces, play grounds, cultural centers, community centers and inappropriate location of public places decrease social interaction of the residents.

7. Lower quality of service facilities such as, irregular supply of water, electricity and gas, absence of appropriate waste management and sewerage system, lack of safety and security in the neighbourhood makes residents dissatisfied and frustrated and thus, less interested in maintaining social relation with neighbours.

8. Absence of school, kutcha bazaar, meeting hall, religious centers in the neighbourhood, which are the prime meeting place of residents, decreases chance of social interaction.

Other Factors of Social Interaction

1. Absence of neighbourhood based organization prevents residents from meeting regular basis, discussing neighbourhood problems, sharing common goals for neighbourhood development, initiating social and cultural programs which are the most effective expression of social interaction at the neighbourhood level.

2. People's isolation from the fellow neighbours, self-oriented attitude, class consciousness and less interest in participating in the neighbourhood development process is one of the main factors of decreasing intimacy and social relation among neighbours.

3. There exists an interrelation among the aspects of social interaction. For this reason, Rasulbag and Eastern Point get comparatively higher status in all the indicators of social interaction than block of Dhanmondi. Therefore, one aspect of social interaction influences other aspects and having social relation with the neighbours is the most effective way to increase social relation and interaction at the neighbourhood level.

E. From overall observation it is found that:

1. Residents of Rasulbag interact with neighbours because of the influence of old tradition that was observed in *mohallas* of Medieval Dhaka. Physical characteristics of the neighbourhood such as low-rise buildings on the both sides of a narrow linear street, presence of common public spaces (kutcha bazaar, mosque, grocery shops, schools, play ground etc.) within the neighbourhood create grounds for residents to meet and talk with each other.

2. Residents of Eastern Point possess social contact with their neighbours because of the influence of distinct housing environment that separates them from surroundings and brings them closer with each other within the neighbourhood by offering various public places (mosque, library, community centre, indoor playground etc.) and various social events organized by neighbourhood association

3. Residents of block of Dhanmondi possess less social interaction with fellow neighbours because of the absence of interest of the residents and absence of encouraging factors like neighbourhood public places and neighbourhood based organizations etc.

7.2 Recommendations for Enhancing Social Interaction in the Neighbourhoods

7.2.1 Creating Friendly Physical Environment in a Neighbourhood

A good neighbourhood should plan in a way that can easily satisfy people's basic social needs and can relate to other people. It should be a place where a great deal of interaction among households, groups and individuals takes place. Additionally, it requires a concept of urban form and design that addresses people's basic social needs. It should allow people to get in contact with one another, offer both a sense of community as well as an individual home and privacy, and enhance residents' feeling of identity and much more. To develop such a friendly neighbourhood in Dhaka City, the following aspects need to given importance in designing neighbourhoods of Dhaka City:

7.2.1.1 Human Need Oriented Planning

In planning neighbourhoods, it is necessary to give importance on need and demand of the residents to make sure that the human beings are the basis of all planning approaches and it values local culture. This is how any neighbourhood can achieve a guiding physical form that fosters community development through public meeting grounds. Before renewal and redevelopment of existing neighbourhoods and development of new residential neighbourhoods of Dhaka City, housing development authorities should assess the needs and demands of the residents.

Social interaction friendly physical environment need to be incorporated both in low-rise and contemporary vertical neighbourhoods. Urban planners of western and even eastern countries are now experimenting various layouts and designs of contemporary

neighbourhoods that symbolize both modern technology and traditional heritage and culture of a society. Urban planners of USA, Canada, Australia etc. that has vast amount of land, still prefer low-rise residential neighbourhoods in the suburb area where residents enjoys natural beauty as well as modern facilities. In these neighbourhoods, pedestrian friendly environment, presence of parks, playgrounds, shops, restaurants, community centers, religious centers etc. eventually increases mental bonding with the neighbourhood and social bonding with the neighbours. But in places like Dhaka City, high-rise residential neighbourhoods are the most logical way to supply housing for the people under shortage of land, ever-increasing land price and huge population pressure. Human need oriented neighbourhood planning is thus, urgent for developing new residential areas because nearly all of the new residential neighbourhoods of Dhaka City are developed as high-rise apartment complexes. If proper ground for social intercourse were not provided, these residential neighbourhoods would become only a block of flats not home for residents

