

FATHER'S PERCEPTION ON THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN 3-5
YEARS OLD CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT

By

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A thesis submitted to Brac Institute of Educational Development in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Science in Early Childhood Development

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Brac University
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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The thesis submitted is my/our own original work while completing degree at Brac University.
2. The thesis does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The thesis does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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Ethics Statement

Title of Thesis Topic: Father's Perception on Their Involvement in 3-5 Years Old Children's Development

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1. Source of population: Educated fathers who had at least one child aged 3-5 years
2. Does the study involve (yes, or no)
 - a) Physical risk to the subjects (No)
 - b) Social risk (No)
 - c) Psychological risk to subjects (No)
 - d) discomfort to subjects (No)
 - e) Invasion of privacy (No)
3. Will subjects be clearly informed about (yes or no)
 - a) Nature and purpose of the study (Yes)
 - b) Procedures to be followed (Yes)
 - c) Physical risk (N/A)
 - d) Sensitive questions (No)
 - e) Benefits to be derived (No)
 - f) Right to refuse to participate or to withdraw from the study (Yes)
 - g) Confidential handling of data (Yes)
 - h) Compensation and/or treatment where there are risks or privacy is involved (Yes)
4. Will Signed verbal consent for be required (yes or no)
 - a) from study participants (Yes)
 - b) from parents or guardian (Yes)
 - c) Will precautions be taken to protect anonymity of subjects? (Yes)
5. Check documents being submitted herewith to Committee:
 - a) Proposal (Yes)
 - b) Consent Form (Yes)
 - c) Questionnaire or interview schedule (Yes)

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Abstract

Evidence suggests that when fathers bond with their children from the early years of life, they play a more active role in their child's development. Research also shows that when children positively interact with their fathers, they have better psychological health, self-esteem and life-satisfaction in the long-term (UNICEF, 2018). This research attempted to explore the father's perception on their involvement in 3-5 years old children's development. Data were collected through in-depth interviews and group discussions. This study revealed that most of the fathers have good knowledge about child development. They tried to explain about child development by saying it as a holistic development which covers physical, mental and social development of a child and it starts from the birth. In terms of practice, it has found out that fathers gave emphasis on spending quality time with the children. They also help in daily activities of their children. They also help their children to be self-reliant. So, in the changing context of nation as well as to reach higher destination more activities, trainings and programs can be taken to promote the importance of ECD.

Keywords: Fathers perception; Fathers involvement; Child development

Dedication

This study is wholeheartedly dedicated to My Mother and My Father

Acknowledgement

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List of Acronyms

ECD	Early Childhood Development
FGD	Group Discussion
IDI	In-Depth Interview
HIC	High Income Countries
LMIC	Low and Middle Income Countries
NICHD	National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

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Chapter I: Introduction & Background

Introduction

Bangladesh is a populated country consisting 165,158,616 populations where about 60 percent of the men and a little over 63 percent of the women are currently married (BBS, 2022). The household size is 4 which is much less compared to last decade. Here society is primarily a men dominant society and most families are headed by men. But this picture is changing because more female participation in labour force is increasing rapidly (BBS, Women and Men in Bangladesh, Facts and Figures 2022).

Goal 5 under SDGs, gender equality, ensure to eliminate all sorts of discriminations towards women and girls and specific targets (5.4, 5.5, 5.6) implies women empowerment and participation in all levels which ultimately reduce the male dominant culture of Bangladesh, thus the responsibility and roles of fathers and mothers towards their children's is changing gradually. Since the 1960s, urbanization and industrial growth are increasing for which families tend to be smaller and the nuclear family group is becoming more common. Now it is observed that traditional parenting roles are changing where more involvement of fathers in direct care of children is increasing. These situations give a golden chance to do research to realize fathers' involvement and perception about their knowledge and practices on 3-5 years old children's development in Bangladesh. Both fatherhood (the social and symbolic status accorded to fathers) and fathering (the activities fathers engage in and carry out in the care of their children) have largely been formally conceptualized through a Western lens. Theories, research, and program models focused on father's contributions to children's well-being have drawn upon traditional Euro-western cultural values, family formations, and goals for children's development. For several reasons, these perspectives are unlikely to be useful in understanding fatherhood and fathering in Bangladesh (Ball and Wahedi, 2010). In

Bangladesh fathers play limited roles in father's involvement in child development both because of their reluctance and not much awareness about their roles in childhood development. Now it is high time to involve fathers and make positive perception about father's involvement in child development for children age 3-5 years old and introducing programs to support fathers' involvement in optimizing conditions for young children is an idea that is gaining ground in international social development (Ball and Wahedi, 2010).

The future of a nation depends on the present generation's proper development at their very early years of life and here, parents have a pivotal role to play to pave the way of appropriate early childhood development of their children to grow as an asset for the family, for the society and for the entire country. When it comes about flourishing and development of a child age 3-5 years old, father's involvement is an incredibly important and beneficial. A child's initial bonding with father can influence the child's overall developmental outcomes at every sphere in future life. The primary styles of interaction with father are forwarded to all relationships; not only a child's innate idea of who he/she is as he/she associate to others, but also, the scope that a child considers as desirable and loving (Gross, 2021). Scholars mentioned that fathers should be involved in making productive impacts on the child through the display of love, understanding, authority, resources, protection, and continuous supportive guidance to the child (Alagbada, T. Joshua, & others, 2021).

Statement of the Problem

Children who do not get much involvement with their fathers are impacted in numerous ways such as they being less physically healthy, having less social-emotional development, having less of a relationship with extended family, experiencing more financial instability (Dads Resource Center, 2021).

Children's diminished steadiness and feeling abandoned if their fathers are not involved in their activities, also struggle with their emotions and become self-loathing (Edward, 2012). Behavioural problems like problems in social adjustment and problems with friendships, fears, resentments, anxieties and unhappiness increase in future life of a child when a child is not involved with father (Edward, 2012).

The father is one of the numerous role recognitions that a man presumes, at the same time, society provides multiple understanding of fathers from the traditional bread earner and cleaner in to the new age as nurturing father (Chakma, 2010). Before the 1990s, fathers and fathering was considered in largely in a financial context but believes about the father's role both from father's themselves and external sources maybe an important predictor of variability in father involvement regarding multiple context (Chakma, 2010).

Father's involvement in early childhood development improves a child's cognitive and learning abilities. studies suggest that increased fatherly involvement might result in children's higher IQ levels and improved learning performance and grow as more resilient and healthily (Rainforest Learning Centre Inc, 2023).

The presence of a father strengthens family bonds. Fathers improve social competence. By talking and listening to their children, fathers can make their children feel more confident and safe, more likely to build sustainable social connections. Fathers can affect children's view on gender and role values (Rainforest Learning Centre Inc, 2023).

In present days, fathers do much more hands-on care giving activities like—changing diapers, getting up at night, helping with homework. The fathers' take part in both outdoor and indoor play for the betterment of early childhood development of their kids.

One of the prime roles that a responsible father has been performing from the very beginning is to provide financial support to meet child's basic need and on the other hand act as a protector from every hazardous moment.

Fathers provide opportunities for children to explore and master skills outside the home. Research shows that there are many positive and direct impact on child development if fathers are involved like cognitive cluster, academic cluster, psychological-emotional cluster, social – interactional cluster.

The quality of father involvement influences a child from the very beginning and can have long-lasting outcome on the whole life of a child.

Mostly, child whose father is strongly involved tend to have less problems in school performance, behaviour, and social interactivity compared with the child whose father is not strongly involved.

"We found that today's dads spend more time, provide more care and are more loving toward their kids than ever before and Most dads see themselves as playing an equally important role in helping their children as mothers do." Kevin Shafer. At present time, fathers spend more quality time which influenced children developmental outcome. Early patterns of interaction with fathers and their children is valuable to incorporates strong and positive behavioural qualities in social interaction (Gross, 2014)

Father's perception about child development is changing in recent times and the family structures of all kinds is also changing simultaneously. If they are engaged, fathers can make differences. Era of Women empowerment and their increased participation rates in job market has changed how society views the traditional roles of fathers and mothers. This transition in economics, urbanization, and sexual roles has led to more opened, flexible, and undefined functions for fathers and a study by the National

Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD, American Psychological Association,2019) indicates that fathers are more involved in caretaking than before.

In Bangladesh, traditionally fathers do not actively participate in the upbringing and their children development and father's perception of fatherhood tend not to considered the importance of playing with their children, reciting nursery rhymes or talking and listening to their children. The result is that fathers as crucial role models (according to some cultural prospective) are absent during much of the child's formative years. In Bangladesh the value of fatherhood and father's involvement is significantly underestimated and yet to be fully explore as an opportunity to enhance child's various academic, pro- socialization behaviour, cognitive competencies and also in language development from the initial years (Chakma,2010). Apart from the traditional roles of being the head of the family and earning money the father's perception and practices of fatherhood is crucial for designing future intention programs to facilitate paternal involvement in child care (Chakma,2010).

