

**Perception and Practices of Fatherhood among
Urban Fathers in Bangladesh**

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I. Preface

The researcher was born in a family with ten family members. He is the fifth child among the eight children in the family. As far as the researcher can recall from his childhood, he saw his father as somebody “very powerful” in the family who hardly stayed at home. Sometimes he (father) used to disappear for a long time. The researcher had no idea about the duration of his absence from the family, whether it was days, weeks or months. Later on when he grew up, he came to know that his father used to go away from home for months for work and business. The researcher also came to know that his father was not at home when his fifth and seventh children were born. Whenever the researcher’s father was at home he saw him as an autocratic person. He used to interrogate the family all the time; why someone did not go to school or failed their exams, why things were not in place or why meals were not ready and he used to shout at his family. Sometimes he punished his children for petty things. Simultaneously, the researcher’s mother’s role was to report to the children’s father about their activities that went ‘wrong’ which sometimes resulted in a second punishment. Apart from this, the father’s role was to bring food, clothing and books for the children who started to attend school. For the researcher and his siblings, being called by their father was always quite ominous because they assumed that something bad was going to happen. In his youth the researcher and his siblings found it hard to ever imagine looking directly at the father’s face and making eye contact. Spending playful and happy times with the father is not in the researcher’s memory.

But the researcher used to have an imaginary father who would take him fishing, on boat rides, holding his hand during visits to the village market, and going for adventurous trips in the jungle to find birds’ nest. The researcher wished that it was really the way it happened in real life.

At the age of seven the researcher was sent to a residential school and would only see his father once or twice a year during either the annual leave or yearly admission. In his adolescence the researcher moved to the city and eventually graduated from college. During that period the researcher was exposed to diverse families, communities, living environment and relationships between family members, especially between fathers and their children. Fathers who were spending

fun and joyful times with their children always attracted the researcher's attention. He used to think that when he was a father one day that would play a positive role model.

Eventually the researcher became a father himself and he has behaved completely differently to that of his own father. He jointly plays the role of a caregiver along with the mother. Presently, he is playing the role of a friend, storyteller, playmate, facilitator and guide to his children. This in turn provides a break to the mother so that she can also take care of herself as well and be an effective mother. It also creates an alternative for the child.

The roles of fathers in childrearing are an important part of the child's development that promote the physical, emotional and wellbeing of the child. Fathers can meet their children's needs by using the following parenting strategies: caring for oneself, better understanding their children as strong human beings; learning to be their friend, helping them to grow with good physical and mental health, supporting and sharing responsibility with the mothers, guiding and motivating their children; and being an advocate for their children. This research was initiated from these perceptions and experiences, and undertaken with the researcher's desire to further explore the topic with other fathers.

II. Executive Summary

Background

“Fatherhood” is not just an abstract ideal that is constructed in different social, economic and political milieus but is also a part of everyday life. Fatherhood is a global phenomenon and has a lot of potential to promote early childhood development. It thus has both theoretical and practical implications. Fatherhood was once considered to be a cultural construct based upon a man’s biological relationship to the children borne by a woman with whom he has physical relations. Now, in some countries, fatherhood is also recognized as a social construct that may include non-biologically related men who engage in a direct or indirect caring role in relation to a younger person. Social fathers may be a child’s uncle, older brother, the unrelated partner of the child’s mother or even an engaged, caring male in a child’s broader community. Currently in Bangladesh, the definition of father tends to remain restricted to a man who is biologically related to a child. It should also be noted that fathers typically continue in their father role even as the child reached adulthood, so that fatherhood does not end when a child matures.

Recently, in developed countries, the role of fathers in child development is increasingly recognized and many initiatives have been undertaken to involve fathers in child rearing and caring. Research findings show that children of involved fathers are more likely to have higher levels of economic and educational achievement, more career success and occupational competencies, higher educational expectations, and more psychological well being. At the same time, men who are involved fathers tend to feel more self-confident and effective as parents; more likely to see their interactions with their children positively; be more attentive to their children’s development; enjoy closer, richer father-child relationship; be more satisfied with their lives; be more able to understand themselves; empathically understand others; integrate their feelings in an ongoing way; find parenthood more satisfying; feel more intrinsically important to their child; and feel encouraged to be even more involved with their child’s life. Spending time taking care of children provides fathers with opportunities to display affection and to nurture their children.

Bangladesh society is known to be male-dominated where, at present and in the recent past, society has been patriarchal and men have enjoyed a relatively higher status compared to women. Hierarchies and segregation in roles and status have conditioned men to regard issues relating to childbearing and rearing as an exclusive female domain. "Father" is just one of the many role identities that a man assumes as part of his "self", placed in a hierarchy of identity dimensions based on salience and centrality. In Bangladesh, although most men value their children highly, fathers appear to place active involvement in caring for and raising their youngsters fairly low on their hierarchy of identity dimensions. Traditionally in Bangladesh, fathers are not directly involved directly in the daily care of their children and do not contribute substantially to their children's growth and development. Participation of Bangladeshi fathers in child-rearing activities appears to be remarkably low regardless of socio-economic status, race and ethnicity. Like many other developing countries, in Bangladesh most of the children are failing to reach their optimal developmental potential due to many factors. There may be a huge potential in the improvement of Bangladeshi fathers' involvement and their roles in helping children to minimize this gap, closing this gap needs immediate attention. A father's role in promoting optimal learning situations and assisting the development of their children is highly valuable and needs to be urgently highlighted.