Photographs of low-rise neighbourhoods of USA: -

| Neighbourhood of Radburn, New Jersey, USA | A neighbourhood of Houston, USA | A neighbourhood of New Orleans, USA |

Source: http://www.gmu.edu/library/specialcollections/plancomm.html

Layout of residential neighbourhoods of Singapore can be followed in developing new vertical neighbourhood of Dhaka City. Singapore is probably the most land-scares country in the world. To ensure optimum utilization of land, Housing and Development Board (HBD) of Singapore developed 'Planned Estates' that are self-contained vertical neighbourhoods, each served by essential amenities such as, super markets, food centers,

clinics, schools, libraries, shopping malls, parks and play grounds. All such estates are well connected by public transport. The amenities are provided in such a way that residents can meet face-to-face with each other and possess community spirit (Nancy, 2004).

Photographs of high-rise neighbourhoods of Singapore: -

Source: http://www.gmu.edu/library/specialcollections/plancomm.html
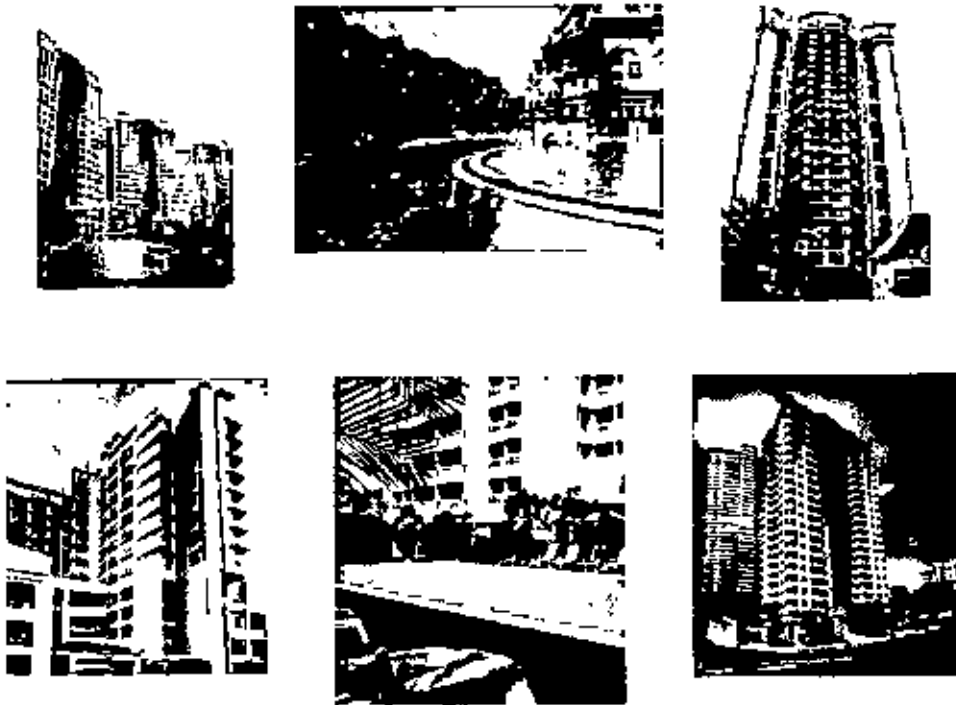
From the present study, it is observed that social aspects of living in a residential area were not incorporated in the planning process of Dhanmondi residential area. Thus, absence of meeting place, play ground, community centre, open space and garden within the neighbourhood results low social interaction among residents in the planned residential neighbourhood of Dhanmondi. On the other hand, Eastern Point, a high-rise apartment complex, showed high social interaction because of the planned arrangement of social meeting grounds for residents. Thus, the new trend of vertical neighbourhoods of Dhaka City can overcome its backdrops such as isolation of people from neighbours,

from nature and from social events etc. by incorporating social spaces within the premise of the housing complex.