Fathers are not on the focus of most parenting research because of the theoretical biases that mothers are primary caregivers not fathers, second, the belief that fathers do not involve in hands-on activities those rooted in social norms about proper roles of men and women also contribute to the reluctance to consider fathers in parenting research. third, fathers have been characterized as children's economical supporter not emotional supporter because they spend less time with children. However, in present days, in dual-earner households both mothers and fathers are actively involved in childrearing practices. Now it is high time for developmental scientists to move away from a predominant focus on primary caregiver for research which cover just mothers, but should consider the household as a unit and think about quality interactions between

fathers and children and among fathers, mothers, and children (Cabrera, Volling, and Barr, 2018).

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to perceive fathers' perception on their involvement in 3-5 years old children's development in Bangladesh. Fathers play pivotal role in every children's life which is not only unavoidable but also not possible to be fulfilled by other caregivers and fathers' involvement have multiple influences on children's physical and socio-emotional health and help shape him or her into the individual they want to be. This study will explore father's perceptions on their involvement in 3-5 years old children's development. The study will also explore what are the practices fathers do to achieve age appropriate development of their children.

Significance of the Study

As per above discussion, it is clear that for the holistic development of 3-5 years old children, the activities which are linked with fathers are crucial and paternal parenting practice helps to promote the inner development of a child. They can meet their children's need by nurturing, supporting, guiding and advocating. The international community has emphasized this issue in the conference and in 2000 our neighbouring country, India, has a formed a policy called the "Indian National Population Policy for responsible fatherhood". This policy places emphasize on male involvement in family affair such as equal opportunities of both women and men in all aspects of household duties. Because it promotes quality and reinforces positive family value and bring greater benefits for children. (Chakma,2010)

Although fathers have typically been perceived and judged by their breadwinning or provisioning, fathers fill other roles as well. Most research suggests that mothers play with children more than fathers do, but because play is more prominent in father-child

interactivity, paternal playfulness and correlative novelty; make fathers important to their children. Thus, enhanced importance increase fathers' influence depends on the amount of time they spend with children. "Sensitive fathering—responding to, talking to, scaffolding, and teaching and encouraging their children to learn—predicts children's cognitive and linguistic achievements just as sensitive mothering does (Lamb, 2004)".

To carry forward the easily Movement in Bangladesh many Strategies and approaches are being applied to involve parents, siblings and other caregivers to achieve the optimum development of children such as home based, Centre based and community involvement programs and child to child approaches. The best approaches to serve the children and empower the father's yet to be found this approaches require using the father's involvement in the process in a cost effective way, particularly to make ECD program a successful one (Chakma,2010)

In the last decade scholars have moved beyond unidimensional characterizations of fathers as breadwinners to multidimensional conceptions of father involvement and fostered new theoretical models about how and why dimensions of fathering vary across developmental and historical time and how they jointly contribute to the life trajectories of children and families (Lamb,2004).

Although it is common to hear that Bangladesh is relatively homogeneous, significant diversity exists, including a small but highly diverse population of indigenous peoples, the portion of the population (11%) that is not Muslim, a small number of extremely wealthy families, a rapidly growing number of urban families with one or both parents in the workforce, as well as families living in the countryside much as they did during or before British rule. Normative assumptions and cultural stereotypes about "the Bangladeshi father" will hinder understandings of the distinctive needs and goals of

different populations of fathers and families, and prevent them from receiving the kinds of support they may find most helpful to ensure optimal family and child outcomes (Ball and Wahedi). Therefore, it is expected that this study on father's involvement in their children (3-5 years) development will be helpful to give a picture with changing situation how fathers have been contributing in their children's (3-5 years) development and what they have been practising in reality.

Research Questions

1. What is fathers' understanding about their involvement in child development for children age 3-5 years.
2. What are the practices fathers do for their 3-5 years old children's development?

Operational Definition

Child development: It's mention to the procedure which starts at human beings grow and mature through early childhood to adulthood where various characteristics of development are considered that include cognitive, bodily and social development. Sigmund Freud on his theory mentioned that because of natural unconscious sexual drives children go through certain stages of development. Furthermore, Erik Erikson and Lev Vygotsky's focused on social relationships and social interactions are the main actors in child development (study.com, 2023).

Perception: The process by which sensory stimulation got translated to formulated experience can be defined as perception.(Britannica, 2022).

Verywell mind a recognize blog, define perception as, "recognizing environmental stimuli through the five senses. Perception refers to our sensory experience of the world. It is through this experience that we gain information about the environment around us.

Through the perception process, we are able to both identify and respond to environmental stimuli.” (verywell mind, 2022)

3-5 years old child development: From ages 3 to 5 years’ children learn some sentences (language skill), ask lots of questions through ‘who’, ‘what’, ‘where’ and ‘why’ (cognitive skills), they try to understand more about their surroundings and enjoy playing (physical skills), they learn rules and take turns, make friends and go outside to develop their socialization (social skills) (startingblocks,2023).

Chapter II: Literature Review

Father involvement is defined as men's ‘positive, wide-ranging, and active participation in their children's lives’. Father involvement means, direct interaction between a father and child (play, caretaking); accessibility, or how available a father is to his child when needed; responsibility, or managing and providing resources for a child (doctor's appointments, supplementing family income or child support); building of social capital, or how fathers provide a support network for children as they grow up to contribute to society (Fogarty and Garret 2005). These are all ways in which a father shows he is involved in his child's life. The first two ways involve direct interaction between fathers and children and the last two ways are more indirect ways that fathers stay involved in their children's lives (Fogarty and Garret 2005).

Regarding children’s health and wellbeing, specifically in childhood fathers play a vital part where their active involvement in childrearing through responsive care and stimulation has revealed positive outcomes in early learning and cognition, also in socio-emotional development (Clara Alemann, Aapta Garg, & Kristina Vlahovicova, 2020).

Evidence shows that, when men are involved from the beginning of children’s lives through participating in pre-natal care and education or have leave from work in the

time of child birth can establish a pattern of higher lifelong participation and fathers' continuous positive involvement in the lives of their children – listening to them and involving them in decision-making – enhances children's physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development and can contribute to their happiness (Save the children,2015).

Several theoretical models or frameworks have been used to understand the complex relationship between father involvement and child outcomes e.g. Ecological Theory of Development by Bronfenbrenner which often been used to depict the interactions and influences acting in nested ecological levels to explain child development and well-being. From a child's perspective, the model consists of the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem, the macrosystems and the chronosystem. Paternal effects on child outcomes are mainly part of the microsystem where it is argued that having several adult microsystems can benefit the child, provided that these interactions and relationships as well as interactions between parents are positive. Interactions within and across systems can ultimately build social capital which is achieved when a father is warm and supportive towards their child, cooperative with the mother, and connected with others in the community such as teachers, or a child's friends (Pablo, Davison, Erkhembayar, 2021).

Many theories such as Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory, attachment theory, social-capital theory depicts that father can contribute uniquely to child's development. Examples of involvement that were positively related to children's developmental outcomes include but not limited to: mere presence, warmth, responsibility, parenting satisfaction, nurturance, financial contribution, and use of language (Paguute, 2004, Tekin, 2012).

A lot of research regarding father involvement yields beneficial cognitive outcomes for children, even more than mother involvement includes higher scores on cognitive competency assessment and better verbal skills (Pruett, 2000), better problem solving skills and intellectual development, increased curiosity and self-regulation skills, higher scores on intelligence and IQ tests. Furthermore, fathers have unique interaction styles that contribute to children's language development, dramatically. They tend to use a more complex language and higher level of vocabulary than do mothers and ask more "why-when-where-what" questions than the "yes-no" questions more often used by mothers (Tekin, 2012).

Father's involvement and child development: Global context

The study of the fathers' involvement in child care increased in the '70s and '80s, and became important to acknowledge how fathers also acted as nurturer and caregivers for developing children's. Father's involvement is conceptualizing to describe men's role in caregiving across a range of task that can be grouped into three major parts. First one is engagement (spent personal time with children), second is accessibility (involved in household chores with minimal one-on-one interaction) and the third one is responsibility (when the fathers perform the activities which are mostly related with child care) (Lamb, 2004).

Children whose fathers are present by their mothers' side at the time pregnancy and the initial years of childhoods are reported to have higher academic success, developed more career skills and better psychological well-being (Heath, 1994).

As parents, involved father's experiences more confident and effective, they realize fatherhood is satisfying, as well as feel intrinsically salient near the child and also experiences motivated for further involvement (Chakma,2010). An involved father promotes inner growth, strength and emotional nourishment of his child because like

as mothers, fathers are also main pillars in child's life and development. (Paediatric Associates of Franklin, 2023)

A study by Cabrera (2014) found that, fathers who are much involved during infancy, like to stay with their involvement as the child grows older. Another study by Flouri and Buchanan (2003) found that fathers who had higher involvement with their children had children with better cognitive development.