However, the researcher could not locate any scientific study that has been conducted in Bangladesh to explore the perception and practices on fatherhood from a father's point of view. This study will look at how urban middleclass fathers perceive and practice fatherhood in Bangladesh. Specifically, this study will explore fathers' (1) feelings and emotions of being a father; (2) perception of fatherhood; (3) perceived qualities of an ideal father and assessment of their self-qualities; (4) views of the relationship with their own children and its expected outcome; (5) perception about the roles of fathers and mothers in child-rearing; (6) level of involvement in daily child caring tasks; (7) views on generational role changes of fatherhood; (8) views on child-care if both parents are earning an income; and (9) compare the differences of perception and practices of fatherhood between single and income families. Gathering insights about these issues is expected to inform policy makers and organizations who can help to maximize father's involvement in childrearing. Cost effective and comprehensive approaches to involve fathers in daily child care need to be found, which in turn will contribute for the healthy child upbringing.

This research provides a descriptive, qualitative study combined with quantitative socio-demographic information to understand the perception of fatherhood of single and income biological fathers from middle-class urban society in Dhaka city. This study followed what Patton (2002) describes as the pragmatic approach to qualitative research, which aims to “supersede one-sided paradigm allegiance by increasing the concrete and practical methodological options available to researchers and evaluators” (p 72). A purposive sampling technique has been used for this exploratory qualitative research. Participants were middle-aged fathers earning a monthly income between 10,000 and 30,000 taka and moderately educated (minimum Higher Secondary Certificate). Thirty two participants for focus group discussion (FGD) and the ten participants selected for in-depth interviews were recruited equally from the same income group (single and) from Dhaka city, each with at least one child under five at home. Focus group discussions and in-depth interviews were used as tools and the main method for data collection. Four FGDs were conducted separately with single income fathers and fathers with a wage earning spouse, followed by in-depth interviews. Discussions and interviews were audio-taped and transcribed for analysis.

The transcriptions of discussions and interviews were entered in ATLAS.ti software (version 5.5). Then coded data were grouped into themes for the final analysis. Quantitative socio-demographic information of the participants was analyzed using SPSS (Version 11.5) to determine the frequency distributions of the data.

Key findings

To become a father was happy and exciting moments for the all participants (n=42, 100%) and vast majority of them (n=40, 95%) were happy and satisfied with the gender of their children and only two of them (5%) preferred a female child instead of male. Participants mostly perceived fatherhood to involve: raising children; earning money; educating and teaching children; providing guidance; making decisions; disciplining children; providing materialistic needs; and ensuring their children's future. The most highly valued qualities for an ideal father identified by the participants were: being responsible; caring; educated; ideological; honest; having social and moral values; and friendliness. Approximately 86% (36 out of 42) considered themselves as ideal fathers having some of these qualities. Most

participants (38 out of 42, 91%) reported social environment, insecurity and safety, lack of play ground, business, economic crisis, job nature; time and lack of confidence in hands on child rearing activities as the major barriers to be an ideal father as well as barriers to their involvement in daily child caring.

Virtually all participants viewed their relationship with their children as friendly relationship and believed that it would have some positive impact on their education, self-control and discipline; and expected that the child would share everything with them. The vast majority (90%) believed that there are role differences between father and mother in child rearing. The general understanding was that mother would do more direct caring and household chores, and they would do out-of-home activities with the children and play an assumed role as the provider and decision maker. The fathers in this study usually spend about three hours per day involved in child rearing and participate in activities which include buying toys, books and food items, taking them for a walk, to the park, zoo or market place, reading to them, playing, looking after them and maintaining hygiene standards. Though the majority of the participants (39 out of 42, 93%) considered themselves better fathers than their own fathers, they rarely participated in the hands-on daily caring activities such as bathing and feeding of the children. Almost all the fathers took part in disciplining their children, teaching them social behaviors, and instructing and guiding their spouse. All participants mentioned the positive and negative outcomes of their proper and improper role playing which mostly focus on education, learning and 'well- raised' focused. Many participants (38 out of 42, 90%) expressed the view that if both parents are at work for earning an income, especially the mother, it causes problems. The main issues is the effect on the children as they must depend on domestic help to take care of their children whom they may not consider the most appropriate role model for their children. Surprisingly there were no differences on perception and practices of fatherhood between only single income fathers and fathers with a wage earning spouse.