7.2.1.2 Providing Pedestrian Oriented Environment in the Neighbourhood

It is necessary to make streets more intimate in scale and encourage greater pedestrian activities by combined with wider sidewalks and a design that favors the pedestrian. A pedestrian oriented street when designed properly e.g. favors all groups of residents. Thus, elderly people, the disabled and children have the freedom to get around with ease in a community without barriers. There is to remember that the street pattern critically shapes the housing blocks and places, provides access and views to special locations and overlays the whole site with a network that is crucial to how people will perceive their environment.

To fulfill the needs of all the residents in a neighbourhood, facilities and public places must be better accessible and within a walkable distance. That means to create a pedestrian-friendly environment where it is a joy to walk and cycle, and where everybody feels safe and stimulated to do so.
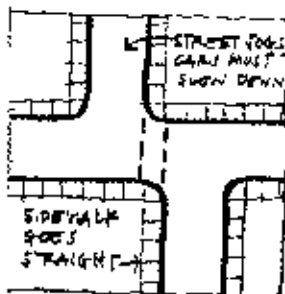
Cars must observe the pedestrian right of way   Sidewalks should range between 3 and 5m to
                                                        provide convenience of movement

Source: Korinke, 2005.

Figure 7.1: Outline of Pedestrian-friendly Street Design

Photographs of pedestrian friendly neighbourhood streets: -

A neighbourhood street of Barcelona, Spain

Women chatting on neighbourhood street,
Barcelona, Spain

Source: http://pictures.traveladventures.org/

The street design of neighbourhood of Dhaka should follow the above rules shown in the figures (Fig-7.1). Improving street condition is very important for neighbourhoods of Dhaka City as pedestrian friendly environment is observed absent in the studied neighborhoods of Rasulbag, Block of Dhanmondi and Eastern Point because of traffic congestion, open sewerage system and absence of foot path.

7.2.1.3 Incorporation of Public Spaces in the Neighbourhoods

It is necessary to maximize the amount of the public realm, provide a variety of public spaces and give public spaces prominent locations for increasing resident's identification with a neighbourhood centre. Public places and buildings placed in the heart or center of a neighbourhood helps residents feel rooted and increases their sense of place and belonging. 'Public places and buildings placed in the "heart" or centre of a neighbourhood helps residents feel rooted and increases their sense of place and belonging' (Korinke, 2005). Public spaces should design by incorporating works of public art to enrich the public environment.

To establish the social increment of a place, village greens and open spaces should be used as formative elements instead of occupying residual space. Additionally, we must

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return meaning to streets and plazas as a part of our public life. Public places are sources of inspiration and recreation. These interact with each individual in the way he/she perceives his/her environment and over time develops a relation to it.

A few examples of neighbourhood public spaces: -

Public places in between mixed-use buildings of the old city of Cologne (Germany)

Neighbourhood Public Hall in Venice. Italy

Residential area with a street market in Berlin. Germany.

Neighbourhood shops of Alberta, Canada

A neighbourhood picnic spot of Alberta, Canada

Neighbourhood snacks bar of Alberta, Canada

Source: http://pictures.traveladventures.org/

Incorporating a small square in the middle of the neighbourhoods of Dhaka City can provide a setting for public events that can draw people regularly together like a market, cultural and community activities or celebrations. It is necessary to establish neighbourhood meeting halls especially in Rasulbag and Block of Dhanmondi to enhance social interaction. It is found that interaction of children is one of the major factors of social interaction. Interaction of children increases interaction among parents.

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Thus, providing both out door and indoor playground for children in the neighbourhood of Dhaka City can ensure effective social interaction among households. Establish elementary schools in the neighbourhoods and making it mandatory for the children to attend in the neighbourhood elementary school will help to bring both children and parents together that is practiced in many western countries.