Epstein (1995) acknowledged that parent involvement is a complex and multidimensional concept widely recognized to impact both the learning and development of a child. Levels and types of parent involvement vary for many reasons, including socioeconomic status, educational background, residential status, and sex of parent (U.S. Department of Education, 2003).

Children experience more positive outcomes and less negative outcomes if they experience positive father-child relationships. Involved fathering is sensitive, warm, close, friendly, supportive, affectionate, nurturing, encouraging, enjoyable, and accepting and associated with positive impacts on their children starts before birth. Research shows that paternal prenatal bonding is connected with benefits to the ensuing father-child relationship and fathers' supportive or abusive behaviour can effect maternal attachment with the baby, and the quality of the partner relationship sometimes anticipates how both parents will respond to fulfil the needs of their child. (University of Wisconsin-madison, 2020)

In the area of early childhood development, investigation has done regarding the influence of father's involvement. A study by Harris and Marmer (1996) found that fathers who were actively involved with their children had children with better emotional regulation skills. Similarly, a study by Sarkadi (2008) found that fathers who were highly involved with their children had children with better social skills.

Father involvement in nurturing child have been highlighted in the past few years. Researchers have identified that fathers have immense impacts on family life especially on the children lives. Development, emotional growth, and cognitive functioning of children can be flourished when fathers get involved in their lives (Levine, Murphy, & Wilson, 1998).

While mothers and fathers can both involve in playful activities, scholars have suggested that fathers have unique types of playful interactions such as ‘rough-and-tumble’ play and teasing interactions that can be beneficial for child development. This idea is supported by a meta-analysis which showed that fathers’ contributions towards child well-being is distinct from that of the mother. Here, father involvement showed a distinctly positive association with measures such as child psychological, social, and academic outcomes (Pablo, Davison, Erkhembayar, 2021).

Lamb, Pleck, and colleagues postulate that ‘positive father involvement’ is an umbrella term which describes whether the father is (1) accessible to their child and is therefore present to address the child’s needs, (2) engaging with their child, allowing them to identify their child’s needs and engage them in different activities, and (3) responsible for their child by planning and managing the needs of their child. This suggests that paternal supervision and involvement can be beneficial to the child. (Pablo, Davison, Erkhembayar, 2021).

Trahan & Cheung (2018) noted that fathers who have a strong early life relationship with their children are likely to have a positive quantity and quality of fathers' relationship with their children later in life because of the emotional attachment and absence of fathers’ care could lead to a stressful childhood experience. (T. Joshua, & others, 2021).

Literature suggests, children engaged with fathers have more positive attitude and socio-emotional attainment compared with the children who are not involved and paternal involvement has greater positive outputs on older children comparing to younger children (Wang, Li, Dill, Zhang & Rozelle, 2021).

Using data from the National Early Head Start Research and Evaluation Project, a study showed in the language domain, boys, not girls, were found to be more susceptible to the effects of fathers' parenting stress which indicated that fathers, in addition to mothers, should be included in early parenting research and interventions (Vallotton and Borphy-Herb, 2017).

In the past 20 years the practice of fatherhood in western Europe and North American countries has come under increasing scrutiny from research policy makers practice owners and the media. There are now international conference and forums on the practice of fatherhood including many websites dedicated to this topic. Interest also continuous on the links between fatherhood research and social and organisational policies (Chakma.2010). Desirable result has a high probability of coming true when there is intensive father involvement. UNICEF (2018) recognized that the first five years of a child's life is the most important when it comes to lay the foundations of the child's future and life choices (edubirdie.com).

Studies which were tested direct effects indicates that fathers influence children's development in several domains through direct interactions or by providing necessary materials to increase learning and development and at the same time, supportive fathers having socially competent children with positive friendships, who remain engage in more complex play to achieve optimal language outcomes in context of every socioeconomic status, race, and ethnicity. While considering indirect effects, studies shows fathers impact their children through spending quality time and quality home

experiences. Fathers' mental health, bonding of parents and encouraging co-parenting are linked with fewer behaviour shortcomings and greater self-regulatory adeptness in children (Cabrera, Volling, and Barr, 2018).

Another important part of father involvement to child development is the theory of Family Centered Care (FCC). Family-centered care theory is a partnership and collaborative method to healthcare decision-making of the child. In other words, when the father and mother are collaborating as partners in the care of a child, then the outcome will be good. (Alagbada, T. Joshua, & others 2021).

Father's involvement and child development: Bangladesh Context

A study by David and Barbara shows that fathering behaviour in Bangladesh, both in rural and urban families, mothers were the primary caregivers and men's time with children involved more on play than caregiving (David and Barbara, 2014).

Considering HICs, father involvement is higher and shows positive link between education and family wealth with father's direct engagement with children but LMICs do not find consistent evidence on such associations (Gracia, Ferland, Aboud, 2022). So, evidence of fathers' direct influence on children's development generates initially from HICs. More father-child engagement can improve children's cognitive and socioemotional development, early learning and behavioural outcomes which are shown by an analyses on parenting interventions by involving fathers in recent years. (Gracia, Ferland, Aboud, 2022)

Euro-western values of fatherhood and fathering have minimal acceptance in South Asia particularly in Bangladesh. In Bangladesh the core of social and family life is determined by strong family ties and symbiotic relationship. By these values of family ties the distinctive roles of every individual are determined and assigned (Ball & Wahedi, 2010).

In Bangladeshi culture the elders, especially males, are the head of the family and they are the decision makers and women are not economically solvent and there are gaps between gender roles in social life. A study on Perceptions and practices of fatherhood among urban fathers in Bangladesh indicated that 90% of urban father think and believe that the father and mother's role are different in child rearing. It is described that mothers' child caring role are feeding, bathing, nursing, cleaning, giving time and doing household chores. Fathers are incapable to do what the mothers does. In compare to mother roles, fathers involve playing a provider role; providing economic support; taking children to a park, zoo or other outdoor activities; making decisions about schools, teachers and doctors; disciplining their children; guiding and directing their spouse (Chakma, 2010). In Bangladeshi cultural ideals differ from Western ideals regarding parenting. It is imperative that mothers are considerate the default caregiver owing to Bengali and Islam culture regarding gender roles (Ball & Wahedi, 2010).

A study evidenced that 44% of urban fathers are unaware of the need for mental care as measures for child development. Only 14% of the fathers knew how to provide interactive care to stimulate the child and only 18% identified playing or walking with the child as activities in which they could participate and contribute to the mental development of their child. That study also illustrated that in Bangladesh, fathers, on average, does not spend even an hour per day with their children and they believe that the influence of their role amounts to only 5% of all the effects that shape a child's learning. Bangladesh context

An Exploratory set of interviews by Golam (ARNEC,2009) shows the beginning of an interest in fatherhood in Bangladesh. How fathers perceive their rules in child rearing and caring activities and the various to increase involvement yet to be explore in Bangladesh (Chakma,2010).

Effective parenting is a popular subject of conversation now-a-days which considers fathers as an inevitable part and cannot remain reluctant regarding child development. If fathers not willing to engage in caregiving activities following traditional patterns of behaviour then father education and support programs induce fathers to adapt new role as caregiver, that might bring a positive effect on their children's development and a way of become better involved in their lives (Taskin and Erkan, 2009).

Father can influence child's behavior, intellectual growth and school adjustment. Again, children who are well-bonded and loved by involved fathers, tend to have less behavioral issues that inoculated against alcohol and drug abuse and vice versa. Research shows that fathers are as important as mothers as caregivers, also ideal person for facilitate social and emotional behavior of their children. Father remains and spend more time in home is a comparatively new structure that has emerged in our culture and on the other hand women's strong financial gain, increase in corporate lay-offs, and men's emerging strong sense of self have made the ground for greater father-child involvement (Chowdhury, Fareha, Islam and Obaydollah, 2018).

Chapter III: Methodology

Study Design

It is a qualitative study design. To obtain insights into a specific phenomenon of interest the collection, analysis, and interpretation of overall narrative, visual data is known as qualitative research (Gay, 1999). A significant belief that underpins qualitative research is that lots of truths can come out by the findings of the study because world is not uniform and stable (Gay, 1999). The primary purpose to select this method is to understand father's perception about father's involvement in 3-5 years old child's development.

Research Participant

Research participants were the fathers having children age 3-5 years old. The participants were chosen purposively. All the participants are working fathers from urban areas and the age range of the fathers were 30-40 years.

Research Site

The proposed research was conducted in Dhaka city and Narsingdi. IDI and FGDs also were done in various parts of the above mentioned areas.

Participant Selection Procedure

Homogenous group of fathers from urban middle-income families, either involve in services or businesses who have at least one child (age 3-5 years) were selected. There were 16 participants. IDI was conducted with 4 fathers. 2 Focus Group Discussion (FGD) (face to face. 6 fathers in each FGD group) were done. Participants were selected purposively.

Data Collection Methods

Thematic In-depth interview (IDI) with 4 fathers and 2 Focus Group Discussion (FGD) (face to face. 6 fathers in each FGD group)

Data Analysis

For data analysis researcher followed the Gay's data analysis process which is text analysis, explanation, analysis, and thematic development and lastly find out The greater meaning of findings (Gay.1999). So, having all the data, the researcher organized data in a systematic process. First of all, data were checked whether all the data were collected properly. Then IDI and FGD answers were transcribed and incorporate all the short notes that the researcher took during the time of interviews. Detailed analysis was done by checking the nominal value and raw data and the correctness of the data will be further checked manually by the researcher. The data were organized into database structure and entered in computer using google spreadsheet (like-MS excel). Eventually the data were analysed in a step-by-step process as given below for the relevancy of the title and research objectives.

Data Cleaning → Data Entry → Checking accuracy of data → Validation → Result and Interpretations

Ethical Issues

Ethical issues were strictly followed in this study. For the study data collection, the participants were taken part voluntarily and without pressure. The participants were contacted and the same details of the study was shared with them to seek their prior consent and convenient time. participant's rights, dignity and autonomy was appropriately protected on the whole process. There was no physical, psychological, legal, political, religious and social harm occurred during the study- The privacy of all data was guaranteed both by the researcher and the BRAC University authority and the

participants ensured that their answers would be kept in record only for academic purposes. The questions of the IDI will be made in a manner so that it will hurt no one feelings. The participants received proper information about the research procedure, purposes, and storage of data and they were given the rights to withdraw their responses any time from the research study.

Validity & Reliability

In research, validity is a standard to measure qualitative data meticulously to gauge that researcher try to evaluate in a research. Through addressing credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of studies and findings, researchers can establish the accuracy of their research (Gay, 2012). Furthermore, reliability is a degree where data of the study persistently measure anything it measures (Gay, 2012). The researcher was highly attentive to keep the validity and reliability of the research.

Here researcher endeavoured to realize fathers' involvement and practices of children's life and how its impacts on developmental domains and related problems and obstacles in the global and Bangladeshi context through some literature reviews. Then researcher noted the specific problems regarding father's involvement and selected the research topic. To fine tuning the validity of the research, triangulation approach was applied.

Validity and Reliability are conceptualized as trustworthiness, rigor and quality in qualitative paradigm. From the qualitative researchers' point of view validity and reliability of a research get affected to remove bias and increase the researcher's truthfulness of a proposition about social phenomenon using triangulation (Golafshani, 2003). Triangulation is a validity procedure where researchers strives for convergence among multiple and different sources of information to form themes or categories in a study. (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Various data collecting and processing methods may be used in triangulation. The procedures used to examine a study's validity and

reliability are determined by the research criterion (Golafshani, 2003). To collect the data Different methods such as In-Depth-Interviews and Group discussions were conducted. Every necessary tools were examined and verified by ECD experts from Brac University. Feedbacks which were given by the experts' panel, were reorganized and redesigned by the researcher The interview questions' reliability had been checked by piloting the developed In-Depth-Interview and Group discussion questionnaire and this way the researcher had ensured the validity and reliability of the study.

Limitations of the study

One of the limitations of this study was that only urban areas were selected for this study but if the fathers of rural areas also took part then it would be better to see the study from more standpoints. Another limitation of this study was only middle income job holders' fathers had taken in conducting this study. If low income groups and higher income groups also selected, then it would be become better to understood how they involved with their children.

Chapter IV:

Results

This section has two parts where demographic information such as participant's age, academic qualification, profession, number of children has mentioned in one part and another is the finding part, where data has been analyzed that have been collected through four in-depth interviews and two Focus Group Discussions (FGDs).

Demographic Information of the Participants

The demographic profile in the study examined the age range of fathers and children, the educational qualification of fathers, and their profession.

All the participants are working fathers. All of them are completed masters in various discipline. 8 participants are Government job holder and another 5 participants are private job holder and

rest of the participant are entrepreneurs. After analyzing the participants' age, it has been found that the mean age of fathers was 35.36 years. The respondents belong to the age group 30 to 40 years. Among the fathers, five of them have two children, and the rest have only one child. The main objective of this research was to explore the fathers' perception on their involvement in 3-5 years old children's development; therefore, the age distribution of the children was an important factor of this study. The age range of the children was between 3 years 1 months to 4 years 10 months. six of them were female, and the rest were male.

Findings

The findings were organized under three main themes, and some sub-themes under the three themes. Findings from in-depth interviews and group discussions are discussed sequentially in each sub-theme.

Theme#1: Fathers perception on early childhood development

Fathers understanding of early childhood development and its importance

In this study, in the in-depth interviews and in focus group discussions, fathers shared their thoughts and opinions regarding early childhood development of their children. According to most of the fathers in the IDIs and FGDs, early childhood development means the holistic development of a child consisting of all form of physical, mental and social development that starts from the birth of a child. One respondent of IDIs shared that after birth, the adaptation with the external factors in a continuous process is the childhood development. Another respondent shared that physical, mental and social development of a zero to five years old child is the early childhood development and it is also very important. One father expressed it in details,

“In the early years; if physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, thinking abilities, moral behaviors, personalities and social development grows up then it will consider as early childhood development of that particular child where the child is free from every anxiety, unhealthy

situations and give his opinion without any hesitation.” (IDI#01, 03/03/2023)

According to him the proper early childhood development determines the future of a child. So give emphasis and be more involvement in early years as a father is very important.

One of the respondent from IDIs express that. for better future early childhood development is a must. Another participant mentioned that,

“The basis of a child grows up in his/ her childhood. If the behavior, norms and physical and mental milestones are not properly developed in the early years, then the child will not play his role accurately in future. Another important thing is that brain of a child is able to put and connect many things constructively which is quite difficult in the latter phase of life. That’s why the correct way should be followed from the initial periods of a child’s life.” (IDI#01, 03/03/2023)

In focus group discussion one of the participants who is the curriculum specialist in one of the government organization under Ministry of Health and Family Welfare expressed that.

“Early childhood development starts from the birth and continuous through language development, motor development, mental and emotional development, cognitive development and overall capacity to get educated in the very beginning of a child’s life. Finally, the basis of early development of a child acts as a milestone for child’s life.” (FGD#01, 16/03/2023)

In FGD few fathers explained that, early childhood development refers to age-appropriate growth of the child, response and feedback capacities of child those are

develops in early years of life. In addition, few fathers told about adequate nutrition can enhance the early childhood development. According to a few fathers when emotional and cognitive development incorporates in child's life as per their age then it can consider as early childhood development.

The future of a children depends on early childhood development, added by another participant in focus group discussion.

When replying about the development of a child, one father has given priority to the environment and stated that child development is when a child grows up physically and mentally in the right environment.

Key persons to play a role in child development and father's involvement

According to all fathers in IDIs and FDG; parents, family, and the environment are the important influencer in child development. One father emphasized on good parenting that includes how parents are giving time, how they deal with their child's problems, how and when other caregivers are being involved with child for the development of child and also surrounding environment can also have impact on child's development indirectly. So all the family members are the role players for early development but father and mother are the key role players in early years of a child's life. Another responded added that, other members of a family can also help to develop overall behavior of a child.

One of the respondents shared that, new ideas, new concept about social life, language development are developed by the age between 3 to 5 years. So, as a father he should know the topics that one he should teach his child, which behavior he should adapt to teach his child, the values and norms and also know about proper nutrition that will build early physical and mental health of a child.

Another respondent said, duties that drives a father for caring his child is actually mean fathers' involvement. If a proper and healthy bonding between the father and the child grows up, then it will help to build friendly environment to nurture a child.

In FGD one of the participants narrated that,

“For the job holder parents nurturing a child is a difficult task. So, as parents, we have to utilize the time that we spend with the child. If a father become busy then mother should give time and vice versa and the job holder parents must realize that the child should not be deprived of love and affection from his or her parents. Though the grandparents and other caregivers have their part in the development of a child but father and mother play the vital role.” (FGD#01, 16/03/2023)

In the FGD one of the respondents emphasizes on mother's role and he mentioned that a mother's role is inevitable for nurturing a child properly. Also as a working father, after returning from job, time spending with the child is crucial otherwise the child may become unhappy.

Theme#2: Importance of fathers' knowledge on child development

In the in-depth interviews and FGDs, all the fathers expressed the same opinion that they should have the knowledge of child development. One of the fathers shared that it is important for all caregivers to have knowledge regarding child development from the time of pregnancy. Fathers should be supportive and caring attitude towards the pregnant mother.

Another respondent explained that a father should know child psychology, child behavior, and surrounding environment of a child to guide the child better, give the child a good environment, and thus plays a good role in child development.

One of the respondents express that,

“Quality time means spending time with the child, speak and listen to the child, answer every asked question, show love, sometimes show authoritative parenting and tell the child what to do and what not to do with the child are the common things that a father should know for the betterment of his child's development.” (IDI#03, 05/03/2023)

Another respondent shared that for early childhood development a father should aware how to provide health facilities, security and adequate nutrition to child for his or her age-appropriate development. Also a father must know about every little detail of his child so that he can respond to his child in an emergency situation.

One of the fathers responded that parents should know about the child's physical and mental development, child nutrition and health, child's behavior and socialization and play. So the duty of both father and mother to observe whether all these things are working properly or not according to their age.

In FGD, one of the fathers mentioned that, a father should have the knowledge about child physical, mental and emotional health. He can then facilitate and guide the child properly e.g. which playing material is suitable for a child can't be an easy task to choose if as a father he does not know his child's playing habit and psychology. Giving time in a right way is another essential factor which is a must for potential development of a child, added by another respondent.

Another respondent expressed that.

“New and essential sentences, new behaviors and new ideas and thinking are open up in the three to five years old children's brain because they interact with the surrounding environment. A father should know which sentences are socially accepted, which behavior is right for his child and which behavior is not appropriate for his child. As a father,

proper knowledge about nutrition is also a mandatory area and he should gather knowledge about nutrition to enhance the child growth and development timely.” (FGD#01, 16/03/2023)

Few of the fathers also shared that they try to know how to deal with children, how to manage children’s behavior, what types of play and playful activities are helpful for early childhood development and what are important nutrient facts has impact on children’s overall growth through social media, or through TV and newspapers or through books.

Theme#3: Fathers’ practices to ensure child development

Fathers’ contribution on their children development

In-depth interviews and FGDs were conducted to explore father’s contribution in early childhood development of their children. Most of the fathers think that spending quality time and providing mental support is important for child development. According to IDIs, fathers shared that they usually spend time with children by playing different types of games, by telling a story or read aloud a story, go outside for a walk or enjoy the sites which are helpful for child’s holistic development.

One of the fathers mentioned that,

“Child safety is important and, in this regard, he tries to ensure his child’s To feed my child, help or teach my child how to do his toileting, roaming around with my child in free time are the ways I involve with my safety which helps his child to grow up independently and achieve his age appropriate developmental milestones.” (IDI#01, 03/03/2023)

One of the respondents also added that, obviously a father should involve with his child in many activities otherwise the child may go to astray or a wrong way. Further he told that, the child may feel insecure which will darken the overall child’s growth and if

father-child relations and interaction are not occur in the childhood in a frequent basis. Another respondent says obviously more involvement makes more security and better bonding which leads to a happy family.

another respondent in IDIs shared his opinion as

“child. These activities are helping to develop my child in a proper way.” (IDI#02, 03/03/2023)

"By Correcting my child's walking and running style, solving my child's errors while he talks with others and through active involvement in the time of my child's play I remain involve, said by another respondent. Another way of contributing for his development through go out for a walk and be an active member of his play. But for his proper development the volume of involvement should be more than present, he also acknowledges it.” (IDI#01, 03/03/2023)

Another respondent expressed that, development in early years is a qualitative change. According to my child's ability to do or not to do an activity I am devoting myself with his every day's chores beside my work.

in group discussion, one of the participants expressed that

“I carefully observe how my child works. If he does any wrong for example if he can't sneeze properly that means without maintaining manner or etiquettes about sneeze, then as a sensible father I should abide him by saying that when you sneeze do it in a safe and proper way. Then I follow other activities like eating, talking, running, playing or any other things that he does. Try to find out the loop holes of him and mitigate those loop holes.so to contribute for my child's early

development I build more attachment with every single activity which is attainable for me.” (FGD#01, 16/03/2023)

I involve with my child through walking and running, talk with right pronunciation, read aloud the story book and sing a song, added by another participant. Another participant said, play with child in leisure period and make an outside tour can be very pleasant for my child. Along with this helping my child with his daily activities is another way to teach him for his proper development through my active involvement. In group discussion one of the participants firmly narrated that,

“I usually maintain a step by step system. Try to do some play with my child every day. In this way it will help to develop emotional bonding with me as well as my child’s motor development and language also increases. I try to make my child to do his routine activities properly. I ensure my child’s proper sleep which is essential for his cognitive development. As a job holder father I help my sons mother to feed him as per as I can. Meanwhile I try to not to use any smartphone or electronic devices while feeding my child. We both engage with him with various play and make enjoyable which will help overall development of my child and create an acceptance of us in my child’s heart.” (FGD#01, 16/03/2023)

Fathers’ contribution to ensure nutrition of their children

In all the IDIs and focus group discussion, all the fathers are very conscious of providing adequate nutrition to their children. One of the respondent expressed that, the fathers with a busy life, always tries add some value through nutritious food in their children’s early years which will include all the necessary ingredients of a balance diet.

One of the father mentioned, I try to give nutritious food to protect my child from diseases. Every day I keep, egg, fruits, milk, green vegetables, protein in the food list as per as my child's age and taste and avoid the outside food and fast food.

Another respondent expressed that,

"I always avoid outside or street food and try to give my child nutritious and homemade foods. Alongside I consult with doctor to meet up my child nutrition deficit. I tried to give age appropriate and routine based food intake." (IDI#01, 03/03/2023)

Another participant expressed if a balance diet is maintained from the very beginning of life then necessary nutrition demand of the child will be fulfilled. I do my shopping according to the need of nutrition of my child, added by another participant.

One of the respondent in group discussion shared that,

"When a child eats as child's father or mother, we should provide every day's homemade food without allowing junk food and one important point is that father or mother should lively engage while feeding or playing the child without talking help from other things like tv, moving objects, smartphone etc. And if we do so, the child will actually find the original taste of the food otherwise the child might eat the food but not with exact interest and taste. Another important thing is that to ensure proper nutrition, same food should not be continued every time and should change the menu according to the child's taste."

Another participant from group discussion added that,

"We only use carbohydrate or protein but we can mix vitamin and green vegetables also. As a father I also give child's mother proper knowledge about food and nutrition. I try to carefully observe the child's growth,

height weight ratio according to the age. In case of any malnutrition then I consult with a doctor or a nutritionist.”

Independence and self-regulation skills development

Every father engages themselves to make their children independent and self-regulated. According to the fathers, they teach their children how to wash their hand before eat, brush their teeth and eat by themselves. Some of them shared that they teach their children to be independent by giving instructions to arrange playing materials, books, clothes, and shoes, and other necessary things they use every day.

One of the responded shared that,

“I teach my child to be self-reliant. I teach my child how to take bath by himself, sleep, play or eat independently and I introduce these things one by one. So that my child can do all those by himself. One of the major purpose of this, it will help my child to face future difficulties when he will be alone to do his tasks. (IDI#03, 05/03/2023)

One father shared that his child is addicted to watch cartoon in smartphones. So to divert the mind from cartoons to towards play I give him small gifts like chocolates, mango juice and make a tour in the zoo.

It was gathered from the FGDs that some fathers try to teach their children to do their daily work in a gentle way with a fixed routine. The fathers also added that, they motivate their children to support their parents and elders day-to-day work.

One of the father responded from FGD that,

“I make daily routine for my child to do some work in the garden e.g. water the plants, clean the grills, sofa and balconies. I use to order my child softly to bring a glass of water or to bring the medicine box. I

inspire and teach my child to do so to be self-driven.” (FGD#2, 18.03.2023).

Another father responded that,

“He teaches the child to wear his own clothes and shoes, he gives fruits on his child’s hands and help the child to eat by himself. Here, he appreciates and rewards the child when the child can follow his instructions.” (FGD#2, 18.03.2023).

One father shared that, “He gives his child a warm hug, whereas another father gives a permission to see cartoon for fifteen minutes.” (FGD#1, 16.03.2023).

To input self-regulation and individualistic development give freedom and listens the child carefully, added by one of the participants of the group discussion.

Another respondent added,

“By controlling oneself to do ethical things in front of the child, a father can be a good teacher regarding child self-regulation. A father should observe child behaviour, what a child likes to do and what a child can done better then father should take action and guide him to do those things in a proper way for proper building of independency in a child.” (IDI#01, 16/03/2023)

Another respondent express that speak with the child and listen what a child wants to say.

In FGD, one of the participant expressed that,

“Self-regulation and independence also depends on self-control of a child. As a father first of all I should find out in what ground my child is not regulated properly. Second after selecting the exact area to rectify of my child I will nurture him to control himself. Self-control is does

not initially remain very strong in child's mind and they do not know exact way to control themselves. For this we have to talk with them very cordially, make understood them what they should do and not to do in a repetitive way. But if we solve the problem in an arrogant way the results might be go in the wrong direction. So the important thing is that we have to listen to them properly or give them enough space to handle their problems.” (FGD#02, 18/03/2023)

Another respondent added that we consider every child as an individual character and deal with them according to the child's behaviour. But we should not let them free that much which might be wrong because as a child, he has not yet gathered much knowledge to handle every situation accurately and properly. If the child gets the extra freedom which is not necessary, then he/ she can black mail the parents emotionally. So as father, we have to maintain a balance in self-control, independence and self-regulations in our young children.

Social interaction skills development

According to most of the fathers, they are aware of developing their children's social skills. To develop the skills, most of them mentioned that they allow the child to interact with everyone, play with other children of his age and take the child outside at different playgrounds.

One father said that I used to go to the playground or in an open space. Sometimes visit his grandparents' house and introduces my child to all his relatives and make him to understand all the relationship.

Another respondent expressed that,

“I give my child the opportunity to play with another child, give a gift for his good behaviour towards neighbours and others and give warning if he does anything wrong.” (IDI#01, 03/03/2023)

Another participant added that to make my child socially skilful I give the opportunity to exchange his views with friends and neighbours and sometimes go outside for hangout. Another respondent said that I like to involve my child in every good works.

One of the participants from FGD shared his opinion as follows,

“In our urban life the socialization of child occurs only after when child starts his school. The child remains closed in his room and don’t even know other children are having fun in the next door. When he goes the roof top then he may see one or two children otherwise not. So, if a father goes in park or in the field with his child or in social gathering or events with his child, where the child may see other children, then the child will talk with other children and might play with them and by this way social competencies on child will increase. So for age three to five years old child development, socialization is very important and child must have the opportunity to go outside to meet others.” (FGD#01, 16/03/2023)

Another participant added, to give emphasis on rural rules (traditional rules) and regulations to upbringing a child because it’s also very helpful for proper socialization. Especially as a father we should take our child in the various places and make him comfortable and teach him how to deal with others in various situations.

Another participant added that,

“The main aim of socialization is to build and enhance the decision making capacity of the children so that in future he can do his activities in an independent way.” (FGD#01, 16/03/2023)

Emotional development and father's roles

All the respondents are agreed on to build a strong emotional skill of children's is crucial. One of the respondents urges on regular speak and know the child's mental situation is a way to enhance the emotional skill of that particular child. Another respondent added that, to improve emotional skill I try to give him the opportunity to mix with his relatives, friends and every member of the family.

Another respondent said that,

“Every child shows emotions especially to his parents. So I try to response with rational emotions but at the same time avoid irrational emotions.” (FGD#01, 16/03/2023)

Another respondent expressed when his daughter cries for something he tries to stop that in a loving manner, make her laugh, listen her every speech attentively.

In the FGD, one of the father narrated that,

“At first a father should try to understand the emotional sides of his child. The child may express his emotion through cry, laugh, angry, remain indifferent and may be in other ways of emotions. Emotional development has two major area- one is positive and other is negative. And we have to teach our children everything in a positive way. Socialization, love and affection, family relations and decision making power and ability to cope up are the elements to know and enhance emotional power in the early years of a child's life and as a primary caregiver, here father and mother play the pivotal role.” (FGD#01, 16/03/2023)

Another respondent says that, a child must have the opportunity to meet every child of different characteristics. So if we resist the child not to meet and play with the children who are not having good qualities then it might hinder his inner development.

Ways to be involve as a father inclusively

Because all the fathers are job holder, most of them agreed on the fact that they are not involved enough with their children for achieving age-appropriate development in every domain. one of the respondents expressed that, talk with the child, make questions about various things and spend time with the child are the ways they can be more involve with their child.

Another respondent expressed that,

“Fathers remain busy because of job, family and social responsibilities. So, when we give time to my child can be and should be more involved. So for more engagement, in holidays I do the work which is most interesting for my child which requires more interaction and involvement. In other days I encourage my child to share different good events which makes father-child interaction deeper. These also protects my child from doing other activities which are not good for my child’s well-being. All these activities impacted on my child’s childhood development.” (IdI#1, 03.03.2023)

In FGDs one of the participants said, that he engaged with his child with every logical and healthy work, take him to playground to participate in play, running. jumping and other activities. another participant shared that, he does not get angry when his child with a curious mind asks questions. He further added that, he took care of every single activity of his child even though some work may not so important. He also tried to stay

connected with his child and try to have quick talk over phone though I have thousands of work to do.

Discussion:

The research aimed to explore the father' perception on fathers' involvement in 3-5 years old child development. Through in-depth interviews and group discussions data were collected. Data had been collected on the basis of the research objective and questions and were analysed and organized based on the findings of IDIs and FGDs.

The demographic profile of the study depicts that all the fathers were well educated, belongs to middle income group and were in middle aged. Current study finding shows that, most of the fathers have the understandings on child development but not in organized process and do their job and other responsibilities they have not enough time to get involved with children.

Theme#1: Fathers perception on early childhood development

The period from conception to entry in school defined as early childhood development that decorate a window of freedom to achieve all developmental domains e.g. physical, cognitive, socioemotional, through the interaction between the child and the environment (UNICEF, 2018). In this study, fathers shared their thoughts and opinions regarding early childhood development of their children. They defined early childhood development in various ways but there was little deviation in their perception and according to them, early childhood development means the holistic development of a child consisting of all form of physical and mental and social development which starts from birth. So, for a zero to five years old child, the early childhood development will be physical, emotional and social development and it is also very important. In this study, one father expressed, in the early years; if physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, thinking abilities, moral behaviours, personalities and social development grows up

then it will consider as early childhood development of that particular child where the child is free from every anxiety, unhealthy situations and give his opinion without any hesitation. It was found that most of the fathers express that, for better future early childhood development is a must. If the behaviour, norms and physical and mental milestones are not properly developed in the early years, then the child will not play his role accurately in future because brain of a child is able to put and connect many things constructively which is quite difficult in the latter phase of life. In this study, according to few fathers when emotional and cognitive development incorporates in child's life as per their age then it can consider as early childhood development.

Caregivers have a long-lasting effect on behavioral and neural development of children's. Research shown that stable caregiving in early life is mandatory for children's healthy socioemotional development but acute disruption in caregiving reverse later development and grow health disorders in whole lifespan (Gee and Cohodes, 2021). It was found in this study that parents, family, and the environment are the important caregivers and influencers in child development. One father emphasized on good parenting that includes how parents are giving time, how they deal with their child's problems, how and when other caregivers are being involved with child for the development of child and also surrounding environment can also have impact on child's development indirectly. So all the family members are the role players for early development but father and mother are the key role players in early years of a child's life.

Another respondent said, duties that drives a father for caring his child is actually mean fathers involvement. If a proper and healthy bonding between the father and the child grows up, then it will help to build friendly environment to nurture a child. In the present study it was found that for the job holder parents nurturing a child is a difficult task. So,

as parents, they have to utilize the time that they spend with the child. If a father become busy then mother should give time and vice versa,

Theme#2: Importance of fathers' knowledge on child development

Caring father likes to play with their kids to develop higher IQs, better language and cognitive skills, also to increase communication skills in kids by asking children more questions compare to mothers, which helps to build vocabulary and also, discussion skills (Zero to Three, 2016). Fathers acknowledged the same opinion that they should have the knowledge of child development. According to the fathers of this study, it is important for all caregivers to have knowledge regarding child development from the time of pregnancy and should be supportive and caring attitude towards the pregnant mother. The study found that a father should know child psychology, child behavior, and surrounding environment of a child to guide the child better.

In the present study fathers shared that, that for the betterment and appropriate child development a father should know how spend quality time with children. It was found in the study that for early childhood development a father should aware how to provide health facilities, security and adequate nutrition to child and every little detail of his child.

It was found that parents should know about the child's physical and mental development, child nutrition and health, child's behavior and socialization and play. So the duty of both father and mother to observe whether all these things are working properly or not according to their age.

In this study a father acknowledged that, the knowledge about child physical, mental and emotional health to facilitate and guide the child properly is important e.g. in case of choosing playing materials. Also giving time in a right way is another essential factor which is a must for potential development of a child.

In the study it was found that a father should know which sentences are socially accepted, which behavior is right for his child and which behavior is not appropriate for his child. As a father, proper knowledge about nutrition is also a mandatory area. Few of the fathers acknowledged that they try to know how to deal with children, how to manage children's behavior, what types of play and playful activities are helpful for early childhood development and what are important nutrient facts has impact on children's overall growth through mass media or books.

Theme#3: Fathers' practices to ensure child development.

Play is indispensable for parents to engage fully with their children for early development and contributes in children's cognitive, socioemotional and physical well-being (Ginsburg, 2007). Most of the fathers acknowledged that spending quality time and providing mental support is important for child development. Play, storytelling, outside walk and enjoying scenarios are helpful for child's holistic development. Child safety and better father- child bonding leads to a happy family. To feed child, help to do his toileting, every day's chores are the activities which helps to develop child in a proper way. It was found that, fathers can involve with their children through various ways such as walking, running, talking with right pronunciation, reading story book, singing, play in leisure time and finally helping children with their daily activities.

Inadequate nutrition knowledge and feeding practices among caregivers causes lasting malnutrition problems in young children (Inayati and others, 2012). It was found that, the fathers try add some value through nutritious food in their children's early years that include nutritious food items such as egg, fruits, milk, green vegetables, protein and avoid the outside food and fast food. In this study fathers mentioned that if a balance diet is maintained from the very beginning of life then necessary nutrition demand of the child will be fulfilled and important thing is that to ensure proper nutrition, same

food should not be continued every time and should change the menu according to the child's taste. also give child's mother proper knowledge about food and nutrition.

Self-efficacy and self-esteem in a child increases after the child learns self-regulation skills properly but difficulties in self-regulation hampers children's well-being including aggression control and social behaviours. So, self-regulation a vital predictors of children's positive development (Hautakangas and Kumpulainen 2021). In this study it was found that, by giving instructions to eat by oneself, arrange playing materials, books, clothes, and shoes, bath by oneself or play independently father engages themselves to make their children independent and self-regulated.

To input self-regulation and individualistic development give freedom and listens the child carefully. A father should observe child behavior, what a child likes to do and what a child can done better then father should guide him to do those things in a proper way for proper building of independency in a child. Another respondent express that speak with the child and listen what a child wants to say and consider every child as an individual character to deal with them according to the child's behaviour.

Social skills continue through life. So, cooperative also sharing mined children, who are helpful and empathic, capable to regulate emotions in adaptive ways, are usually good at most of the social arenas in their life. Social competence is multidimensional, like the ability to accumulate cognition, motivation, and behaviour in achieving positive developmental outcomes in social tasks (Hagen and Berg, 2020). In this study, fathers acknowledged that, to develop the social skills, they allow the child to interact with everyone, play with other children of their age, exchange their views with friends and neighbours and take the child outside at different playgrounds.

In this study fathers mentioned that, in urban life, socialization of child occurs only after when child starts his school. So, if a father goes in park or in the open field with

his child or in social gathering where the child may see other children, then the child will talk and play with them and by this way social competencies on child will increase. Fathers mentioned in this study that, they should take their children in the various places and make them comfortable and teach them how to deal with others in various situations. The main aim of socialization is to build and enhance the decision making capacity of the children so that in future he can do his activities in an independent way. Fathers' emotions and behaviours sometimes provide unique contributions to children's emotion regulation with stronger links compare to mothers (Cherry and Emily, 2021). It was found that, all the fathers are agreed on to build a strong emotional skill in child's life is essential and this way they try to understand the child's mental situation. To improve emotional skill of their children they give the opportunity to mix with relatives, friends and every member of the family deal every activity in a polite manner.

It was noted in the study that, at first a father should try to understand the emotional sides of his child. Emotional development has two major areas- one is positive and other is negative. And they have to teach their children everything in a positive way. Socialization, love and affection, family relations and decision making power and ability to cope up are the elements to know and enhance emotional power in child's life and as primary caregiver father and mother can play the pivotal role.

In the father's day 2018, a campaign was lounded to inform parents that if fathers nurture kids in childhood through love and security, engage through play, ensure necessary nutrition – then children will acquire more because of having minimum behavioural issues which will assure a healthy and happy life (UNICEF, 2018). It was found that, fathers remain busy because of job, family and social responsibilities. So for more engagement, fathers should do the work which is most interesting for their child and requires more interaction and involvement.

Conclusion

In Sweden, a study shows that fathers' involvement in childcare activities had positive outcomes on child's cognitive maturing, irrespective of the mother's level of education (Fronger, 2019). Moreover, a study in Canada found that fathers' participation in perinatal education programs and prenatal care classes leads to healthier and stronger family relationships, improved paternal mental health, and better child development outcomes (Villeneuve, 2021).

The proper early childhood development determines the future of a child and if the behavior, norms and physical and mental milestones are not properly developed in the early years, then the child will not play his role accurately in future. So, father emphasized on good parenting that is how parents are giving time, how they deal with their child's problems, how and when other caregivers are being involved with the child for the age-appropriate development of the child in a positive environment.

It is found in this study that, if a proper and healthy bonding between the father and the child grows up, then it will help to build friendly environment to nurture a child. So though the grandparents and other caregivers have their part in the development of a child but father and mother have to play the vital role.

In this particular study, it was found that how a father should deal with a pregnant mother and what a father should know about child's developmental milestones and surrounding environment, for this, fathers try to know how to deal and children's behavior, what types of play and playful activities are helpful for children and what are important nutrient facts has impact on children's overall development.

Most of the fathers emphasized on spending quality time and providing mental support is important for child development and also gave emphasize on not to use any smart devices while feeding the child and ensure a balance diet. Fathers engaged themselves

to make their children independent and self-regulated. They maintain a balance in self-control, independence and self-regulations in their young children.

To develop social skills fathers gave importance on interaction, play, go outside and know-how to maintain good relationships with relatives. They also are agreed on to build a strong emotional skill is very crucial.

In this study it was found that, though all the fathers are job holder, most of them agreed on the fact that they are not enough involved with their child for achieving age-appropriate development in every domain.

In present days, fathers become more engaged in children's education, health, and age appropriate growth. They are taking part in school events, helping with homework, taking their children to doctor's appointments, and engaging in fun activities with them. However, there are still many social and cultural barriers such as traditional gender roles, lack of awareness of father involvement benefits, and economic constraints are preventing fathers from playing a more effective role for children's well-being.

So, considering knowledge developmental milestones, participation in childcare and education activities, and involvement in family dynamics which are essential factors in fathers' participation in child development, holistic approaches are required to encourage fathers' participation in childrearing and promote their active involvement, improving their knowledge, attitudes, and skills related to childcare in Bangladesh, as well as globally.

Recommendations

- More studies can be done with a large number of populations considering various economic group on fathers' perceptions on father's involvement in 3-5 years old child development.

- Same study can be done in both in rural and urban area on how fathers can be more engaged in child development in different setting.
- There are limited programs and trainings on ECD knowledge and practices at the community level. So, in the changing context of nation as well as to reach higher destination more activities, trainings and programs can be taken to promote the importance of ECD.
- Mass media, social media and gadget companies can play a big role in promoting importance of child development. On other hand, along with the government they can also execute rules and regulations how much time a child should spend time on screens of smart devices.
- It is high time to take initiative by the government and policy makers to increase the number of play grounds and parks in the urban area.
- Government can also take initiative to start paternity leave in Bangladesh following the other countries because father-child relation actually starts after the birth.
- Through training, take part in ECD programs, participate in workshops and seminar regarding child care and development, the significance of father's practices and involvement in early years' children's development may accelerate and those programs will be conducted both by the government and by the private organizations (NGOs and MNCs).

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Appendix A

Participants Demographic Information:

IDI:

Participant SL	Age	Academic qualifications	Profession	Children	Sex
01	34	MSc	Government Job	1 girl (3 years 1 month)	Male
02	36	MSc	Government Job	1 girl (4 years 2 months)	Male
03	36	MCom	Entrepreneur	1 girl 1 boy (7 years 5 months, 3 years 9 months)	Male
04	36	MCom	Teacher	1 girl 1 boy (7 years 5 months, 3 years 11 months)	Male

FGD 01:

Participant SL	Age	Academic qualifications	Profession	Children	Sex
01	40	MSc	Curriculum Specialist	1 girl 1 boy (7 years 5 months, 3 years 3 months)	Male

02	36	MSc	Superintendent Admin	2 boys (6 years 5 months, 3 years 7 months)	Male
03	35	MSc	Training Officer	1 girl (4 years 4 months)	Male
04	36	MSc	Accounts Officer	1 girl 1 boy (7 years 5 months, 4 years 3 months)	Male
05	32	MSS	Government Job	1 boy (4 years 2 months)	Male
06	34	MSc	Government Job	1 boy (4 years 5 months)	Male

FGD 02:

Participant SL	Age	Academic qualifications	Profession	Children	Sex
01	38	MSc	Entrepreneur	2 boys (6 years 5 months, 3 years 5 months)	Male
02	34	MSc	Private Job	1 boy (4 years 2 months)	Male
03	32	MSc	Teacher	1 girl (3 years 4 months)	Male
04	35	MCom	Entrepreneur	1 boy (3 years 10months)	Male

05	38	MSS	Private Job	1 girl (4 years 6 months)	Male
06	36	MSc	Private Job	1 boy (3 years 11 months)	Male

Appendix B

English Questionnaire

IDI:

1. What do you understand by early childhood development? Do you think early childhood development is important? If yes, why?
2. How does early years of proper development make impacts in future of child's life?
4. Who are the primary caregivers of 3-5 years old children's early years of development?
5. What is meant by father's involvement in child development? Do you think father's involvement in early years matters in a child's life? If yes, why?
6. In your opinion, what are the knowledge that a father need for proper development of 3-5 years old children?
7. Do you think you are contributing to the development of your child? If yes, how?
8. how can you involve yourself (in play, outdoor activities, toileting, sleep and eat) with your child to enhance their motor skills, language and cognitive development?
9. How you can involve yourself to ensure adequate nutrition for your child's development?
10. How do you help him to develop his independence and self-regulation skills?
11. What are ways that you follow to develop social skills on your child or to interact with others?
12. Can you please share how you involve yourself for emotional development of your child?
13. Do you think you are enough involved with your child to achieve age appropriate development? If not, how do you can be more involved with your child that would be helpful for his/her development?

FGD:

1. What do you understand by early childhood development? Do you think early childhood development is important? If yes, why?
2. How does early years of proper development make impacts in future of child's life?
4. Who are the primary caregivers of 3-5 years old children's early years of development?
5. What is meant by father's involvement in child development? Do you think father's involvement in early years matters in a child's life? If yes, why?
7. In your opinion, what are the knowledge that a father need for proper development of 3-5 years old children?
6. Do you think you are contributing to the development of your child? If yes, how?
7. how can you involve yourself (in play, outdoor activities, toileting, sleep and eat) with your child to enhance their motor skills, language and cognitive development?
8. How you can involve yourself to ensure adequate nutrition for your child's development?
9. How do you help him to develop his independence and self-regulation skills?
10. What are ways that you follow to develop social skills on your child or to interact with others?
11. Can you please share how you involve yourself for emotional development of your child?
12. Do you think you are enough involved with your child to achieve age appropriate development? If not, how do you can be more involved with your child that would be helpful for his/her development?

Appendix C

Bangla Questionnaire

IDI:

১. শিশুর প্রারম্ভিক বিকাশ বলতে আপনি কি বুঝেন? আপনি কি মনে করেন শিশুর প্রারম্ভিক বিকাশ গুরুত্বপূর্ণ?
২. সঠিক প্রারম্ভিক বিকাশ কিভাবে শিশুর ভবিষ্যতে গুরুত্বপূর্ণ ভূমিকা পালন করে?
৩. ৩-৫ বছরের শিশুর প্রারম্ভিক বিকাশে কে/কারা আসল ভূমিকা পালন করে?
৪. শিশুর প্রারম্ভিক বিকাশের ক্ষেত্রে বাবার সম্পৃক্ততা বলতে কি বুঝায়? আপনি কি মনে করেন, বাবার সম্পৃক্ততা শিশুর জীবনে গুরুত্বপূর্ণ ভূমিকা পালন করে? যদি তাই হয়, কেন?
৫. আপনার মতে, তিন থেকে পাঁচ বছরের শিশুদের সঠিক বিকাশের জন্য একজন বাবার কি ধরনের ধারণা থাকা উচিত?
৬. আপনি কি মনে করেন যে বাবা হিসেবে আপনার শিশুর সাথে আরো বেশি সম্পৃক্ত হওয়া উচিত?
৭. আপনি কি মনে করেন আপনি আপনার শিশুর বিকাশে অবদান রাখছেন? যদি তাই হয়, কিভাবে?
৮. শিশুর সাথে (খেলাধুলায়, ঘুরতে যাওয়া, টয়লেটিং, ঘুম, খাওয়া) কিভাবে নিজেকে সম্পৃক্ত করে শিশুর চলন দক্ষতা, ভাষার দক্ষতা ও জ্ঞানমূলক বিকাশের বৃদ্ধিতে আপনি সহায়তা করতে করেন?
৯. শিশুর পর্যাপ্ত পুষ্টির চাহিদা মেটাতে আপনি নিজেকে কিভাবে সম্পৃক্ত করতে পারেন?
১০. আপনার শিশুর স্বতন্ত্রতা ও আত্মনিয়ন্ত্রণে দক্ষতা বৃদ্ধিতে আপনি কিভাবে সহায়ক ভূমিকা পালন করেন?
১১. আপনার শিশুর সামাজিকীকরণ দক্ষতা বৃদ্ধিতে আপনি কি কি পন্থা অবলম্বন করেন?
১২. আপনি কি বলবেন আপনার শিশুর আবেগীয় দক্ষতা বিকাশে আপনি কিভাবে নিজেকে সম্পৃক্ত করতে পারেন?
১৩. বয়স ভিত্তিক শিশুর বিকাশের ক্ষেত্রে, আপনি কি মনে করেন আপনি আপনার শিশুর বেলায় যথেষ্ট সম্পৃক্ত? যদি তা না হয়, আপনার শিশুর সঠিক বিকাশে নিজেকে আরও কিভাবে সম্পৃক্ত করতে পারেন?

FGD:

১. শিশুর প্রারম্ভিক বিকাশ বলতে আপনি কি বুঝেন? আপনি কি মনে করেন শিশুর প্রারম্ভিক বিকাশ গুরুত্বপূর্ণ?
২. সঠিক প্রারম্ভিক বিকাশ কিভাবে শিশুর ভবিষ্যতে গুরুত্বপূর্ণ ভূমিকা পালন করে?
৩. ৩-৫ বছরের শিশুর প্রারম্ভিক বিকাশে কে/কারা আসল ভূমিকা পালন করে?
৪. শিশুর প্রারম্ভিক বিকাশের ক্ষেত্রে বাবার সম্পৃক্ততা বলতে কি বুঝায়? আপনি কি মনে করেন, বাবার সম্পৃক্ততা শিশুর জীবনে গুরুত্বপূর্ণ ভূমিকা পালন করে? যদি তাই হয়, কেন?

৫. আপনার মতে, তিন থেকে পাঁচ বছরের শিশুদের সঠিক বিকাশের জন্য একজন বাবার কি ধরনের ধারণা থাকা উচিত?
৬. আপনি কি মনে করেন যে বাবা হিসেবে আপনার শিশুর সাথে আরো বেশি সম্পৃক্ত হওয়া উচিত?
৭. আপনি কি মনে করেন আপনি আপনার শিশুর বিকাশে অবদান রাখছেন? যদি তাই হয়, কিভাবে?
৮. শিশুর সাথে (খেলাধুলায়, ঘুরতে যাওয়া, টয়লেটিং, ঘুম, খাওয়া) কিভাবে নিজেকে সম্পৃক্ত করে শিশুর চলন দক্ষতা, ভাষার দক্ষতা ও জ্ঞানমূলক বিকাশের বৃদ্ধিতে আপনি সহায়তা করতে করেন?
৯. শিশুর পর্যাপ্ত পুষ্টির চাহিদা মেটাতে আপনি নিজেকে কিভাবে সম্পৃক্ত করতে পারেন?
১০. আপনার শিশুর স্বতন্ত্রতা ও আত্মনিয়ন্ত্রণে দক্ষতা বৃদ্ধিতে আপনি কিভাবে সহায়ক ভূমিকা পালন করেন?
১১. আপনার শিশুর সামাজিকীকরণ দক্ষতা বৃদ্ধিতে আপনি কি কি পন্থা অবলম্বন করেন?
১২. আপনি কি বলবেন আপনার শিশুর আবেগীয় দক্ষতা বিকাশে আপনি কিভাবে নিজেকে সম্পৃক্ত করতে পারেন?
১৩. বয়স ভিত্তিক শিশুর বিকাশের ক্ষেত্রে, আপনি কি মনে করেন আপনি আপনার শিশুর বেলায় যথেষ্ট সম্পৃক্ত? যদি তা না হয়, আপনার শিশুর সঠিক বিকাশে নিজেকে আরও কিভাবে সম্পৃক্ত করতে পারেন?

Appendix D

Voluntary Consent Form for Parents

Institute of Educational Development, BRAC University

Title of the Research Protocol: Father's Perception on their involvement in 3-5 years old Child Development.

Principal Investigator: Abul Moin

Introduction:

According to Dads' Resource Centre Founder and Chair Dr. Joel N. Myers "When fathers are actively involved in their lives our children are happier and safer, and our society is healthier and more productive," Dads Resource Center, (2021). So father's involvement in early years is inevitable and "Taking up roles as caregivers offers men the opportunity to begin to break free from the narrow concepts of manhood, providing their sons and daughters with positive role models, improved health and development, and higher hopes for the future." (Khondkar,2023).

Purpose of the research:

I am from the Institute of Educational Development- BRAC UNIVERSITY conducting a research to explore father's Perception on their involvement in 3-5 years old Child Development.

Why selected:

I have selected the fathers as they are one of the prime caregivers in early years of a child's life.

Expectation from the respondent:

If you agree to participate you will be expected to share your knowledge and practices about parenting Knowledge on Child Development in Early years. The respondents may give electronic signature or they can send consent in an email.

Risks and benefits:

There is no risk for you to participate in this study. Moreover, the child directly or indirectly may be benefited in future if the findings are taken into account by the policy makers and educators.

Privacy, anonymity and confidentiality:

All information collected from you will remain strictly confidential. I would be happy to answer your questions about the study and you are welcome to contact me; (cell # 01715912821), (Email # moinjony555@gmail.com) or anytime required.

Future use of information:

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

Right not to participate and withdraw:

Your participation in the study is voluntary, and you are the sole authority to decide for and against your participation in this study. Refusal to take part in the study will involve no penalty. If you agree to my proposal of enrolling yourself in my study, please indicate that by putting your signature or your left thumb impression at the specified space below.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Signature of Investigator

Participant Date:

Signature of Subject

Date: