

PARENTS' PERCEPTION ON RESPONSIVE PARENTING DURING INFANCY

By

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A thesis submitted to BRAC IED BRAC University in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Science in Early Childhood Development

BRAC IED
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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/We have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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Approval

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Ethics Statement

Title of Thesis Topic: "PARENTS' PERCEPTION ON RESPONSIVE PARENTING DURING INFANCY"

Student name: Rabeya Sultana

1. Source of population

The participants were selected from ex/current colleagues; classmates of ECD master's program and other friends and colleagues from my own professional or social contacts.

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 (yes)
- d) Sensitive questions (yes)
- e) Benefits to be derived (yes)
- 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 (no)
- 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)

Ethical Review Committee:

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(chair/co-chair/other)

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Executive Summary

Keywords: Responsive parenting; Parents' perception; Infant; Child development.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my parents for their love and continuous support. I would also like to dedicate this to all parents, children, friends, classmates and colleagues from whom I have collected the data.

Acknowledgement

I would like to convey my gratitude to my supervisor, Ms. Areefa Zafar, for her all guidance and support. I would also like to convey my sincere gratitude to the course coordinator, other faculty members and also the Executive Director of BRAC IED BRAC University under whose supervision the course has been running. Besides, I would like to thank my friends, ECD classmates and colleagues for providing me relevant information for this study. I am truly grateful to the parents and children for participating.

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List of Acronyms

APA	American Psychological Association
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ELDS	Early learning development standards
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
IDI	In-Depth Interview
RCT	Randomized Control Trial
US	United States
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

Glossary

- Thesis:** An extended research paper that is part of the final exam process for a graduate degree. The document may also be classified as a project or collection of extended essays.
- Glossary:**
- Perception** Perception is the ability to see, hear or become aware of something through the senses (Oxford Dictionary, retrieved on 27.2.2013). It is the process of organizing and interpreting sensory information to represent and understand the environment by an individual (Pomerantz, 2003).
- Responsiveness** Responsiveness is a major component of parenting infants (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Bornstein, 1989d). Although responsiveness takes many guises, parents who respond promptly, reliably, and appropriately to their babies' signals give babies a good message from the start. They tell their children that they can trust their parents to be there for them. They give their children a sense of control and of self. A baby cries, a mother comes—the baby already feels she or he has an affection the world. A baby whose parent has been unresponsive is frequently angry because the parent's inaccessibility may be painful and frustrating; furthermore, because of uncertainty about the parent's responsiveness, the infant may grow apprehensive and readily upset by stressful situations (Rubin and Burgess, in Vol. 1 of this Handbook).
- Responsive parenting** Responsive parenting described from different theoretical frameworks emphasizes an affective–emotional style with positive affection and high levels of warmth and nurturance (Darling & Steinberg, 1993), responses that are contingently linked to children's signals, and acceptance of children as unique individuals (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978; Bornstein, 1985).

Chapter I Introduction & Background

Introduction

Parenting is the provision of ongoing care and supports that a child needs in order to survive and thrive. All children have the need and the right to be parented (Judith L. Rvans). Parents are the key in promoting and supporting the physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development of a child from infancy to adulthood. In terms of individual development, early childhood development is of particular importance (Dubravka Males and Ana Siranovic). Parents are the prime teachers of their children during the period of early childhood development (Dubravka Males and Ana Siranovic). Article 18 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child underlines the principle that both parents have common responsibilities for the upbringing and development of the child. This Article (together with Articles 3, 5 and 27) makes states responsible to provide appropriate support to parents so that they could fulfil their parental role. In this respect, the need for education for responsible parenthood should have central place. In this period of life, the family has the primary responsibility for upbringing and development of the child, and it determines the circumstances of the child's development. Parents are responsible not only for the quality of the family environment. In those early years of their child they determine family influences the child shall be subjected to (Dubravka Males and Ana Siranovic). However, early childhood lays the critical foundations for health, learning and behavior across the life course. During the first years of life children change from dependent and helpless newborns into walking, talking, and active problem-solving children. The nurturing qualities of the environment and the human relationships children develop with parents, caregivers, family and community should have one of the most significant and lasting impact on children's development.

In the early ages, children develop in several areas or domains. In general, these domains include:

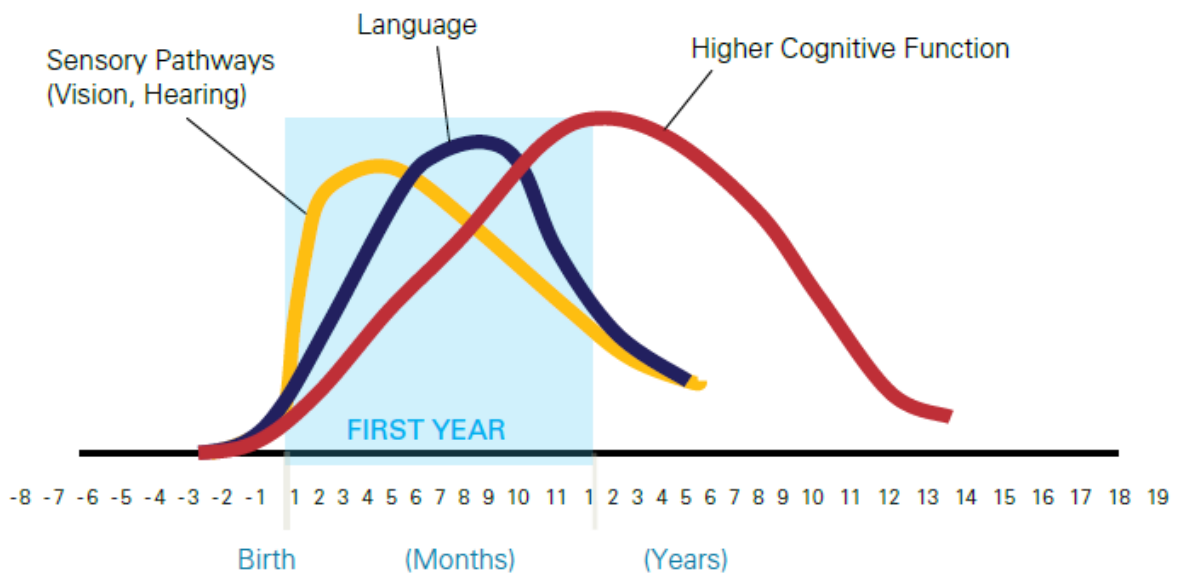
- **Physical development** - includes mastering movement, balance and developing the unfolding ability to use the body's big muscles and small muscles.
- **Social and emotional development** – is the child's ability to form and maintain relationships. Young children learn to make friends, participate in group games, show empathy for others, cooperate, and understand the concepts of taking turns and fairness as well as of what is acceptable and not acceptable in social situations.
- **Cognitive development** – refers to the increasing ability to learn and think in more and more complex ways. In the early years, children develop curiosity and learn to ask “how?” and “when?” and “why?” questions. Their attention span increases, they learn to focus on tasks and solve problems, they learn to recognize colors and read numbers and letters.
- **Communicative development** - includes the ability to understand language and to express needs, thoughts and emotions verbally.
- **Adaptive skills** – refer to the child's developing abilities to adapt to the surrounding environment and adjust to routines. By the end of the early childhood years most children are able to dress, eat, bathe, brush their teeth and go to the toilet without adult assistance.

The early years, especially the first three years of life, are very important for building the baby's brain. Everything¹ she or he sees, touches, smells, tastes or hears helps to shape the brain for feeling, moving, thinking and learning. During early childhood, the brain undergoes a rapid development that lays the foundation for a child's lifelong learning capacity and

¹ The early childhood years, A time of endless opportunities, Module 1

emotional and behavioral health (Figure 1). By the age of three years, the brain reaches 80 per cent of its adult weight. At this age, the brains of children are 2.5 times more active than the brains of adults, and they remain this way throughout the first decade of life.

Figure 1: Human brain development (Rate of synapse formation by age)



Source: C. A. Nelson (2000)

Brain development is genetically influenced, but modifiable by the quality of the environment, as human babies are born immature. Nature has given all sort of physiological mechanisms and neurochemical regulatory processes (hormones and neurotransmitters) to ensure a close caregiver-infant relationship for the first couple of years. In this way the dependent baby can receive all kinds of experiences that are necessary for developing the architecture of the emerging brain.

The study by US National Academy of Science (2016) acknowledged that parental knowledge of child development is positively associated with quality parent-child interactions and the likelihood of parents' engagement in practices that promote their children's healthy development. In contrast, the closeness between the primary caregiver,

usually the parents are one of the most relevant experiences for survival and healthy development of the young child. Besides, the care giving approach of parents is affected by both interactions of personal and environmental factors. These include characteristics of both children, and parents alongside the broader social context of the surroundings. Parents differ to an extent in which they respond to children's signals and influence their behaviors. Excessive care giving, followed by a sensitive, stimulating, and cognitively controlling approach, is unhealthy for children's development. Therefore, parents are fundamental in the whole process of early brain development as they are the main source of security, food, stimulation and learning for babies and young children.

Parents influence their infants directly by means of their genes, beliefs, and behaviors as well as indirectly by means of their influences on one another and the multiple contexts in which they live (Bornstein, 2008). Parent–infant interactions include nurturing, interacting socially, stimulating cognitively, and understanding the environment. The views parents hold about their infants and the activities they involve them have meanings to the development of babies. Mothers typically take more responsibility and engage in infant caregiving than fathers, but fathers play corresponding and indicative roles.

From classic anthropological and human development perspectives, parenting often is defined as a primary mechanism of socialization, that is, a primary means of training and preparing children to meet the demands of their environments and take advantage of opportunities within those environments². More recently, developmental psychologists and economists have described parents as investing resources in their children in anticipation of promoting the children's social, economic, and psychological well-being. Kalil and DeLeire (2004) characterize this promotion of children's healthy development as taking two forms: (1) material, monetary, social, and psychological resources; and (2) provision of support,

² Breiner H, Ford M, Gadsden VL, National Academies Press (US), 2016

guidance, warmth, and love. Bradley and Corwyn (2004) characterize the goals of these investments as helping children successfully regulate biological, cognitive, and social-emotional functioning.