7.2.1.4 Planning Social Interaction Friendly Building Frontage

High fences and walls, garages in front of the buildings and other obstructions are uninviting and reflect social barriers to get into contact with the neighbours. They should be a replaced by a more permeable street front. Incorporating penetrable architectural features like arcades and walk-through passages into buildings is particularly important where the streetscape is composed of an enclosed space (Sucher, 1996).

Buildings should be open to the sidewalk and allow for "eyes on the street". Building entries, windows, balconies, porches etc. should face to the street to encourage public activity and observation by nearby residents. Eyes on the street promote safety and a feeling of ownership of and identification with the surrounding street space. These aspects need to incorporate especially in the planning of new neighbourhoods of Dhaka City.

| Diverse and inviting building frontages | Building frontage having no visual barrier |
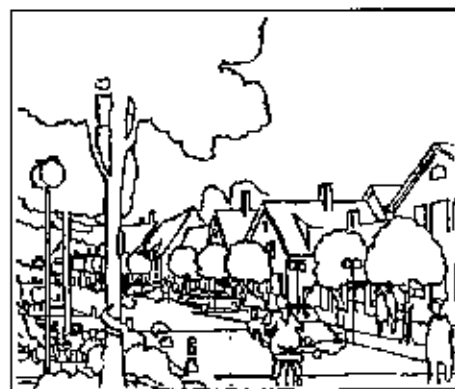
Source: Korinke, 2005.

Figure 7.2: Social Interaction Friendly Building Frontage

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It is necessary to provide a variety of building facades. The architectural design should incorporate porches, balconies and bays and these should vary from one building to another to provide a high level of visual interest to pedestrians. Avoid monotonous and monumental looking building frontages that follow the motto "less is more" (Coulthard *et al*, 2002).

A few examples of inviting building frontages: -

| A small courtyard in the middle of four houses Burano, Italy | Neighbourhood building frontages having diverse colors, Buenos Aires, Argentina | Colorful building frontages of a neighbourhood, Gothenburg, Sweden |
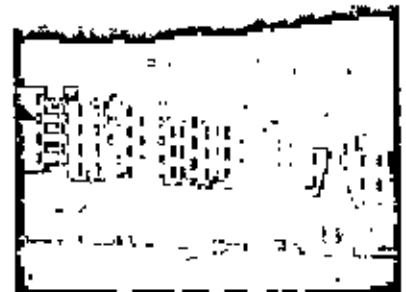
Source: http://pictures.traveladventures.org/

7.2.2 Creating Friendly Social Environment in a Neighbourhood
There are many ways to create, improve, and maintain a healthy and supportive neighbourhood by taking effective social initiatives such as:

Effort to Know the Neighbours

Initiatives to know about neighbours develop friendly relationships with neighbors. It is important to think neighbours as a member of extended family People feel better and safer, and problems seem less overwhelming, when support is nearby. It is easier to share joys and worries if people know their neighbors. If a family in a neighbourhood seems to be in crisis or under stress, neighbours need to offer help and support. A smile or word of encouragement can mean a lot if it comes from a neighbours.

Forming Neighbourhood Association

Forming neighbourhood based organization is very effective to bring neighbours together by organizing various social and cultural events. Through neighbourhood organization, residents can discuss about their local problems and can act as a pressure group to solve these problems. Even they can take initiatives to solve their own problem. Residents can form Neighbourhood Watch to keep neighborhood safe. Events for children such as, various games and cultural competitions will bring children and parents closer as well as create a strengthen environment for children after school activities.

Willingness of the Residents for Creating Friendly Social Environment

It is necessary to take initiatives by every individuals living in the neighbourhood in order to increase social interaction in the neighbourhoods. People's self- concentrated attitude and intention to live isolated from the neighbours that is observed in the attitude of the residents of studied neighbourhoods, simply decreases their safety and security within the neighbourhood. The willingness of the residents is the main key for creating good and friendly social environment in the neighbourhood.