Conclusion

Perception and practices of fatherhood, in the traditional sense, continues to be dominant with fathers even though they considered themselves to be better fathers than their own in terms of involvement, education, and awareness and caring. Fathers

in this study discussed what they understand about fatherhood, ideal fathers and their qualities, roles of fathers and mothers, their practices and activities with their children, which does not take into account direct care for children and spending quality time with them. Except for the caretaker role, the perception and practices they viewed were primarily within the roles of 'supporter', 'decision maker' and 'economic provider', without having much involvement in daily and direct care of their children. Traditional female childcare tasks such as feeding and bathing of the child etc. are not considered within the purview of 'their involvement' fatherhood. They considered themselves to take part in the out-of-home activities and mothers would undertake direct caring activities and household chores for the children. The fathers shared the levels of commitment to the parenting endeavor, typically; they want to raise their children well, they want to see them educated and they want to put in as much effort, money and time as they can. Lack of sufficient time, security, confidence and good social environment was found to be the most important constraints reported by the fathers against active participation. Whether the mothers were at home or at work, the vast majority of fathers believed that mothers must do more for caring children as they are more capable of handling children. This belief reflects the traditional societal views of the father-mother roles in child rearing. Fathers voiced their concerns about the potential negative impacts upon children by keeping children in the primary care of domestic helpers if the mothers undertake income-generating activities along with the fathers.

One of the policy implications of this study finding is the need for policy to support responsible fatherhood as now seen in neighboring India. Gaps between the beliefs and practices of fathers on fatherhood need to be addressed to reinforce that fathers have an important role to play. When both parents are working, day care facilities need to be provided for their children. Government Organizations (GO) and Non-government Organizations (NGO's) can work together to create infrastructure and build capacity to run day care centers. Substantial effort is required to remove the cultural barriers and bring a change in men's attitude to prepare them for the new fathering role. Furthermore, there is a need to explore ways to train domestic helpers and establish public-government initiatives to raise awareness to change the views and attitudes towards domestic help which will in turn help to build a respectful future generation.

III. Declaration

This research paper contains no material that has been accepted for the award or any other degree or diploma in any educational institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the paper.

Signed..........

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Glossary of Terms

ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GO	Government Organization
HSC	Higher Secondary Certificate
IDI	In-depth Interview
KAP	Knowledge, Attitude and Practice
NGO	Non-Government Organization
SSC	Secondary School Certificate
SES	Socio Economic Status
WHO	World Health Organization

1. Introduction

“Fatherhood” is a global phenomenon and has a lot of potential to promote Early Childhood Development. Recently, in developed countries, the fathers’ role in child development has received increased attention and many initiatives have been undertaken to involve fathers in child rearing and caring. The “Father” is just one of the many role identities that a man assumes as part of his “self”, placed in a hierarchy of identity dimensions based on salience and centrality (Marsiglio, 1995; Marsiglio & Cohan, 2000). Margaret Mead, a well-known anthropologist, emphasized the importance of paternal status in her research during the early 1960s (1962). Society provides multiple understandings of fathers, from the traditional breadwinner and disciplinarian to the ‘new age’ nurturing father and Mr. MOM (Coltrane, 2007; Lamb, 2000; Pleck & Pleck, 1997). Fatherhood as a social phenomenon has long been an integral aspect of population studies. In some countries, fatherhood is also recognized as a social construct that may include non-biologically related men who engage in a direct or indirect caring role in relation to a younger person.

Before the 1990s, policymakers considered fathers and fathering largely in a financial context (Halle, Moore, Greene & LeMenestrel, 1998). Over time, however, increased concern about children’s wellbeing peaked the interest policymakers about the ways in which fathers contributed to the overall wellbeing of their children, particularly in the context of low-income and disadvantaged families. Palkovitz (2002) noted that men engage in a variety of roles that may encompass the notion of “good fathering,” and that these roles are largely socially constructed. Accordingly, beliefs about the father’s role (both from fathers themselves and external sources) may be an important predictor of variability in father involvement across multiple contexts (Palkovitz, 2002).

In Bangladesh, traditionally fathers do not actively participate in the upbringing of their children or their development, as they are not involved directly in the daily care of their children. Fathers’ perceptions of fatherhood tend not to consider the importance of playing with their children, singing, reciting nursery rhymes or talking and listening to their children. The result is that fathers – as crucial role

models (according to some cultural perspectives) – are absent during much of the child's formative years. In Bangladesh the participation of fathers in child-rearing activities is remarkably low regardless of socio-economic status, race and ethnicity. The value of fatherhood is therefore significantly underestimated and yet to be fully explored as a window of opportunity for enhancing children's various cognitive, academic, pro-social behavioral and language development from the early years. Apart from the traditional roles of being the head of the family and earning money, understanding the fathers' perception and practices of fatherhood is crucial for designing future intervention programs to facilitate paternal involvement in child-care.

2. Background and Literature Review

2.1 Fatherhood in a global context

Previous research that has sought to understand how fathers learn to be fathers has tended to focus on the role of their own fathers, their peers, and their partners (Daly 1993; Masciadrelli, Pleck, & Steuve, 2006). Recent studies in developed countries on diverse groups of fathers has explored how fathers have perceived fatherhood and their roles when they are involved; as a context of motivations and enactment (Day, 1998), as a source of stability—"being there," providing support; as a mentor and teacher—guiding, shaping values, teaching children, as a caregiver—engaging in physical interactions, providing care, and as a nurturer—providing emotional support and love (Summers, Boller, Schiffman & Raikes, 2006). Research has shown that children influence the fathers' orientation toward self and other, values and expectations, time, and the relationship with their parenting partner (Daly & Brown, 2009). Also, fathers perceived their role as the provider for the family, the teacher and/or role model to the children (Este & Tachble, 2009), promoting a particular role for fathers as educational facilitators to children (Gillies 2009). In a similar study on Indian fathers seven dimensions of the ideal fatherhood and fathering roles were identified, the father as a: caretaker, surety, economic provider, playmate and friend, role model, family head, and as a resource (Saraff & Srivastava, 2008).

The literature yields equivocal findings regarding ethnic differences in paternal roles, as illustrated by Pleck's (1997) review. For instance, McAdoo (1993) has argued that once social class is accounted for, there are few differences in the care-giving behaviors of African American and White fathers. Another study showed the impact of parenting attitudes and behaviors on young children's development were similar in both low-income African American and middle-income White American fathers (Kelley, Smith, Green, Berndt, & Rogers, 1998). On the other hand, some studies reported that African American fathers demonstrated higher levels of involvement with their children, compared to White fathers (Pleck, 1997). Lamb

(1997) suggested that although there may be universal aspects of father-child relationships (e.g., supporting their development) and paternal roles, these should be demonstrated, and not assumed. Marisiglio and colleagues (2000) highlighted the diversity of fatherhood contexts included in research studies: divorced, non-resident or 'absent' fathers, resident single-father families, stepfathers, young fathers of children born to teenage mothers, gay fathers and fathers from different racial and ethnic backgrounds. However, relatively little cross-national comparative research has been conducted. Studies that focus explicitly on the way fatherhood is actually lived and experienced has revealed considerable complexity and diversity, raising important questions about what it means to be an involved father (Doucet 2006; Featherstone 2003; Hobson 2002).

Fatherhood encourages men to increase intergenerational and extended family interactions and participate in service-oriented activities and increased earnings (Knoester & Eggebean, 2006; Lerman & Sorensen, 2000). Men who are involved fathers tend to feel more self confident and are more effective as parents (DeLuccie, 1996), find parenthood more satisfying (Lamb, 1982), feel more intrinsically important to their child (Lamb, 1987), and feel encouraged to be even more involved (DeLuccie, 1996). Spending time taking care of children provides fathers with opportunities to display affection and to nurture their children (Almeida & Galambos, 1991; Coltrane, 1996). Involved fathers are more likely to see their interactions with their children positively (DeLuccie, 1996), be more attentive to their child's development, enjoy closer, richer father-child relationships (Lamb, 1987; Snarey, 1993), are likely to exhibit greater psychosocial maturity (Pleck, 1997; Snarey, 1993), be more satisfied with their lives (Eggebean & Knoester, 2001), feel less psychological distress (Barnett, Marshall, & Pleck, 1992; Ozer, Barnett, Brennan, & Sperling, 1998), and be more capable to understand themselves, empathically understand others, and integrate their feelings in an ongoing way (Heath, 1994).

In patriarchal societies (i.e., not *all*), fathers have been identified traditionally as the "breadwinners" of the family, whereas mothers were primarily responsible for care-giving. Thus, the traditional family structure has not always encouraged fathers to become involved parents. Consequently, many early conceptualizations of father involvement centered on the idea of "deficit" or "inadequate" fathering (Hawkins & Dollahite, 1997) of their children. Evidence indicates that this conceptual historical change in the "culture of fatherhood" increasing the amount of visible involvement

of fathers with their children (Larossa, 1988 Pleck & Masciadrelli, 2004). Although the exact effects of increased father involvement on family dynamics remains to be seen, the emerging evidence suggests that fathers' increased care-giving of children often has positive outcomes for families (Pleck & Masciadrelli 2004; Day & Lamb, 2004). Research involving men and their children also indicate a strong correlation between positive father involvement and children's cognitive, emotional, relational and physical well-being (Vogel, Boller, Faerber, Shannon, & Tamis-LeMonda, 2003). Children from families with involved fathers are more likely to have higher levels of economic and educational achievement, career success, occupational competency, better educational outcomes, higher educational expectations, higher educational attainment, and psychological well being (Amato, 1994; Barnett, Marshall, & Pleck, 1992a; Flouri, 2005; Furstenberg & Harris, 1993; Harris, Furstenberg & Marmer, 1998; Snarey, 1993).

In many parts of Asia, traditionally, men are expected to work hard and make money to support and protect their families and show filial piety and respect for his parents (Huang, Lin, Tien & Chen, 2001). The traditional father tends to be absent from child-rearing because it is seen as one of the mother's obligations and it is rare to find an outward demonstration of a close father-child relationship or the father acting like a friend to the child in traditional Asian societies (Huang et al., 2001). It must be acknowledge that, in this context, working long and hard hours to earn a good income to support the child and family is also a very important way for the father to show that he cares and to demonstrate his perception of a 'positively involved' father. Unfortunately, there is a scarcity of published reports that directly focus on fathers and their perception on fatherhood and practices from developing countries in Asia, particularly in Southeast Asia, where children's development is largely compromised due to many ecological factors (Walker, Wachs, Gardner, Lozoff, Wasserman, Pollitt & Carter, 2007).

In the past twenty years, the practice of fatherhood in western Europe and North American countries has come under increasing scrutiny from researchers, policy-makers, practitioners and the media. There are now international conferences and forums on the practice of fatherhood, including many websites dedicated to this topic. Interest also continues on the links between fatherhood research and social and organizational policies (Lamb & Sagi 1983; Haas, Hwang & Russell, 2000). Importantly, also, there have been several national analyses across America and

Europe of fatherhood that have focused on reviews of research, policies and practices, that have also attempted to provide direction for future work and practice (Cabrera, Tamis – LeMonda, Bradley, Hofferth & Lamb, 2000).

Recently, the child development field has shown a notable upswing in activity around fatherhood, including efforts to define its multi-faceted nature, identify its contextual determinants, and provide evidence of its contribution to children's development (Cabrera et al. 2000). Much of the existing literature has focused on the global construct of "father involvement." This construct, for the most part, has referred to the amount of time fathers spend with their children or the extent of their care-giving responsibilities. A pilot project undertaken in six U.S. cities for fathers, which included a component labeled the 'Fatherhood Development Curriculum' (Watson, 1992), showed that most participants (91%) felt that the fatherhood curriculum was helpful in teaching them parenting skills and improving their relationship with their children. The amount of care-giving and the sensitivity towards children's needs for the father's care have been differentially related to children's developmental outcomes and to paternal-family characteristics (Barnett & Baruch, 1987; Parke, 1996; Volling & Belsky, 1991). Research shows that toddlers with two supportive parents scored higher Bayley Mental Development Index (MDI) at the age of 24 and 36 months than all other children with two unsupportive parents (Ryan, Martin, & Brooks-Gunn, 2006). Thus, it is important to consider involvement in care-giving and paternal sensitivity separately because different factors may influence each of them.

2.2 The Bangladesh context

Bangladesh is one of the most densely populated countries of the world with a population of about 142 million, with approximately 16% of the population aged between zero and five years (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2008). This study was conducted in Dhaka, Bangladesh's capital. It is the world's fastest-growing mega-city with a population of more than 12 million people—double the number of a decade ago—and is projected to grow to 20 million by 2020 (World Bank, 2007). Bangladesh society is known to be male-dominated where, at present and in the recent past, has been patriarchal, and men have enjoyed a relatively higher status compared to women. Hierarchies and segregation in roles and status have conditioned men to regard issues

relating to childbearing and rearing as an exclusive female domain. Currently in Bangladesh the definition of father tends to remain restricted to a man who is biologically related to a child. It should also be noted that fathers typically continue in their father role even as the child reached adulthood, so that fatherhood does not end when a child matures.

In general, men remain the key figure in domestic decision-making, play key social and economic roles for the family, and, typically, behave first as a husband and then as a father. Very limited studies have been conducted in Bangladesh to see the fathers' perception on fatherhood. A secondary analysis of a sub-sample of fathers in an early childhood development study by Haider (2003) on their knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP study, 2001) indicated 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, spend less than one hour a day with their children and they believe that the influence of their roles amounts to only 5% of all the influences that shape a child's learning (KAP, 2001). An exploratory set of interviews by Golam (ARNEC, 2009) shows the beginning of an interest in fatherhood in Bangladesh. How fathers perceive their roles in child rearing, caring activities, and the barriers to increased involvement are yet to be explored in Bangladesh. There is virtually no research-based literature on fathers of young children in Bangladesh which directly focuses on how fathers perceive fatherhood and their roles in child-rearing and caring, why fathers are not involved directly in the daily care of their children, and the barriers that stop fathers from being involved in their upbringing. There is also a lack of information about how increased involvement of mothers, the primary caregivers of children, in outside jobs for income generation influence parenting practices, particularly in urban societies. This study will be an inaugural and exploratory study on Bangladeshi urban fathers.

3. Justification

In light of above discussion it seems clear that fatherhood and the roles of fathers are important parenting practices that promote the physical, cognitive, socio-emotional and well-being of children which enhance the holistic development of the child. Fathers can meet their children's needs by using the following parenting strategies: caring for oneself; better understanding their children; nurturing, supporting and helping the mothers, guiding and motivating their children; and acting as an advocate for children. The international community has emphasized this issue at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and in 2000 our neighboring country, India, has formed a policy called the 'Indian National Population policy for responsible fatherhood'. This policy places emphasis on male involvement in family affairs such as the equal participation of women and men in all areas of family and household responsibilities, including family planning, child-rearing and housework and it should be promoted and encouraged by the Government. Because it promotes equality and reinforces positive family values and also bring greater benefits for children. .

Like many other developing countries, many children in Bangladesh are failing to reach their optimal growth and development potential due to many factors (Grantham-McGregor, Cheung, Cueto, Glewwe, Richter, Strupp, 2007). The increase in the fathers' involvement and an increase in the active nature of their roles in helping children to reach their optimal development might have huge potential in Bangladesh, this needs immediate attention. Society and families in Bangladesh highly value education and they want their children to be educated, respect their elders, be successful in life, and be economically solvent. Fathers tend to work hard to ensure financial support for their children and family. It must be acknowledge that in the South Asia context, working long and hard hours to earn wages to support a child and family is also a very important way of showing their level of care and a demonstration of a 'positively involved' father.