Definition of responsiveness

Responsiveness is a major component of parenting infants (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Bornstein, 1989d). Although responsiveness takes many guises, parents who respond promptly, reliably, and appropriately to their babies' signals give babies a good message from the start. They tell their children that they can trust their parents to be there for them. They give their children a sense of control and of self. A baby cries, a mother comes—the baby already feels she or he has affection to the world. A baby whose parent has been unresponsive is frequently angry because the parent's inaccessibility may be painful and frustrating; furthermore, because of uncertainty about the parent's responsiveness, the infant may grow apprehensive and readily upset by stressful situations (Rubin and Burgess, in Vol. 1 of this Handbook). Infants deliberately search for and use others' (parents') emotional (facial, vocal, gestural) expressions to help clarify and evaluate uncertain and novel events, a phenomenon called social referencing (Campos and Stenberg, 1981; Feinman, 1982; Feinman and Lewis, 1983). Between 9 and 12 months of age, infants look to mothers and fathers for emotional cues and are influenced by both positive and negative adult expressions (Dickstein and Parke, 1988; Hirshberg and Svejda, 1990). Indeed, in such situations infants may position themselves so they can keep their mother's face in view (Sorce and Emde, 1981). Infants not only play less with unusual toys when their mothers show disgust instead of pleasure, but when the same toys are presented a few minutes later infants show the same responses, even though mothers may no longer pose an emotional expression but are instead silent and neutral (Hornik, Risenhoover, and Gunnar, 1987). Infants are immediately and long-term affected by mothers'

lapsing into a “still-face” (Cohn, Campbell, and Ross, 1991), and infants of depressed mothers show inferior social referencing skills, perhaps because their mothers provide less frequent or certain facial and vocal cues and fewer modeling responses (Field, 1995).

Responsive parenting

Parenting or child rearing is the process of promoting and supporting the physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development of a child from infancy to adulthood. Parenting refers to the intricacies of raising a child and not exclusively for a biological relationship (Retrieved from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parenting>).

To parent effectively, it’s not enough to simply avoid the obvious dangers like abuse, neglect, or overindulgence. Indeed, The National Academy of Sciences delineates four major responsibilities for parents: maintaining children's health and safety, promoting their emotional well-being, instilling social skills, and preparing children intellectually. Numerous studies suggest that the best-adjusted children are reared by parents who find a way to combine warmth and sensitivity with clear behavioral expectations. Parents may find the Four C’s to be a helpful acronym: care (showing acceptance and affection), consistency (maintaining a stable environment), choices (allowing the child to develop autonomy), and consequences (applying repercussions of choices, whether positive or negative) (Retrieved from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/parenting>).

Responsiveness has been observed as a typical characteristic of parenting in mothers in different parts of the world (Bornstein, Tamis-Lemonda, et al., 1992). Some types of responsiveness are similar, and some vary relative to divergent cultural goals of parenting. Mothers in different cultures do not vary substantially in responding to infant vocal distress or non-distress. Responsiveness to distress, for example, is thought to have evolved an

adaptive significance for eliciting and maintaining proximity and care (Bowlby, 1969). However, mothers respond variously in more discretionary interactions, as in determining which infant attentional behaviors to respond to and how to respond to them. In line with cultural expectations, Japanese mothers emphasize emotional ex-change within the dyad in responsive interactions with their babies, whereas U.S. American mothers promote language and emphasize the material world outside the dyad (Bornstein, Tamis-LeMonda, et al., 1992).

As Bornstein (1991) explains, the “particular and continuing task of parents and other caregivers is to enculturate children to prepare them for socially accepted physical, economic, and psychological situations that are characteristic of the culture in which they are to survive and thrive. Responsive verbalization on the part of a caregiver to a child's signal is known to be important for language and cognitive development and may also encourage eating by making the child more attentive to the caregiver and more engaged with the food (Frances E. Aboud, Sadika Akhter)”. Responsive parenting described from different theoretical frameworks emphasizes an affective–emotional style with positive affection and high levels of warmth and nurturance (Darling & Steinberg, 1993), responses that are contingently linked to children’s signals, and acceptance of children as unique individuals (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978; Bornstein, 1985).

Definition of perception

Perception is the ability to see, hear or become aware of something through the senses (Oxford Dictionary, retrieved on 27.2.2013). It is the process of organizing and interpreting sensory information to represent and understand the environment by an individual (Pomerantz, 2003). Parental beliefs about child development are inculcated through a complex interaction of ethnicity, culture, social class experience, and education (Bartz & LeVine, 1978). Campbell, Goldstein, Schaefer, and Ramey (1991) noted that in order to

understand parental beliefs about child development, it is necessary to consider the cultural and socioeconomic conditions that enhance or constrain their belief systems. Parental perceptions of child development vary within and between cultures (Goodknow, 1988). The sociocultural context in which development occurs influences parental cognitions and how parents relate these cognitions to the development of their children. Parents' knowledge concerning the development of skills may influence their conceptualizations of normal and acceptable behavior and may also explain why parents with diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds differ in their child rearing attitudes, beliefs, and practices (Zepeda & Espinosa, 1988).

Statement of the problem

Responsive parenting refers to the ability of parents to meet the needs of their children mentally, emotionally and physically through the critical few years after birth, when brain development is at its peak (Engle et al., 2011). As Bowlby theorised, and as science now shows, an infant's secure attachment to at least one responsive and emotionally stable adult lays the foundations for social and emotional skills later in life (Richter, 2004), and can protect against a range of other risk factors (Carpenter and Stacks, 2009). In South Asia, the focus of government programmes on parenting education is on early childhood issues with specific focus on feeding, growth monitoring, language development and hygiene education³. The importance of consistent responsiveness, defined by an affective-emotional construct, was evident even when a broader constellation of parenting behaviors was considered (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2016 APA, all rights reserved). Increased maternal responsiveness facilitated greater growth in target infants' social, emotional, communication,

³ CRIN, Report on Perception of Children on Parenting Practices

and cognitive competence, supporting a causal role for responsiveness on infant development (Landry, S. H., Smith, K. E., & Swank, P. R. (2006). The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) states that the family has the key responsibility to ensure the fundamental rights of children as it is the primary setting within which children are cared for and parented and where first significant relationships develop, and the foundations of their development take place.

According to the publication by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in Kosovo with the support of UNICEF in Kosovo (retrieved from <https://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2015/06/elds-report-eng-for-web-1.pdf>), Early learning development standards (ELDS) in early childhood mean statements describing the expectations for children's behavior and their performance in various areas of development and learning, reflecting on "*what children should know and be able to do.*" These standards constitute the main objectives to stimulate optimal development of children regardless of gender, individual characteristics, social, economic level of their families, affinity or skill level. Development and learning standards in early childhood are child-centered and designed for children, thus their accomplishment should be considered only as support for children's development. Physical and motor development is quite rapid in the first three years of the child's life, during which the child's bones and muscles develop rapidly. Also, their coordination and balance skills and force are developed rapidly, enabling them to perform their daily activities with more energy. During the first years of life, children refine their motor skills and their manipulative skills thus becoming able to find their way in their environment. The general structure of the movements starts to develop over time, which includes already learned dancing, jumping, holding, running.

Recently, some of the government-supported Early Childhood programmes have incorporated child development in their parenting programmes (Jackson et al., 2009). Guidelines from the

World Health Organization and United Nations Children's Fund now advocate a responsive style of interacting with infants and young children during feeding and stimulation as a means to enhance both nutritional status and psychosocial development (Frances E. Aboud, Sadika Akhter). In the same study that took place in Bangladesh it was found out that children in the responsive intervention group showed greater language development, appetite, and self-feeding, and those who received micronutrient fortification in addition they had better weight and length. Mothers in the responsive intervention groups showed more verbal responsiveness and to provide more stimulation in the home.

John Bowlby, the father of attachment theory, once said: 'If a community values its children, it must cherish their parents.' There is growing evidence that responsive parenting can have lifetime effects on all aspects of children's development including their health, nutrition, learning and protection.

However, many parents either are not aware of the need for responsiveness, or their capacity to parent responsively is compromised by poverty, lack of access to services or other socio-economic and environmental factors (Richter, 2004).

Significance of the study

Parenting is a hard work. Even with the best resources available, meeting the needs of family members in today's fast-paced society is difficult (Blair et al., 2012). The daily stress of making ends meet can take a toll on all family members, including children. While it may be difficult to change circumstances such as housing, employment, and transportation, there are things parents can do to reduce the effects of stress and to help their children develop resilience. Resilience is the ability to recover from or adjust easily to adverse situation. It is important because it allows us to overcome negative experiences, and it is an ability that,

when supported appropriately, develops throughout childhood. There is a large body of research supporting the importance of building resilience to help prevent negative consequences of environmental stressors.

Responsive parenting can be highly demanding, and in some cases, there is some coaching to be done. In fact, interventions helping parents recognize the importance of responsive behaviors have shown that increases in responsiveness result in children developing more secure bonding and attachment to their parents along with better problem-solving, language, and social skills (Landry et al., 2012).

Responsive parenting is immensely powerful, improving child health and development both in the short and long term, even at a genetic level. Whilst responsive relationships are important to a child's health and development, an absence of such parenting may have a negative impact, particularly in toddlers (Sigman, 2016). A significant breakdown in the 'serve and respond' interaction, unreliable or lack of responses may disrupt development of the child's brain. The lost opportunities associated with a lack of interaction with children may lead to stress in a toddler that may lead to problems in learning, behavior and health (Molet et al., 2016). Being consistently responsive and understanding our children's ever-changing development needs is a complex and demanding process, that some of us may find harder to achieve than others (Landry et al., 2008). This may be particularly true in specific circumstances such as for parents of children with special needs. It is often the case that parents from disadvantaged backgrounds take for granted that they have less impact on their children's consequences, but even small efforts to respond to children can have a positive consequence.

Bangladesh, though a small country, has a rich cultural heritage and strong family bonds. Parenting practices mainly follow traditional norms with some exceptions in better-educated

and richer families. Parenting practices also differ in urban and rural contexts. Children are raised in an affectionate environment with both parents and with extended family members in most cases. However, there also exist a smaller percentage of single parent families with mothers most commonly as the single parent. Here childrearing practices are mainly focused on ensuring that the children are fed and educated. Parents often have little awareness about early child stimulation and parent-child interaction. Poverty and lack of adequate nutritional and developmental knowledge of the parents leads to malnutrition in over 50 % of children (Childrearing, Motherhood and Fatherhood in Bangladeshi Culture, Jena Derakhshani Hamadani, Fahmida Tofail).

Research objectives

- To explore the parents' perception on responsive parenting in infancy.

Research questions

- What are parents' perceptions about responsive parenting in infancy?
- What are the current practices for responsive parenting during infancy?

Chapter II Literature Review

This literature review focuses particularly on first-time parents of young children (age 2 or younger). We took this approach in light of evidence that new parents of infants and toddlers are especially receptive to information and ways of thinking about parenting and child development. As Bornstein notes, “nothing stirs the emotions or rivets the attention of adults more than the birth of a child.” Parents at high risk for engaging in harmful caregiving behaviors (e.g., abuse and neglect) also may not yet have firmly established parenting practices, providing a window for primary prevention. We also highlight parents’ knowledge of their young children’s social-emotional and physical development, as healthy parent-child relationships form primarily through caregivers’ intensive efforts to meet the social-emotional and physical needs of their infants and toddlers. Infants’ survival, in particular, depends upon caregivers possessing the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of the young one in these areas (e.g., feeding, nutrition, sleeping, nurturing, protection from harm). The fact that babies cannot live a solitary existence is captured in Winnicott’s famous remark, “there is no such thing as a baby...a baby cannot exist alone but is essentially part of a relationship.” In addition to ensuring their offspring’s survival, parents provide children with the social experiences they need to build healthy brains and become successful, contributing members of society, including the ability to form secure early attachments and healthy relationships later in life, the capacity to self-regulate emotional states and behavior, and the resources to cope with life stressors.

Parenting knowledge guides important decisions about caring for young children, including how to support their physical health, emotional needs, and development of socialization skills (Hickson et al., 2012; Bond et al., 2006). Existing research presents a compelling case that responsive parenting is essential to raising a healthy child, but the specific mechanisms by

which this occurs is less clear⁴. There is a well-established link between what parents know and how they behave with their young children, which in turn affects child outcomes (Benasich et al., 1996). Responsive parenting is critical to ensuring children's healthy growth and development, especially an understanding of how to soothe an infant, express love and affection, and respond to an infant's bids for attention, as well as good nutrition and safe sleep practices (Bowlby, 2008; Chung-Park, 2012). Compared to mothers with limited knowledge of child development, mothers with more knowledge engage in higher-quality parent-child interactions, use more effective parenting strategies, and participate in more developmentally supportive activities with their children. They also have more appropriate expectations of their children, and in turn engage in more effective, less harsh discipline practices (Bornstein *et al.*, 2012; Huang *et al.*, 2005).

Few researchers have examined responsive parenting and social-emotional development, but existing findings suggest a link. For example, a randomized control trial (RCT) study of low-birthweight, premature infants (approximately half of whom were black and half of whom had other racial and ethnic backgrounds) and their mothers found that children of mothers with greater general knowledge of child development at 12 months were less likely to have behavior problems at 36 months relative to children of mothers with less developmental knowledge (Benasich et al., 1996). Furthermore, the intervention literature, including a number of experimentally designed studies, indicates that the best child outcomes occur when parents learn to attend to children's signals and respond sensitively (i.e., when the intervention teaches knowledge and application of parenting skills), as favorable social-emotional outcomes are explained in part by the quality of early parent-child relationships (Dunst et al., 2008; Flaherty et al., 2010). Conversely, parents without certain types of knowledge may not interact with their children in ways that support their social-emotional

⁴ National Academies of Sciences, E., & Medicine. (2016). Parenting matters: Supporting parents of children ages 0-8. National Academies Press.

development. For instance, mothers who are unaware that their infants and toddlers are attentive to people and environments are less likely to respond to their young children's efforts to interact with them (Putnam et. al., 2002).

Other research shows a connection between responsive parenting and young children's physical health and development. For instance, Corrarino (2013) showed that parents who know about how to prevent injuries tend to maintain safer home environments, their children have a lower likelihood of experiencing unintentional injuries. Family involvement in early childhood benefits the child, family, and school staff (Epstein, 2001). Research has shown that parent involvement in their child's education, beginning in early childhood, enhances social skills and academic competence (Nokali, Bachman, & Votruba-Drzal, 2010; Sheldon & Galindo, 2012).

Besides, many parents underestimate the negative impact of adverse experiences e.g., domestic violence, serious illness, death of a loved one etc. on the development of their infants and toddlers (Bartlett et al., 2017; Lieberman, 2004). In addition, mothers with lower levels of education have been found to believe that their children feel emotions, use words and sounds, and develop cognitive skills later than mothers with higher levels of education (Hoff et al., 2002).

Chapter III Methodology

Research design provides a framework to the researcher to navigate the journey in the field and finally execute the study. This study utilized qualitative approach as a predominant method. It was believed that in-depth qualitative information was needed to find comprehensive answers to the research questions.

Study Area

The field of this research was at Dhaka metropolitan. Data has collected from parents of infants.

Selection of the Sample and Sampling Technique

16 respondents (8 male and 8 female) were selected through using purposive sampling method. Through this sampling technique, the study recruited participants who provided in-depth and detailed information.

Data collection tool

In this research, data has collected through 4 in-depth interview (IDI) and 2 focus group discussion (FGD) of the parents as primary technique for data collection. Since the use of standardized open-ended interviews allow to express parents' experiences and viewpoints in much detail as they want, this study involved very open-ended wording in the interview questions.

Demographic Information of the Respondents

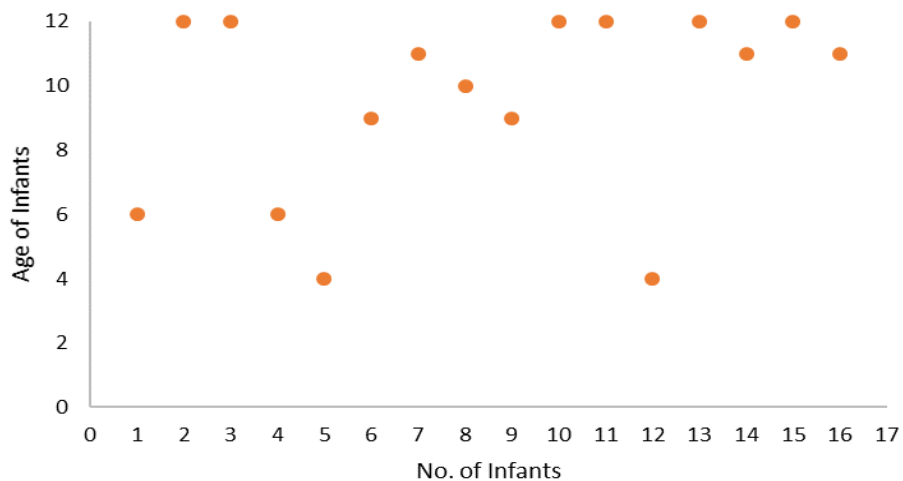
The research participants who have been selected for this study have significant characteristics. It is to be noted that for this study purpose 2 Focus Group Discussions (one

with mothers and another one with fathers) and 4 In Depth Interviews conducted. There were 16 respondents altogether who are categorized into various classes according to their age, gender, occupation, age of their infants, family and their financial status etc.

Age Distribution of the Respondents

After analyzing the age of the participants, it is found that the mean age of mothers was 31.6 years. Whereas, the fathers' mean age was 34.5 years. The respondents belong to age group 27 to 42 years. The main objective of this research was to explore the parents' perception on responsive parenting in infancy, therefore the age distribution of the infants was an important factor of this study. Figure 2 reveals that the study covered the infant's age of 4 months to 12 months which helped the study to acquire appreciated data and information on responsive parenting in infancy through their understanding and experience sharing by FGD and IDI.

Figure 2: Age distribution of the infants



Source: Authors' calculation

Education and Occupation of the Respondents

The responded parents were from different occupations. For instance, the study found service-holders, young entrepreneurs, and business fathers as well as service-holder and

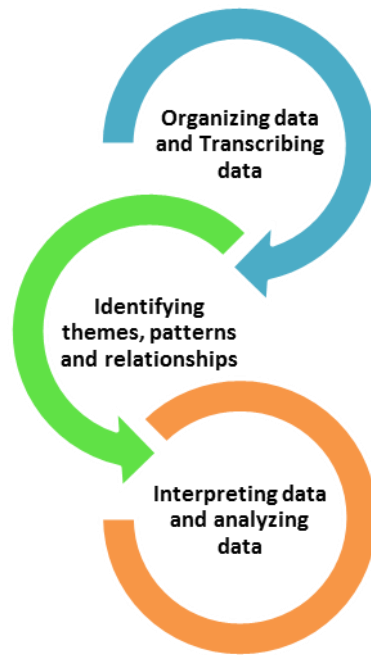
housewife mothers. Most of the parents were passed tertiary education. They are well established and holding higher middle-class family status. Thus, all of parents' good socioeconomic status makes them more concern about babies' holistic developments.

Data Collection Procedure

The study established rapport with participants to make them feel more comfortable, which generated more insightful responses – especially regarding sensitive topics. In-depth interviews gave the greater opportunity to ask follow-up questions, probe for additional information, and circle back to key questions later on in the interview to generate a rich understanding of attitudes, perceptions, motivations regarding parents' perception on responsive parenting for infants. Focus group discussions were used to understand the issue at a deeper level. The number of questions were reasonable (10 to 12). The participants did not get the chance to see the questions like a survey. It was ensured that the wording on questions was clear. The study asked the questions in a way that cannot be answered with a simple “Yes” or “No” answer. The answers were recorded and noted simultaneously for further analysis of the study.

Data Analysis Procedure

The collected data were tabulated for necessary analysis. The percentages, calculation of averages was performed to fulfill the objectives. Suitable tables and diagrams were made to process the data. The recorded interviews were transcribed and translated into English though the interviews were in Bengali. Processed data were coded on predetermined questions and themes. The transcripts of the interviews were documented carefully to grasp the data fully and to identify the patterns of the data. Data analysis procedure was involved the following steps.



Ethical consideration

The study was conducted with utmost ethical consideration particularly ensuring that no harm to the study participants is done. The study used a consent form in which the study method, its objectives, purpose of the study was briefly described. Upon clear understanding the participants have signed on the consent form. The consent form ensured that the results will not be shared by anyone outside the research team and no identification of the child or the parents will be used.

Although the questionnaire asked for phone numbers for the purposive sampling of qualitative data collection, these were never used for the data reporting. For qualitative research only gender identity was used for reporting any quotes from the research participants.

Reliability and Validity

The researcher attempted to increase the reliability and validity of responses in such a setting:

- by making sure that informants are very clear on the nature of the research e.g. why the researcher is there, what he is studying, how he will collect data and what he will do with it.
- by first building a trust-relationship with the subjects and staying in that setting for a long period of time.
- by interviewing the same informant on several occasions and making observations more than once and over time.
- by comparing the results obtained with other evidence.
- by confirming findings and analysis with informant (the danger with this technique is that subjects may become sensitized to the researcher's inferences and provide the answer that support the researcher's point).
- by keeping accurate and detailed field notes to note the variations in responses over the course of time.
- by showing field notes to a second outside researcher. Another researcher is often much quicker to see where or how a fieldworker is being misled or coopted.

Limitations of the Study

Although this study had been able to gather in-depth knowledge from multiple sources to achieve its purpose, there were a number of limitations which are worth mentioning. The limitations were:

- The study was done with only one demographic group of people and it is assumed that they are aware about child development
- The sample size is not representative
- Lack of previous studies in the research area in Bangladesh.
- Tool validation was done by experts, but no piloting of tool was possible due to short time
- Data collection period was short

Chapter IV Results & Discussion

Results

Theme 1: Parents understanding of responsive parenting

This study attempted to find out the parents understanding and perception on responsive parenting through two different methods i.e. Focus Group Discussions and In-depth Interviews.

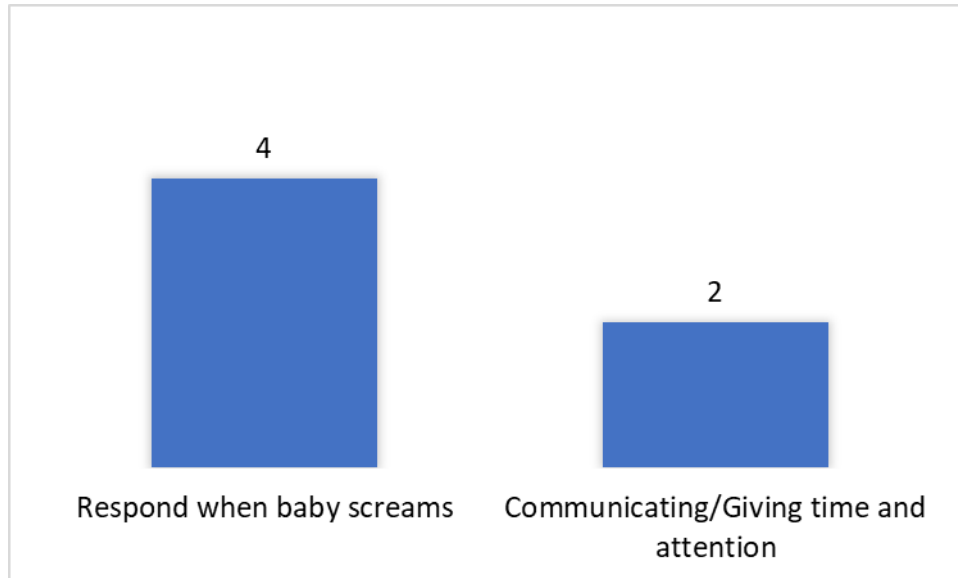
Many different views come out from the study. For instance, good portions (5 out of six) of fathers interact with their babies when she/he cries. They try to cool their baby, walk with him, play music, or do whatever needs to be done to calm the baby. It was found that, most of the fathers (5 out of six) believe that babies express all of their feelings through crying; and responding according to that or figuring out the reason of crying is called responsive parenting. Besides, couple of fathers (2 out of 6) even think that understanding the needs from the facial expression of his baby and retort to that is the appropriate way to respond. However, giving enough time and attention, and communicating through different ways, for instance reciprocating after any action make by the babies e.g. when a baby smiles the parents smiles back.

According to the FGDs, Figure 3 showed that four of the fathers think that responding to a baby's cry is responsive parenting. Rest of others think that communicating and/or giving time and attention to his baby is called responsive parenting.

One father's response - "Babies can only make few sounds and gestures. I research through online sources to differentiate the crying types so that I can respond according to my baby's need and this is responsive parenting."

Another father responded – “you need to analyze baby’s facial expressions to determine whether he likes anything or not and respond accordingly”.

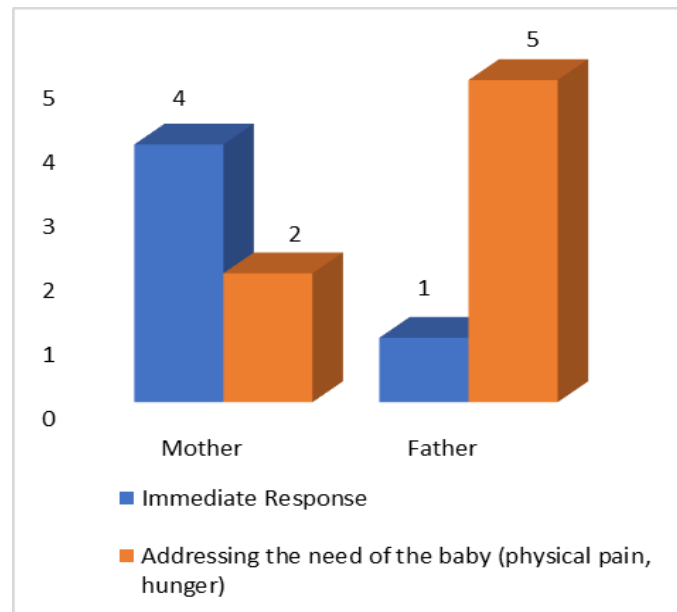
Figure 3: Father’s perception on responsive parenting (from FGDs)



Source: Author’s calculation

On the other hand, mothers mentioned that the immediate response to their babies whenever they need is a part of the responsive parenting process. Because, immediate response makes the baby to feel safe. Besides, they also mentioned that if parents do not respond immediately the babies become upset which then turns into difficult situation for parents to manage. Two of the respondents mentioned that it is very important to find out the reason behind the child being upset. They believe, the child would not cry if something is not bothering him/her i.e. physical pain, hunger etc. Since babies cannot speak, mothers are always aware of their babies and respond to their child's emotional and physical needs. Therefore, the mothers (6 out of six) respond based on the need of their babies and address the issue that bothers the babies.

Figure 4: Difference in response to infant's need between father and mother



Source: Author's Analysis

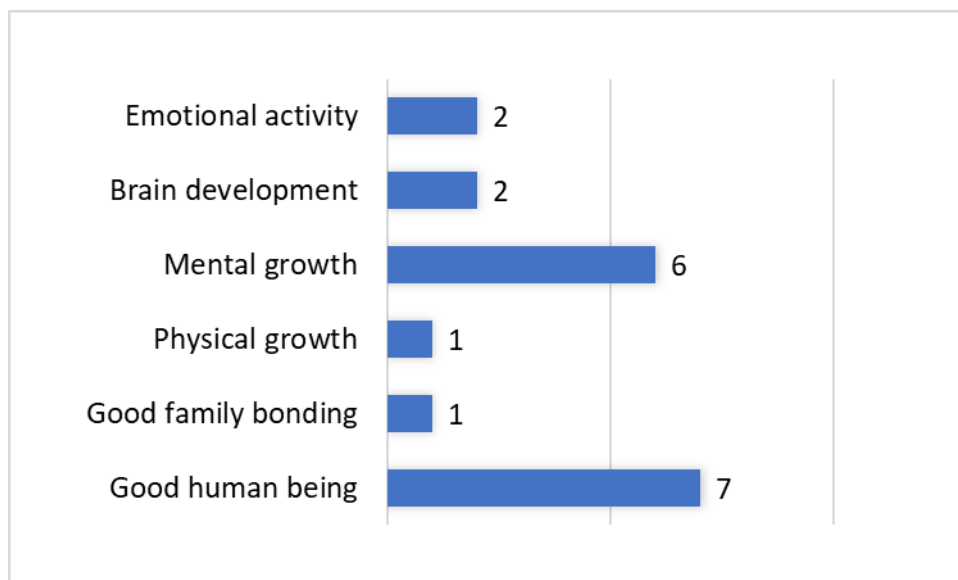
However, the study also found the different perception of the mothers who have more than one child. Since mothers who have a first child have no previous experience, they feel it is important for them to respond to the child's needs. On the other hand, it was found out that mothers with two or more children think that they should respond less otherwise babies have negative impact or they become depended. Therefore, these mothers respond less to their babies so that the babies become more independent. It is found out that almost all the mothers having first child are eager to respond to their child. They usually like to respond immediately through playing or communication consistently.

The study also sought to find out why parents think that their children need responsive parenting. All the parents agreed on the importance of the responsive parenting for their child development process. The results showed that parents identified many positive reasons behind the importance of responsive parenting. Figure 5 revealed that seven parents identified responsive parenting as an important factor to make their babies to be a good human being. They also mentioned responsive parenting as an important factor for baby's good mental growth (6 parents). One parent emphasized on responding parenting for good family

attachment and baby's physical growth. Besides, the study also found that parents should respond as it helps for baby's brain development (2 parents) of their babies. Two of the parents pointed out that responding to their babies are not only important for their children, but it also helps to reduce parents' mental stress.

The fathers (4 out of six) think that in infancy period the babies need mothers more than fathers as babies are more attached with mothers in this period. Because, fathers think mothers can understand their baby's mood more than fathers during infancy.

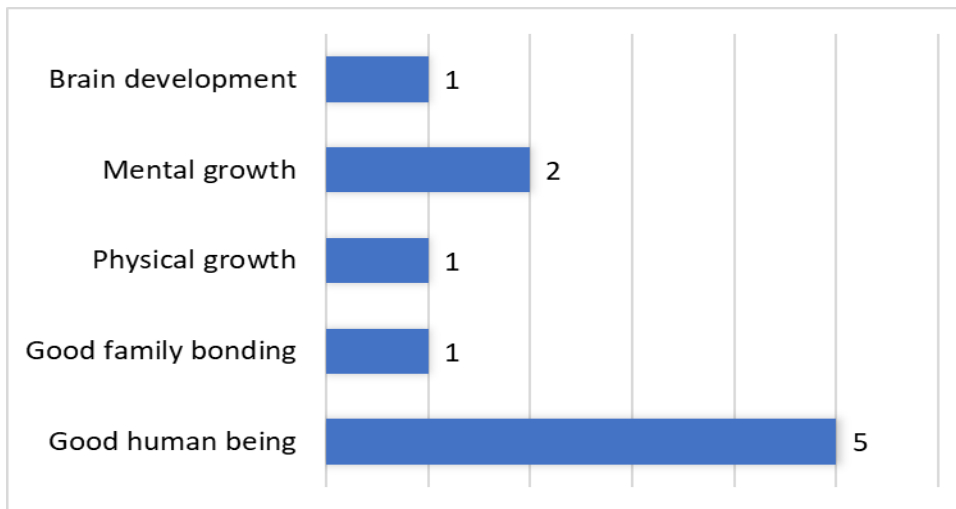
Figure 5: Parent's perception on respond to baby's need (from FGDs)



Source: Author's calculation

Moreover, this study also found that the opinions differ between fathers and mothers. Figure 6 revealed that most of the mothers (5 mothers) are more aware of responsive parenting because they want their children to become a good human being. Two of the mothers shared parents should respond to their babies as it helps for the mental growth of babies. One of the mothers emphasized that parents should respond to babies need for baby's physical growth, cognitive development, and family bonding.

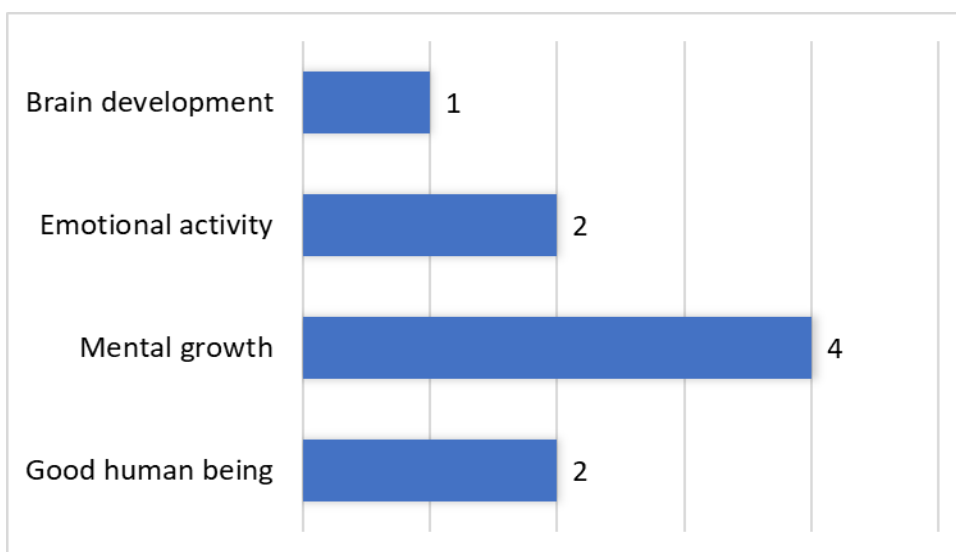
Figure 6: Mother's perception on respond to baby's need (from FGDs)



Source: Author's calculation

On the other hand, Figure 7 showed that 4 of the fathers were highlighted the mental growth as an important factor. If parents respond to their babies need, they think that responsive parenting can build trust and confidence in baby's mind which ultimately helps in mental growth. Two of the fathers expressed that responsive parenting could relief parents' emotional stress. One of the fathers think that parents should respond to babies need as it helps for brain development of babies and two of the fathers think it helps for babies to become a good human being when they grow up.

Figure 7: Father's perception on respond to baby's need (from FGDs)



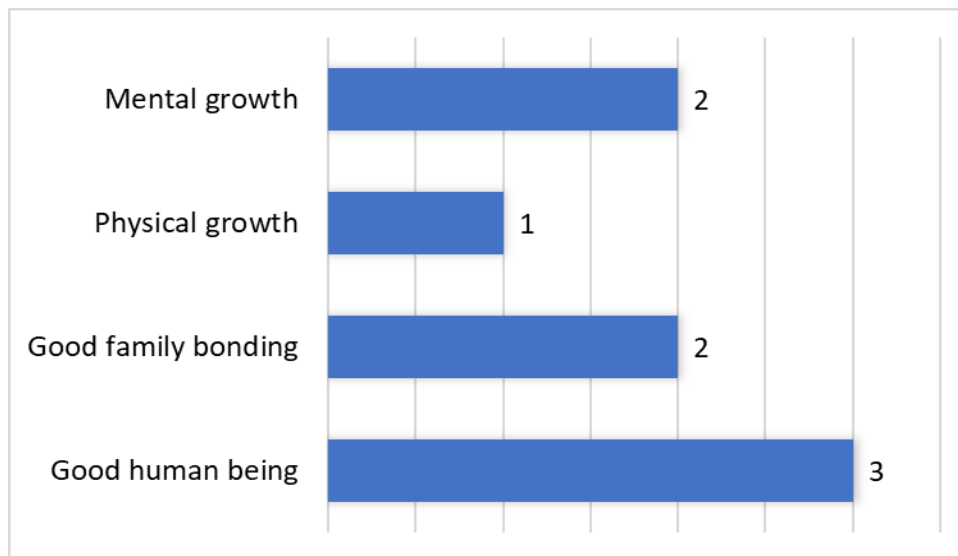
Source: Author's calculation

The study also conducted in-depth interviews of parents and figured out the perception on responsive parenting. Hence, study also found the different perceptions among fathers and mothers. For instance, one of the fathers think that responsive parenting means to do things according to their children's liking. They usually try to understand the baby's mood and do things accordingly. They always try to do what their baby likes to do. Besides, another father tries to understand the meaning of crying of babies and act accordingly.

On the other hand, mothers gave a different view. The study found that one of the mothers are well aware of their babies need and respond according to the situation. They think that understanding the babies need is important but responding in all the time is not good in all situations. If babies want to do something which are risky or not good for her baby, it is necessary to change her/his focus so that baby can changes her/his mind from those things. The remaining another mother think that responsive parenting means to support their baby always so that the baby does not feel lonely. Because they believe that giving attention all the time to the baby can create a good attachment between them. Giving attention to baby's need is helpful to build trust in baby's mind which would be very important for the future.

The study conducted in-depth interviews to find out why parents think that their babies need responsive parenting. Hence, the parents also agreed on the importance of the responsive parenting for their child development. Figure 8 revealed that one mother highlighted responsive parenting as a vital part for her baby's social norms development. Besides, another father shared that responsive parenting can help to build a good family bonding among parents and children. However, parents also mentioned that responsive parenting is needed for baby's physical (1 parent) and mental growth (2 parents).

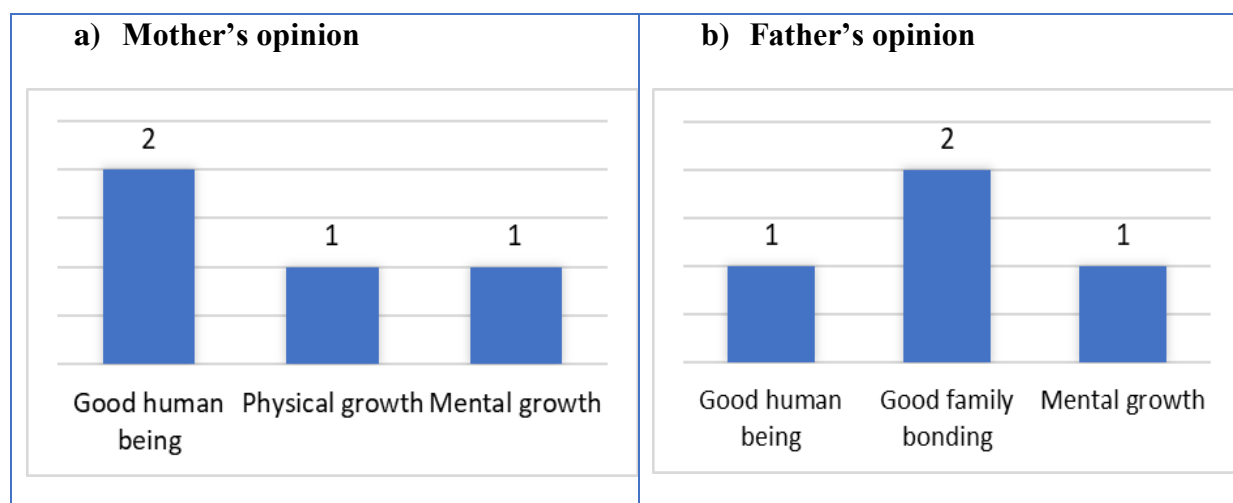
Figure 8: Parent's perception on respond to baby's need (from IDIs)



Source: Author's calculation

Moreover, the study also found different opinions from mothers and fathers through in-depth interviews. For instance, Figure 9 revealed that most of the mothers gave (2 mothers) emphasis on responsive parenting so that their child could learn social norms and manners to become a good human being whereas 2 of the fathers emphasized on friendly relationship with their child which would strengthen the family bonding. They shared that if they do not respond there will not be good bonding between a father and a child. There will be communication gap in future. They also emphasized on giving time to babies which they think later build friendly relationship and babies become more confident when they grow up.