7.3 Conclusion

'Throughout history, man has grouped themselves together for safety, for the exchange of services, food and goods, for worship and social intercourse' (Nabi, 1971). Neighborhood is considered as the primary base for expressing common needs and shared goals of the people. 'Neighborhood ties can transform human social bond to *social capital* that refers to the social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from their maintenance and development' (Putnam, 2000). Relationship gives people support, happiness, commitment and a sense they belong and have a role to play in the society. Social connectedness at the neighborhood level plays a vital role in promoting wellbeing and strengthening communities. A neighbourhood should constitute a cohesive unit both in terms of the physical layout and the resident's social well-being. The present study was an effort to compare the status of social interaction in the three different types of neighbourhoods of Dhaka City in terms of location, physical features and socio-economic characteristics and it is revealed that Rasulbag and Eastern Point, a low rise naturally grown neighbourhood and a high-rise housing complex respectably possess higher level of social interaction than the neighbourhood of Dhanmondi, a planned residential area of Dhaka City.

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Table 1: Perception towards Neighbourhood Boundary

Perception towards Neighbourhood boundary	Rasulbag		Dhanmondi		Eastern Point	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
This building/apartment unit	11	21.15	30	69.76	3	7.5
The nearby two or three buildings/apartments	12	23.08	4	9.30	7	17.5
Buildings/apartments of this street	26	50	1	2.33		
Buildings/apartments of this apartment complex	0	0	0	0	29	72.5
Buildings/apartments of this block	0	0	5	11.63	0	0
Others (do not have any idea)	3	5.77	3	6.98	1	2.5
Total	52	100	43	100	40	100

Source: Field survey, 2005.

Table 2: Satisfaction towards Physical Environment of the Neighbourhood

Sense of Belonging	Neighbourhood	Opinion (%)		
		Agreed	Disagreed	Do not Know
You are satisfied with the physical environment of the neighbourhood	Rasulbag	51.92	19.23	28.85
	Dhanmondi	55.81	25.59	18.60
	Eastern Point	55	35	10

Source: Field survey. 2005.

Table 3: Perception towards Status of Social Interaction

Perception of social interaction	Rasulbag		Dhanmondi		Eastern Point	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Satisfactory	17	32.69	0	0	26	65
Medium interaction	15	28.85	11	25.58	8	20
Less interaction	11	21.15	20	46.51	6	15
No interaction	5	9.62	10	23.26	0	0
Others	4	7.69	2	4.65	0	0
Total	52	100	43	100	40	100

Source: Field survey, 2005.

Table 4: Spatial Extent of Regular Visit

Residing place of the neighbours	Rasulbag		Dhanmondi		Eastern Point	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
In the same apartment/buildings	18	34.62	22	51.16	25	62.5
Within 1-3 apartment/buildings on the both sides of respondents house	14	26.91	10	23.26	12	30
Within 4-6 apartment/buildings on the both sides of respondents house	13	25	7	16.28	3	7.5
Within 7-9 apartment/buildings on the both sides of respondents house	5	9.62	4	9.30	0	0
Within 10-12 apartment/buildings on the both sides of respondents house	2	3.85	0	0	0	0
Total	52	100	43	100	40	100

Source: Field survey, 2005.

Table 5: Causes of Less or No Interaction

Causes of less and no interaction	Rasulbag		Dhanmondi		Eastern Point	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Old residents do not well come new residents	10	9.09	19	18.45	5	7.14
New residents do not want to mingle with the local residents	12	10.91	6	5 83	3	4.29
New residents do not stay longer in the neighborhood	16	14.55	8	7.77	6	8.57
People are now busier than past	25	22.73	15	14.56	17	24.29
People are now self oriented	22	20	15	14.56	16	22.86
Class distinction prevents social interaction	7	6.36	13	12.62	6	
Absence of open spaces and /or meeting places in the neighborhood	12	10.91	13	12.62	8	8.57
Absence of neighborhood based organization	0	0	9	8.74	0	0
others	6	5.45	5	4.85	9	12.86
Total	110	100	103	100	70	100

Multiple answers counted
Source: Field survey, 2005.