For this inaugural study of fathers' perceptions in Bangladesh, the focus is on fathers' beliefs and perceptions about their actual and potential roles in more direct forms of involvement with their children. For example, in performing daily care

giving tasks, engaging in play, and accompanying their children on excursions outside the family home. Strong family bonds and existing family structures could be useful conduits to instill fathers' roles. These kinds of roles need to be instilled urgently to improve the learning and development process of children. In fact, the government of Bangladesh is giving high priority on Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD)

An Operational Framework for Pre-primary Education (2008) has already been approved and The Comprehensive Early Childhood Care and Development Framework is under development to address the issue. In both policies the roles of parents has been highly emphasized. For example, one of the objectives of Operational Framework for Pre-Primary Education policy is "to support parents and others caregivers by providing knowledge and skills necessary to meet children's developmental needs (page 16)".

To carry forward the ECD movement in Bangladesh many strategies and approaches are being applied to involve parents, siblings, other caregivers to achieve the optimum development of children such as home-based, center-based and community involvement programs and child-to-child approaches. The best approaches to serve the children and empower the fathers are yet to be found, these approaches require using the fathers in the process, particularly to make ECD program a successful one. Finding a cost effective comprehensive approach to involve fathers in child rearing and caring process that will benefit all the children and empower the fathers is crucial, particularly when the mothers are also being involved in earning wages for the family. In order to do so, the perception of fathers on fatherhood in Bangladesh, in various contexts and conditions, must be understood to then accordingly decide the best approach.

It is anticipated that the current study will help to strengthen the incorporation of perceptions and views of fathers on fatherhood into parenting programs. This is, however, certainly not the only method for increasing paternal involvement. A number of other strategies, particularly those that directly focus on fathers' own beliefs, attitudes, and practices, may be more efficient ways of increasing fathers' involvement in healthy child upbringing. The emergent concept of the role of the father and the perception on fatherhood needs to be translated into practice to support and strengthen the father-child relationship and to favor fathers' involvement early in the life of the children.

4. Study Objectives

The key objective of this study is to analyze the knowledge, attitudes and practices of fathers from middle class socio-economic background on fatherhood that includes only wage earning fathers in the family and fathers of (child's mother is also wage earner) wage earning families. This study will explore fathers': (1) feelings and emotions of being a father; (2) perception of fatherhood; (3) perceived qualities of an ideal father and assessment of their self-qualities as father; (4) views of relationships with their own children and its expected outcome; (5) perception of the children rearing role of fathers and mothers; (6) involvement in daily child caring; (7) views on generational role changes of fatherhood of urban fathers in Bangladesh; (8) views on child-care if both parents are involved in income generation; and (9) to compare perception and practices among urban fathers with a working spouse and urban fathers without a working spouse.

5. Method

This study used what Patton (2002) describes as the pragmatic approach to qualitative research, which aims to “supersede one-sided paradigm allegiance by increasing the concrete and practical methodological options available to researchers and evaluators (p.72)”. Due to the lack of available knowledge on the perspective of perception and practices of fatherhood, a qualitative, exploratory study design was used.

This research was based on focus group discussions (FGD) and in-depth, face-to-face, semi-structured and structured interviews with fathers in households with a working spouse and without a working spouse, living in the Dhaka city. The FGD was applied as the primary instrument to collect data. If participants did not feel comfortable sharing on any particular topic regarding fatherhood, while within the group setting or if they felt any group pressure, in-depth interviews were used as a follow-up mechanism for data collection. A purposive sampling strategy maximized the diversity of the participants. Specifically, participants were recruited through personal contacts, word-of-mouth inquiry, and through friends. A special effort was made to recruit a heterogeneous group of fathers. FGDs were conducted with same wage earning group of fathers to explore perceptions and practices of fatherhood specifically in middle class families, who are academically educated; appears to be family oriented; have a tendency to adapt with changes and are comparatively more concerned about their children’s future compared to other classes. FGDs ran for approximately one and half hours. In addition, semi-structured and conversational in-depth interviews were conducted separately with only wage earning fathers and fathers with a wage earning spouse to elicit each father’s account of their beliefs and perceptions. This arrangement was provided to elicit expressed beliefs which may or may not come in a mixed group setting. These interviews were approximately one hour long. Both FGDs and interviews were audio-taped and transcribed for analysis.

5.1 Study population

A purposive sampling technique was applied for this exploratory qualitative research. The study population only included the wage earning fathers and fathers with a wage-earning spouse, from the middle class socio-economic background. These fathers are living in Dhaka city and have at least one child at home under five years old. The minimum requirement for participants was at least a completion of HSC level education and employment with a monthly income between 10,000 Taka to 30,000 Taka, to consider them as fathers from middle class socio-economic background. Only families with a single income father are defined by the father as the only income earner for the family. Wage earner defines the situation when both parents are involved in earning an income and both of them are away from the family home for the whole day. The relationship of both types of fathers to the children was biological and in each case the number of dependent family members was six or less.

5.2 Sample Size

There were 16 fathers from each earning group (single wage earners versus dual wage income fathers) for conducting four FGDs, containing eight fathers in a group that made 32 fathers all together. In addition to explore topics in more depth, 10 fathers were recruited to conduct in-depth interviews with groups of fathers in a similar income group, with equal numbers in each group.