Figure 9: Difference between father's and mother's perception on respond to baby's need (from IDIs)



Source: Author's calculation

Theme 2: Current practices of parents in responsive parenting

Parents shared that babies have different emotional needs and parents should be mindful to those things and treat his/her baby accordingly. The study found that mothers pay higher attention than fathers till 6 months of a child. Most of the respondents mentioned that they spend time with their babies mostly by playing, singing, reciting poem, etc. Two of the mothers mentioned that they start teaching some letters, Islamic practices i.e. surah reciting. Three of the mothers like to walk with their baby in the balcony to show the nature i.e. trees and birds.

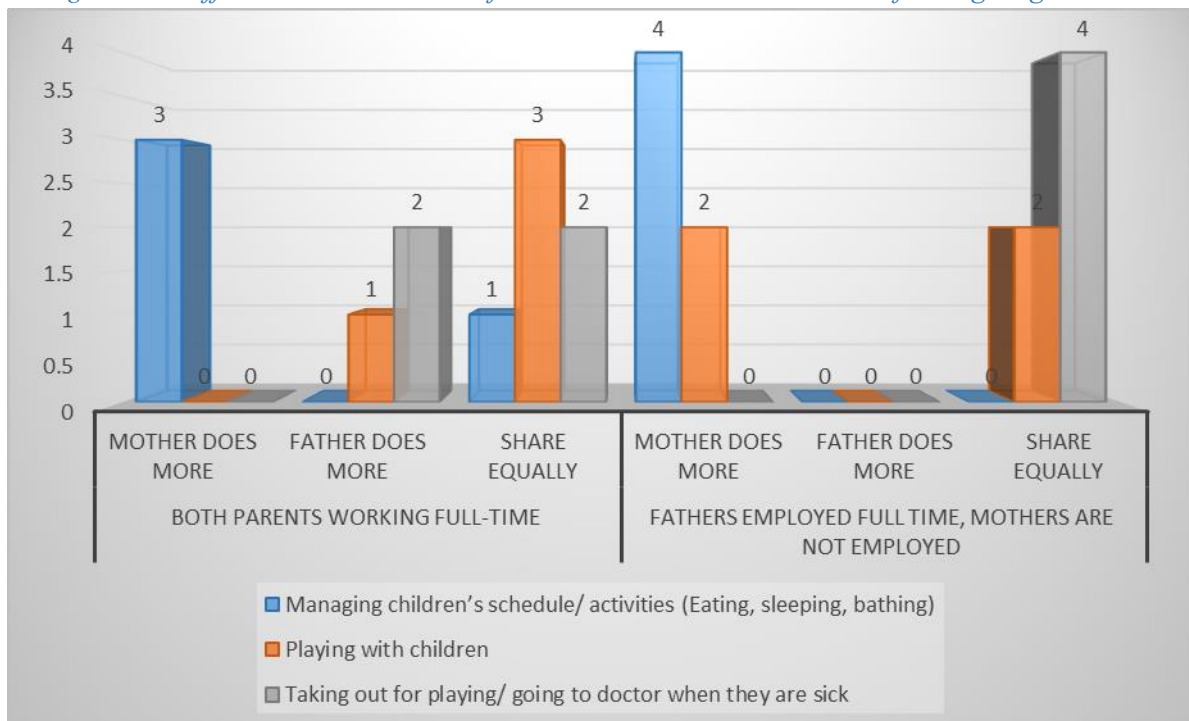
Table 1: Difference of the practices between employed and unemployed mothers

Particulars	Both Parents working full-time			Fathers employed full time; mothers are not employed		
	Mother Does More	Father Does More	Share Equally	Mother Does More	Father Does More	Share Equally
Managing children's schedule/ activities (Eating, sleeping, bathing)	3	0	1	4	0	0
Playing with children	0	1	3	2	0	2
Taking out for playing/ going to doctor when they are sick	0	2	2	0	0	4

Source: Authors' calculation

On the other hand, there's a significant difference in mothers and fathers' household's distribution of care giving activities/how they spend time with their infants. These differences also depend on the employment status of the parents. In most cases, since fathers are busy during the day for work, they cannot give their time to babies much. Therefore, they used to give time to their child during weekend. In the weekend, most of the fathers try to go out for a walk or roam around with their baby. Most of the fathers also try to give some time to their baby at night while they recite poems and help to make their babies to sleep. The study found that fathers usually help their wives in their free time rather than pay attention to their babies. Sometimes they help to change the baby's diaper and play with their baby in absence of their mothers. Notably, fathers are more aware of the hospital and vaccine related duties for their babies. The study also found that 2 fathers out of 6 fathers rarely pass their times with their babies.

Figure 10: Difference in mothers and fathers' household's distribution of care giving activities



Source: Author's calculation

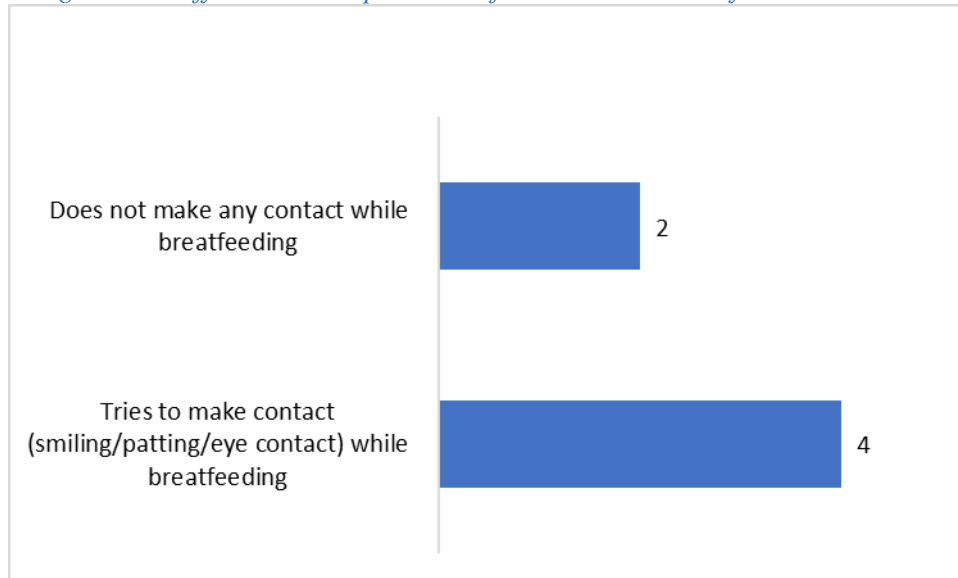
The study found that almost all parents first try to find out the problems that makes their babies cry (i.e. check the diaper, whether they get hurt etc.) and then do whatever is needed. three of the mothers mentioned “feeding” as a best practice to calm down their babies. In this case, mothers also seek help from their husbands. Sometimes they need to stay up for all the night and take care of their babies by rotation. The study found that, two of the mothers recite poems or Islamic songs to calm their babies. If mothers get busy or feel tired, other family members also take care of the babies.

Besides, study found from the FGDs that fathers are more concerned than mothers when their babies cry when they are home, though they need help from their wives. Fathers usually take their babies on lap and go out for a walk. Since fathers do not stay at home at day time, they try to take care of their babies at night if baby cries. They help to feed their babies by supporting their wives. But study found that two of the fathers are not able to calm down their babies as babies are more attached to their mothers.

The study shows that what the parents would do during feeding depends on babies’ age and need. Before 6 months of a baby when the baby is having only breast milk and bottled milk, it is very easy for the parents to feed them. One of the mothers of FGD shared that she does not make eye contact during breast feeding her baby. Because this will interrupt the baby to feed and baby will not have any milk. One of the mothers shared that it becomes difficult to feed baby after 6 months when baby starts taking other food. Mothers (5 out of six) shared that babies do not need any forcing or do anything for breastfeeding. FGDs revealed that 2 of the mothers pat their baby while breastfeeding and believes that it makes the baby feel good and helps to create a bonding at the same time. Three of the mothers think that because their babies are more than six months old, they try to sing, tell stories, and play while feeding their baby. While babies eat, mothers also try not to distract the baby. Besides, all the mothers

mentioned that, babies are especially reluctant to eat when they are sick. It requires more effort at that time.

Figure 11: Difference in response to infant's need between father and mother



Source: Authors' calculation

The study also revealed that fathers are more concern about the food items of their children. Parents usually prefer homemade foods and most of the fathers help to search the recipe through online. It is found that babies do not want to eat if they focus on eating. Parents shared that the babies need to shift their concentration to something else. Three of the fathers claim that, while their wives feed their children, they try to divert their children's attention in another direction through entertaining them. For instance, the fathers play music or talk and sing during the feeding time. The fathers of children under 6 months of age have little to do while feeding a baby. At this time, they only help their partners in buying and preparing the food for their babies.

The study has found out that making baby sleep is one of the most challenging parts of parenting. Two of the mothers mentioned that breastfeeding is the best way which takes only

5-10 minutes to make baby sleep. At the time of breastfeeding, they hug the babies tight to make them feel comfortable.

Mothers who are housewives shared that it is important to give their children time and play with them to make them sleep. They sing or recite poem at the time of babies sleeping time. Therefore, they sometimes spent many sleepless nights to take care of the baby and make them sleep. On the other hand, the working mothers are unable to give enough time to their babies. Thus, sometimes most of the working mothers need external help from their partners or other family members.