Table 6: Necessity of Social Interaction

Necessity of social interaction	Rasulbag		Dhanmondi		Eastern Point	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
To increase good relationship with the neighbors	41	29.93	40	31.01	38	32.20
For development of the neighborhood	38	27.74	12	9.30	16	13.56
To solve the neighborhood problems	11	8.03	33	25.58	21	17.8
To increase helping nature of the neighbors	18	13.14	12	9.30	13	11.02
To prevent crime in the neighborhood	18	13.14	21	16.28	15	12.71
To practice social customs	9	6.57	8	6.20	10	8.47
Others	2	1.45	3	2.33	5	4.24
Total	137	100	129	100	118	100

Multiple answers counted
Source: Field survey, 2005.

Table 7: Initiatives Necessary for Enhancing Social Interaction

	Rasulbag		Dhanmondi		Eastern Point	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Local residents should be friendly with the new residents	25	13.59	9	6.72	4	5.47
Taffic congestion and water logging problems need to be solved	11	5.98	0	0	0	0
New residents should mingle with the local residents	22	11.96	19	14.18	3	4.11
People need to overcome class coconsciousness	14	7.61	10	7.46	8	10.96
People should practice traditional culture of social relation	16	8.7	12	8.96	16	21.92
New people should have provision in the local club	16	8.7	0	0	0	0
Infrastructure of local playground need to be developed	16	8.7	0	0	0	0
An indoor meeting place is needed in the neighborhood	13	7.06	0	0	0	0
People need to attend in the social and cultural events initiated by neighborhood club	15	8.15	0	0	20	27.4
A neighborhood based organization is need to be formed	0	0	25	18.66	0	0
Children and teen aged can form a association	20	10.86	21	15.66	8	10.96
Women can form a different association for them	8	4.35	25	18.66	8	10.96
There is no way to enhance social interaction in this neighborhood	1	0.54	9	6.71	0	0
Others	7	3.80	4	2.99	6	8.22
Total	184	100	134	100	73	100

Multiple answers counted
Source: Field Survey. 2005.

APPENDIX-II

Aspects of Social Interaction in the Neighbourhoods of Dhaka City

Survey of residents' opinion as a part of research for the degree of Masters in Urban and Regional
Planning
Department of Urban and Regional Planning,
Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology
Dhaka- 1000

Study Area. ....   **Date**. ....

Name of the Respondent..

A. Socio-economic Characteristics

1. Household information.............................

Relation with the respondent	Age	Sex	Education	Occupation	Income (Monthly)	Type of house

2. Type of Household............ ....

   a) Nuclear family
   b) Joint family
   c) Extended family
   d) Others

3. Employment sector of the respondent....................

   e) Government
   f) Non-Government
   g) Self-employed
   h) Others..

B. Housing Characteristics

4. Housing Type.......................................

    a) Apartment housing
    b) Non-apartment housing
    c) Single house
    d) Others....... ....

5. Year of construction.......................

6. Number of building in the premise....................

7. Number of flat in the building.........................

8 Type of tenure ....

    a) Owner occupied
    b) Rental house
    c) Government house
    d) Others............. ....

9. How long have you been living in this house?

a) 2-<5 years, b)5-<10 years, c)10-<15 years, d)15-<20 years, e) 20 years and above

10. Why are you living in this house?

....
....

11. Do you face any problem in living in the neighbourhood?

Yes   ☐   No   ☐   Others   ☐

If yes, what are the problems you face in your neighbourhood?

....
....
....

B. Information on Social Interaction

- ### Perception of and attitudes towards the neighborhood

12. According to you what is the area of your neighborhood?

    a) This block
    b) This small community
    c) The streets nearby
    d) This apartment estate
    e) Others...

13. List significant feature of your neighborhood (limit to 10 items)

....
....
....
....

14. In your opinion what class of people (based on income) living in this neighborhood?

    a) High class
    b) Middle class
    c) Lower class
    d) Mixed
    e) Others...................................

15. How you define your class in this neighborhood?

....

16. According to your opinion, what is the status of social relation among neighbours in your neighbourhood?

    a) Satisfactory
    b) Medium interaction
    c) Less interaction
    d) No interaction
    e) Others...

- ### Commitment and Sense of Belonging

17. Your opinion on................................. ....

	Agreed	Disagreed	Others
If have a chance to move out, you will leave this neighborhood			
You feel sense of community with your neighbours			

- **Neighbourly contact**

18. Your opinion on...

	Number of houses
You know the name of the name of head of the household	
You know occupation of head of the household	
You visit neighbour's house by invitation	
You visit neighbour's house regularly	

19. You regularly visit to the neighbours....................................

	Opinion
Living in the same building\apartment	
Living within 1 to 3 building\apartment on the both side of your house	
Living within 4 to 6 building\apartment on the both side of your house	
Living within 7 to 9 building\apartment on the both side of your house	
Living within 10 to 12 building\apartment on the both side of your house	

- **Mutual assistance**

20. What Types of mutual assistance you practice within the neighborhood?

	Yes	No	Others
Regularly/sometimes done a favor for neighbours			
Neighbor regularly/sometimes done a favor for you			
Visit neighbors when they become sick			
Neighbor visit you when you become sick			
You borrow money and/ other things from the neighbours			
Neighbors borrow money and /other things from you			

- **Social Network**

21. Do you have any kin living in this neighbourhood?

Yes ☐   No ☐   Others ☐

If yes, what type of kin do you have in this neighbourhood?

... .

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22. Do you have any friend living in this neighbourhood?

Yes ☐   No ☐   Others ☐

If yes, where does your friend live in the neighbourhood?
....

23. Is there any community association in the neighborhood?

Yes ☐   No ☐   Others ☐

If yes, what types of community association are in the neighborhood?

    a) Well fare societies
    b) Clubs
    c) Women's groups
    d) Non-profit groups
    e) Others...

24. Do you have membership of the association in your neighborhood?

Yes ☐   No ☐   Others ☐

If yes. do you have to pay for membership? and how much do you have to pay?

Yes ☐   No ☐   Others ☐

....

25. What types of activities initiated by this neighborhood association?
....
....
....

26. Do you attend in the activities initiated by these neighborhood associations?

Yes ☐   No ☐   Others ☐

If not, why?
....
....
....

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- **Secondary social interaction**

27. Does your neighborhood possess the following support centers?

Types of support Centers	Yes	No	Description of the Support Centers (Location, Type, Size)	Use of the support centers by the neighborhood people (Users, Frequency)
Religious Centers				
Education Centers				
Parks/Open spaces				
Cultural centers				
Health care centers				
Grocery				
Markets/Shops				
Kactha bazaar				
Play ground (out door)				
Indoor playing space				
Recreational Spot				
Neighborhood watch or foot patrol				
Community centers				
Others				

D. Problems of and Concerns for Neighborhood

28. In your opinion what are the major problems of your neighborhood?
....
....

29. How does neighborhood people discuss about these problems?
....
....

30. Are there any local organizations devoted to upgrade the neighborhood condition?
....

31. Have your neighborhood people taken any initiative to solve any problem in the past 6 months?

Yes ☐   No ☐   Others ☐

If yes. what types of steps they have taken?
....
....

32 Do you think that social interaction among the neighborhood people is necessary?

Yes ☐   No ☐   Others ☐

If yes, why social interaction is necessary?

....
....

33. According to you, what are reasons for having less social interaction in the neighbourhood?

....
....

34. According to you what types of initiatives need to be taken to enhance social interaction in the neighborhood?

....
....

35. What kind of help you want to offer for enhancing social interaction among people of your neighborhood?

....
....

Thanks for your co-operation