5.3 Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling was the sampling method used, with maximum variation sampling. Purposive sampling is a sampling method used in qualitative research to select “a limited number of informants strategically so that their in-depth information will give optimal insight into an issue about which little is known”(Varkevisser, Pathmanathan, & Brownlee, 2003). Heterogeneous groups of fathers were recruited in terms of age, education, income, number of children and religion.

5.4 Study Areas

Focus group discussions were conducted in my office meeting room at Banani and participants were recruited from Banani, Badda, Gulshan, Mirpur, Moghbazar,

Motijheel and Kachukhet. The in-depth interviews were undertaken on location at Sabujbagh, Mugdapara, Ahmedbagh, Jatrabari and Mirpur areas.

5.5 Duration of the study

The have been study carried out for a total period of six months.

- Preparatory phase: one month (Oct'09)
- Period of data collection two months (Nov-Dec'09)
- Data cleaning, transcription, coding analyses and write-up - three months (Jan-Mar'10)

5.6. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

5.6.1 Inclusion Criteria

- Only wage earner, biological fathers and biological fathers with a wage earning spouse, and those who have below five years old children at home
- Fathers who falls under a minimum education level
- Have willingness to participate in the study voluntarily

5.6.2. Exclusion Criteria

- Refused to give informed consent
- Very sick
- Evidently mentally retarded/disordered (i.e. no systematic screening or intelligence testing was conducted)
- Who do not match specified the earning group, education level, and age of children

5.7. Research issues

Research issues for this qualitative study were compiled after extensive brainstorming and literature review, considering the investigator's own experiences of being fathered and of fathering, journalistic commentaries in Bangladesh about father roles and involvement, personal insight and knowledge of the Bangladesh context,

and a review of the largely Euro-Western literature on father involvement. The research issues are presented in the research table in Appendix (IIa, IIb).

5.8. Research Instruments

Focus group discussions (FGD) and in-depth interviews were the data collection methods used for this study. FGD was the primary tools for data collection and the in-depth interview (IDI) was the secondary tool. Both FGDs and IDIs were conducted according to a topic guide prepared by the researcher with guidance from the thesis supervisor. The topic guide evolved as a result of new understanding as the study progressed. The final topic guide is presented in Appendix IIa.

FGDs and IDIs were audio-taped and were transcribed verbatim following each interview or FGD. A structured questionnaire was used for baseline information collection of the participants during sample recruitment (Appendix IV).

5.9. Data collection procedure and implementation of the study

FGDs were conducted by the principal investigator on 23rd and 24th October, 2009. A four phase process was used to conduct each FGD: introduction, opening, discussion and wrap up. Introduction phase was used to introduce the participants to each other, help them relax, familiarize them with the topics and prepare them for participation in the discussion. The participants sat at an oval shaped table with name tags placed in front of them (see appendix VI). Between October 2009 and January 2010, personal individual semi-structured and conversational interviews were conducted with fathers. Interviews were face-to-face lasting roughly sixty minutes on average in either their home or an office (belong to the researcher or participant) in a relaxed and comfortable setting (see in appendix VI). Consistent with conventional strategies of qualitative research, simultaneous data collection and analysis was conducted, resulting in minor modifications to the interview guide as the study unfolded. The interviews began with a brief introduction by the researcher, an overview of the study and its purpose. Participants were asked to describe themselves, their children, jobs and especially their relationships with their children. Fathers were encouraged by the researcher to talk about, in mostly a chronological order, their feelings of fatherhood; fathers roles; understanding of fatherhood; qualities of an ideal

father and self qualities as fathers; and others views of fatherhood including their current perceptions and practices of fatherhood.

I was accompanied by a research associate and a research assistant for this research. One team member was an experienced qualitative researcher and the other team member had experience in qualitative research. Based on the main issues proposed in this research protocol, I have developed the data collection instruments with my team, in consultation with the supervisor.

5.10. Pretest of data collection instruments

The focus group discussion topic guidelines and semi-structured in-depth interview topic guide was pre-tested a week before final data collection and adapted accordingly.

5.11. Data collection in the field

For the study, a moderating guidelines/checklist was developed for conducting FGD and IDIs. A focus group and in-depth interview topic guide was developed. I recruited the participants as per the inclusion criteria mentioned above. During recruitment socio-economic (SES) background and other information of the respondents were screened out.

All questions and issues being considered for the FGDs and in-depth interviews were reviewed by my supervisor, my team and myself. The focus group discussion topic guidelines and semi-structured in-depth interview topic guide was pre-tested a week before final data collection and adapted, modified and edited accordingly on the basis of feedback received from pre-test before finalization. To prepare I undertook training to follow a detailed set of guidelines to conduct the focus group discussions (Morgan & Krueger, 1998). I also reviewed literature on FGDs, conducted role-play and piloted the guidelines with supervision from local mentor to ensure I was well prepared to collect the data for this study.

The focus groups were scheduled in locations that enabled the fathers to feel comfortable and relaxed. I conducted the focus groups discussions during the weekend (Friday and Saturday) at convenient times for the participants; two FGDs were conducted in the day, with same group of fathers. Each focus group session

took approximately ninety minutes in length. Each researcher followed the same standardized format to conduct each FGD (Morgan et al., 1998). I have employed a four-phase format to conduct each FGD: introduction, opening, discussion and wrap up. All discussions were recorded in a digital voice recorder and audio tape recorder. All team members were trained to play manual note-taking and gate-keeping roles during the FGDs.

I worked closely with my team prior to each FGD and interview, and discussed and exchanged opinion during data collection to adapt and improve the guides during the course of the research in order to assure that the data collected is as comprehensive as possible.

5.12 Data analysis

Qualitative data analysis was an ongoing process, starting as soon as we entered the field and finishing once the final report is complete. I applied immediate and extensive de-brief in the field, a systematic process of shifting, charting and sorting of material according to key issues and themes. I transcribed all recorded and audio-taped discussions and interviews. This was followed by careful reading of transcripts to identify key themes, followed by indexing, charting, mapping and interpretations.

Data analysis started during the data collection procedures, as described above, by reading the transcripts and discussing the data with the team. Transcripts were finalized after cross checking with the tapes, and then a coding scheme and code definitions were developed by the team and the supervisor (see Appendix III). Attention was paid to describing field experiences during data collection. Accuracy checks were undertaken by two other researchers who randomly selected a set of transcripts, who reviewed them while listening to the tapes. The analysis was discussed in a meeting with the research team and with the supervisor. Then the transcribed versions of discussions and interviews were entered in ATLAST.ti software (version 5.5) to group the same patterns of responses. This software helped me uncover and systematically analyze complex phenomena hidden in text data. The software provides tools that can quickly locate, code, and annotate findings in primary data material, to weigh and evaluate their importance, and to visualize complex relations between the data.

Coded data were grouped into the themes and sub-themes for the final analysis. In addition, I also collected quantitative socio-demographic information including age of fathers & mothers, their education, earning, number of children, religion and job types using structured close ended questionnaires. This information was analyzed using SPSS (Version 11.5). Frequency distributions of all collected socio-demographic variables were observed. Significant differences between sample means of single-wage-earner and -wage-earner families were assessed using Chi-square test and Student's t-test for continuous variables.

5.13 Quality assurance

5.13.1. Pretest of data collection instruments

The focus group discussion topic guidelines and semi-structured in-depth interview topic guide was pre-tested a week before final data collection and adapted accordingly.

5.13.2. Training for conducting FGD & IDI: To conduct the FGD and IDI, I underwent training and became familiar with the skills required to professionally moderate the sessions to explore the research topic and issues from the respondents. I subsequently trained my research assistant on the research issue, topic guide, and the format for comprehensive note-taking.

5.13.3. Data validation through triangulation

In this study inter-method triangulation was employed for ensuring validity of data. This approach involves using more than one research method or data collection technique, because each addresses different dimensions of the topic. Data from two sources such as IDI and FGD were compared for triangulation.

In addition, triangulation of analytic methods also used by researchers to address credibility and validity concerns by incorporating multiple sources for data and/or several methods of analysis. Three researchers were involved including myself in the early steps of analysis, known as coding. We coded each transcript separately. A definition of each code was constructed on the basis of thorough discussion between the three researchers; all transcripts were analyzed according to these codes. The same procedures were followed during the preparation and finalization of the

topic guide and semi-structured questionnaire. A second researcher audited the transcriptions for possible errors.

Following this approach helped us gain an inter-subjective understanding of coding, themes and findings among the members of the research team who contributed to the reliability of the findings presented in this report.

5.13.4. Providing a secure and confidential location

The respondents were interviewed in a location that assured privacy. Consent was asked before each discussion and interview, and the same procedure was followed for recording the discussions and interviews. The consent forms are presented in annex V. In the notes of the interviews, all respondents were coded and names were not mentioned during analysis, in order to assure that answers could not be linked to individuals.

5.14. Ethical Consideration

All ethical issues related to research involving human subjects were addressed according to the guidelines outlined by the WHO and also the guidelines from the Ethical review committee of BRAC University were followed in this study. The prospective participants were given the opportunity to receive summary information about the study in writing before providing consent and taking part in the research interviews (please see the consent form in the Annex V). Verbal consent was received before recording and commencement of each group discussion and written consent was taken from each participant prior to the in-depth interview. Confidentiality of the participants has been strictly maintained and names of the respondents were included in the analysis.

6. Results:

There are two parts in this section, the first presents the quantitative findings and the second depicts qualitative findings on fatherhood. A total of forty-two fathers ($N=42$) participated in this study. Within this group, ten participated in the IDIs and thirty-two fathers participated in the FGD. The FGD participant group was heterogeneous. Please see the Annex I for further details about the participants.

6.1. Quantitative results:

The target population was middle aged middle-class group of the society. Their mean age with standard deviation (SD) was 32 ± 6 years. Father's spouses' average age was 26 ± 4 years. According to selection criteria all fathers had minimum education levels of Higher Secondary School (HSC), however only a third of them had Masters Degree. All participants had below five children at home (1.4 below per/participant) and gender distributions of the children of participants are 66% boys and 34% are girls.

Figure 1 shows graphical presentation of the fathers' professions. A large proportion of fathers (50%) are serving in non-government private companies and 4% of them are involved in business and self-employment. For the participants whose spouses also earn a wage, the majority (90%) are also working in non-government or in the private sector (See Annexure I).

Fathers separated by profession