However, the study also found that fathers give time especially at night and weekend to their babies to make baby sleep. They sing songs that their babies like, interact with them, swing them and sing with child in sleeping time. Two of the fathers make their babies to fall asleep by walking.

Study found that almost all the parents interact with their babies during nappy time, shower time and feeding time. The study also found that babies usually enjoy shower time. Parents spend shower time with their babies mostly by playing, singing, reciting poem etc. Study revealed that parents allow babies to play in the water at shower time as babies love water. They give their babies toys to play with. Mothers also talk with their babies about what they are doing during bathing time. Because, they feel that babies would learn quickly in this way as babies are very curious to know things.

Besides, fathers also try to spend time with their babies though it is hard to present in home at the shower time. They usually spend their maximum time with their babies in the weekend. Almost all fathers mentioned that they go out for a walk in the weekend and talk to their babies. It shows that the fathers who become father for the first time are more excited to pass time and play with their babies. Three of the fathers mentioned that they interact with their

baby during shower time and feeding time. Sometimes they play in the water with their babies, play music and help their partners at the shower time.

Parents mentioned that music is preferred by every baby and they become happy when they listen to songs or rhymes. Parents also enjoy very much to recite rhymes and sing to their baby. They feel that singing songs or reciting rhymes are more engaging for their babies which can also make parents stress free. Although babies do not understand the songs and poems, three of the mothers feel that this would help the baby in learning the language and this is helpful for brain development.

Around five of the parents shared that babies have some specific choice of songs and rhymes and they feel excited and give positive reaction when parents recite or play those. Besides, fathers usually prefer to sing or recite rhymes for the baby at the feeding time as well as at their leisure time. Because they shared that rhymes and songs is mood swinger for the babies. The study found that the fathers give priority and try to address that first when their babies cry. Fathers try their best to pacify their babies if they cry. As a reason, they mentioned that, it is very important to know why a baby is crying. Studies have also revealed that if fathers hear that their babies are crying, it is not possible for them to concentrate on any task. Besides, mothers get little bothered if their babies cry. Fathers also shared that when they are busy with something, they send someone else to help the mothers to soothe their babies.

The study found that almost all the parents are willing to play with their babies when babies want to play. But sometimes it depends on the situation. For instance, study found that two of the mothers who are working get less time to play with their babies as they feel too tired after office. On the other hand, mothers who stay at home do not mind playing with their baby even at their sleeping time. Also, they are very concern about the safety of their babies since babies like to play with different household items. Therefore, parents usually like to play soft games i.e. tumbling, titillation, hugging, crawling, etc.

The study also found that although fathers feel tired after returning from the office, they always like to play with their child because they know that babies do not get them all day and fathers feel guilty for that. Besides, study also revealed that around two of the fathers mentioned that they sometimes cannot play with their babies when they pass a very stressful week.

From the In-depth interviews, study also get more or less similar results that fathers give less time to their babies. Mostly they pass 1 or 2 hours with their babies. Most of the fathers have only one day of weekend. In the weekend, they play with their babies. Although it is hard to get time for some fathers to help with their wives. There are lots of play zone for kids now, parents are more concerned about the security and safety of those places. That is why they are comfortable to visit relative's houses with their babies. Sometimes they go for shopping with babies which they think is a recreation for their babies. Notably, the study found that, the father who is doing business giving more time to his baby than the father who is a service holder. Instead, mothers give their babies the first priority on top of everything. They spend most of the time with their babies by playing, reciting poems and telling stories, teaching words and numbers, etc. other than the regular activities.

One mother shared, babies usually cry when they feel hungry or feel sleepy. Therefore, parents are more concerned about feeding their babies when they cry. One of the fathers shared that he tries to shift his baby's focus by doing different activities such as opening window, playing with him/her, presenting different stuffs as a toy, etc. so that he/she stops crying.

Moreover, study found that mothers know it well when their babies might cry. Mothers mentioned that, babies usually cry if there is a disturbance in the daily schedule. For example, baby will cry if anybody forces him to sleep before bath as babies usually sleep in the morning after taking bath. Besides, in-depth interviews it revealed that, sometimes babies cry

a lot at night without any reason. Study also revealed that one of the mothers faced post maternity depression which made her frustrated and impatient and but after enrolling in ECD course it helped her to overcome her post maternity depression.

It is found that feeding a baby takes around 10 to 20 minutes if parents recite rhymes or play with their babies. Both mothers of IDI are always taken some extra initiative like spread out their baby's favorite toys or making sound with mouth for feeding them smoothly. Fathers as well as other family members i.e. grandparents help to feed babies.

In-depth interviews revealed that babies prefer to sleep with both of their parents. IDI found that two of the parents usually walk with their babies by holding them to make them fall asleep. Sometimes they sing, recite rhymes or Islamic prayers, shake babies' feet at the sleeping time. Parents also give importance on creating the sleeping environment i.e. switch off the light, tie the mosquito net, etc. to make their babies fall asleep.

The study also found from the in-depth interviews that shower and feeding are usually done by mothers. Study also revealed that, although mothers allow their babies to play in the water with toys at the shower time, they are always concerned about the health issues of their babies. They keep their eyes on their babies and interact with them so that the growing process of a baby happens rapidly. On the other hand, fathers interact positively during shower and feeding time.

However, study found from the in-depth interviews that very few parents do not allow the mobile phones to listen the songs to their babies. They mentioned that mobile phones can make them addicted to it which would not good for their eyesight as well as for brain development. Both parents mentioned that they recite rhymes and sing their babies favorite songs that make their babies happy.

In-depth interviews it has found out that, both IDI mothers ask for someone's help i.e. grandparents, husband, or other family members immediately when their babies cry in her busy moment. But if nobody presents at that time, they try to calm the baby with her voice. On the other hand, fathers are more concerned about the reason of crying. Therefore, whatever important tasks they do that is not a big thing for them since they always prioritize their babies' need first.

In-depth interviews also found that parents enjoy playing with their babies and they encourage their babies to play. One of the parents of in-depth interviews mentioned that they let their babies play till they feel sleepy. The study also found that parents try to understand their babies' mood whether they want to play alone or with somebody. Parents also mentioned that there would be many different types of games for babies in this age (0 to 12 months) what they prefer to play i.e. hide & seek, crawling in the floor, making different noise, etc. with their babies.

Discussion

In the discussion part the report will try to align the findings with the overall objective of the study.

Parents understanding about responsive parenting

Parents who respond to their babies' signals promptly, reliably, and appropriately give a good message to children from the beginning. Responsive parenting described from different theoretical frameworks emphasizes on affective responses that are contingently linked to children's signals, and acceptance of children as unique individuals. In this study, different views have come to define the responsive parenting. For instance, fathers believe that babies express all of their feelings through crying; and responding according to that or figuring out the reason of crying is called responsive parenting.

However, fathers also feel that children need mothers more than fathers during infancy because children are more involved with mothers during this period. This is because fathers think that mothers can understand a child's mood better than fathers during infancy. Besides, mothers gave the importance on the immediate response to their babies whenever they need because they believe immediate response makes the baby to feel safe.

The study also found that mothers of two or more children have different perceptions. Almost all the mothers having first child are eager to respond to their child where mothers with two or more children respond less to their babies so that the babies become more independent. Even the fathers who become father for the first time are more excited to pass time and play with their babies.

The research was also exploring the practices of responsive parenting the parents (both father and mother) showed/displayed positive parenting in addressing the responsive parenting.

In terms of individual development, early childhood development is of particular importance. Early childhood lays the critical foundations for health, learning and behavior across the life course. In this study parents identified the importance of responsive parenting in infancy. They mentioned that the early childhood as the most rapid period of development in a human life. Also, some parents expressed the responsive parenting as relief from their emotional stress. Although individual children develop at their own pace, all children progress through a sequence of physical, cognitive, and emotional growth and change. Parents in this study mentioned many aspects of the child development such as: brain development, mental & physical development, good family attachment, and social norms development. Most of the parents are more concern about the social norm development means to grow their babies as a good human being. They also prioritize the responsive parenting for building trust and confidence in baby's mind. If parents respond to their children's needs, they feel that responsive parenting can build trust and confidence in the child's mind that ultimately aids in emotional development. One of the fathers mentioned during IDI:

“As a parent we are always concerned. If I don't response with him, we won't have a friendly relationship. He won't share anything to me. He may get involved in bad things. He will fear me rather than sharing with me. I can share my experience here. Once I used to share everything with my father when I was at tender age. Then I started to notice that my father is not responding. He was not taking that positively I stopped sharing. My father is an experienced man as he was govt. officer of anti-corruption commission. In my profession he could have helped me if we had a sharing relation. I don't want any distance to my child.”

Many research papers argued that the responsive relationships are important to a child's health and development, an absence of such parenting may have a negative impact, particularly in toddlers (Sigman, 2016).

Current Practices of parents in responsive parenting

There is a well-established link between what parents know and how they behave with their young children, which in turn affects child outcomes (Benasich et al., 1996). This study found most of the parents spend time with their babies mostly by playing, singing, reciting poem, teaching some letters, Islamic practices, etc. The study found a significant difference in mothers and fathers' household's distribution of care giving activities. These differences depend on the employment status of the parents. In most cases, since fathers are busy during the day for work, they cannot give their time to babies much. Therefore, they used to give time to their child during weekend. They try to give the child some time at night to help their children sleep. Fathers usually help their wives in their free time rather than pay attention to their babies. It has also found out that feeding is the most needed demand from an infant's side and when a baby cries the mother first tries to feed the baby.

In contrast, the study found a clear distinction of practices between working mothers and housewives. Mothers who are housewives give their children time and play with them. They sing or recite poem at the different times i.e. sleeping time, feeding time, even free time. Besides, they sometimes spent many sleepless nights to take care of the baby and make them sleep. On the other hand, the working mothers are unable to give enough time to their babies. Thus, sometimes most of the working mothers need external help from their partners or other family members.

This study attempted to understand the parents' perception and practices regarding their babies' cry. However, research on early childhood experiences consistently shows that children who have enjoyed the most loving care in infancy become the most secure and loving adults, while those babies who have been forced into submissive behavior build up feelings of resentment and anger that may well be expressed later in harmful ways. In our culture, we assume that crying is normal and unavoidable for babies. Yet in natural societies where babies are carried close to the care-giver much of the day and night for the first several months, such crying is rare. In contrast to what many in our society would expect, babies cared for in this way show self-sufficiency sooner than do babies not receiving such care. (Hunt, 2019). This study found that fathers are more concerned than mothers when their babies cry when they are home, though they need help from their wives.

Moreover, responsive parenting is critical to ensuring children's healthy growth and development, especially an understanding of how to soothe an infant, express love and affection, and respond to an infant's bids for attention, as well as good nutrition and safe sleep practices (Bowlby, 2008; Chung-Park, 2012). This study found that parents' activities during feeding, nappy or shower time depends on babies' age and need. Parents are very concern about the food items of their babies. Before 6 months of a baby when the baby is having only breast milk and bottled milk, it is very easy for the parents to feed them. Babies who are more than six months old, they are keen to listen to songs, stories, and play while feeding. Parents also spend time in the shower or nappy time with their babies through playing, singing, reciting poems, etc. Singing songs or reciting rhymes are more engaging for the babies which can also make parents stress free.

Conclusion

The study was aimed at to explore the parents' perception on responsive parenting in infancy. Different views and parenting practices have found in this study through the analysis of the collected information by FGDs and IDIs.

Both mothers and fathers could define about responsive parenting. But in practice it has been found out that the way mothers with first child practice responsive parenting does not remain the same with the second baby. In practicing responsive parenting, mother's presence is more prevalent than fathers and it is more obvious with housewife mother with their working husbands. There is a good balance of work when both parents are working, and responsive parenting is equally done both fathers and mothers in this case.

Primarily, it is a difficult task to understand the child's emotional needs. Therefore, find out what it means to practice responsive parenting, and how it can influence child's future emotional and cognitive development is a very important issue. It is easy to identify the physical needs of children - access to nutritious food, shelter, effective healthcare. But the emotional needs of a child, especially during infancy, may not be as obvious as babies are at their learning stage to learn how to communicate. According to the child health education expert, Dr Aric Sigman, one of the most vital experiences in shaping a child's developing brain is what's known as 'serve and return' interaction between children and parents (Sigman, 2016). Children are naturally reached for conversation first through crying and then babbling, facial expressions and gestures, and adults respond with appropriate gestures. Responsive parenting encourages the "serve and return" interaction through the expression of warm and accepting behaviors to respond to children's sensitive signals which lead to brain development, cognitive development, learning procedure, good family attachment, and to be

a good human being; especially in the early years and this is what has come out from this study.

Recommendation

Based on the findings and discussion, this study would propose a number of recommendations:

- More studies are required on responsive parenting in Bangladesh context during infancy that will create more evidence-based examples to the larger population
- More awareness needs to be built by government and other stakeholders on responsive parenting on the perspective of child development as the study found that mothers with second child does not practice responsive parenting
- Further study is required on how fathers can be more involved during infancy
- Paternal leave should be implemented as fathers expressed mothers are more involved during infancy
- Social or print and other media can play a big role in promoting responsive parenting

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Annex I: Questionnaire

A. IDI questionnaire

1. What do you know about responsive parenting for your baby?
(শিশুর প্রতি পিতামাতার সাড়া দান/ জবাব দেওয়া প্রক্রিয়া সম্পর্কে আপনি কী জানেন?)
2. How do you spend time with your baby?
(আপনি কীভাবে আপনার শিশুর সাথে সময় কাটান?)
3. Other than his/her regular activities e.g. feeding, bathing what else do you do?
(তার নিয়মিত ক্রিয়াকলাপ ছাড়া (খাওয়ানো, স্নান, ইত্যাদি) আপনি শিশুর সাথে আর কি কি করে থাকেন?)
4. What do you do when your baby cries?
(আপনার বাচ্চা যখন কাঁদে তখন আপনি কী করেন?)
5. What do you do when you feed your baby?
(আপনি বাচ্চাকে খাওয়ানোর সময় কী কী করেন?)
6. What do you do when your baby wants to sleep?
(আপনার বাচ্চা যখন ঘুমাতে চায় তখন আপনি কী করেন?)
7. Do you interact with your baby during nappy time, shower time or feeding time?
If yes, how do you interact?
(ঘুম পাড়ানোর সময় বা গোসল করানোর সময় অথবা খাওয়ানোর সময় আপনি কি আপনার শিশুর সাথে আলাপ করেন? যদি করেন, কীভাবে যোগাযোগ করেন?)
8. Do you recite rhymes and sing a song with your baby? Why do you do that? What change you see in your baby when you recite rhyme and sing a song?
(আপনি কি আপনার শিশুর সাথে ছড়া আবৃত্তি এবং গান করেন? এটা কেন করে থাকেন? আপনি যখন ছড়া আবৃত্তি এবং গান করেন তখন আপনার শিশুর মাঝে কি কোনো পরিবর্তন দেখতে পান?)
9. How do you respond when your baby cries but you are involved in another activity?
(আপনি যখন অন্য কোনো কাজে ব্যস্ত থাকেন, তখন আপনার বাচ্চা কান্নাকাটি করলে আপনি কী করেন?)
10. If your baby wants to play how you do respond when you are with your baby?
(আপনার বাচ্চা যদি খেলতে চায় তবে আপনি তখন আপনার শিশুর সাথে কী করেন?)
11. Do you think if you respond to the need of your baby s/he will be benefited?
How?
(আপনি কি মনে করেন আপনি যদি আপনার শিশুর প্রয়োজনের প্রতি সাড়া দেন তবে সে উপকৃত হবে? কিভাবে?)
12. Why do you think parents should respond to a baby's need?
(আপনি কেন মনে করেন যে বাবা-মার শিশুর প্রয়োজনের প্রতি সাড়া দেওয়া উচিত?)

B. FGD questionnaire

1. What do you know about responsive parenting for your baby?
(শিশুর প্রতি পিতামাতার সাড়া দান/ জবাব দেওয়া প্রক্রিয়া সম্পর্কে আপনি কী জানেন?)
2. How do you spend time with your baby? Other than his/her regular activities e.g. feeding, bathing what else do you do?
(আপনি কীভাবে আপনার শিশুর সাথে সময় কাটান? তার নিয়মিত ক্রিয়াকলাপ ছাড়া (খাওয়ানো, স্নান, ইত্যাদি) আপনি শিশুর সাথে আর কি কি করে থাকেন?)
3. What do you do when your baby cries?
(আপনার বাচ্চা যখন কাঁদে তখন আপনি কী করেন?)
4. What do you do when you feed your baby?
(আপনি বাচ্চাকে খাওয়ানোর সময় কী কী করেন?)
5. What do you do when your baby wants to sleep?
(আপনার বাচ্চা যখন ঘুমাতে চায় তখন আপনি কী করেন?)
6. Do you interact with your baby during nappy time or shower time or feeding time? If yes, how do you interact?
(ঘুম পাড়ানোর সময় বা গোসল করানোর সময় অথবা খাওয়ানোর সময় আপনি কি আপনার শিশুর সাথে আলাপ করেন? যদি করেন, কীভাবে যোগাযোগ করেন?)
7. Do you recite rhymes and sing a song with your baby? Why do you do that? What change you see in your baby when you recite rhyme and sing a song?
(আপনি কি আপনার শিশুর সাথে ছড়া আবৃত্তি এবং গান করেন? এটা কেন করে থাকেন? আপনি যখন ছড়া আবৃত্তি এবং গান করেন তখন আপনার শিশুর মাঝে কি কোনো পরিবর্তন দেখতে পান?)
8. How do you respond when your baby cries, but you are involved in another activity?
(আপনি যখন অন্য কোনো কাজে ব্যস্ত থাকেন, তখন আপনার বাচ্চা কান্নাকাটি করলে আপনি কী করেন?)
9. If your baby wants to play how you do respond when you are with your baby?
(আপনার বাচ্চা যদি খেলতে চায় তবে আপনি তখন আপনার শিশুর সাথে কী করেন?)
10. Why do you think parents should respond to a baby's need?
(আপনি কেন মনে করেন যে বাবা-মার শিশুর প্রয়োজনের প্রতি সাড়া দেওয়া উচিত?)

Annex II: Voluntary Consent Form

Institute of Educational Development- BRAC UNIVERSITY

Title of the Research Protocol: To explore the parents' perception on responsive parenting during infancy.

Principal Investigator: Rabeya Sultana

Before recruiting into the study, the study subject must be informed about the objectives, procedures, and potential benefits and risks involved in the study. Details of all procedures must be provided including their risks, utility, duration, frequencies, and severity. All questions of the subject must be answered to his satisfaction, indicating that the participation is purely voluntary. The subject must indicate his acceptance of participation by signing or thumb printing on this form.

Introduction:

Parenting or child rearing is the process of promoting and supporting the physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development of a child from infancy to adulthood.

Responsiveness is a major component of parenting infants (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Bornstein, 1989d). Although responsiveness takes many guises, parents who respond promptly, reliably, and appropriately to their babies' signals give babies a good message from the start. They tell their children that they can trust their parents to be there for them. They give their children a sense of control and of self. A baby cries, a mother comes—the baby already feels she or he has an affection the world.

Purpose of the research:

I am from the Institute of Educational Development- BRAC UNIVERSITY conducting a research to explore the parents' perception on responsive parenting in infancy.

Why selected:

I have selected the parents (father and mother) as they are the primary caregiver.

What is expected from the respondent?

If you agree to participate you will be expected to share your knowledge, attitudes and practices about responsive parenting during infancy.

Risks and benefits:

There is no risk for you to participate in this study. Moreover, the infant 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; Rabeya Sultana at BRAC UNIVERSITY (cell # 01713147812) 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: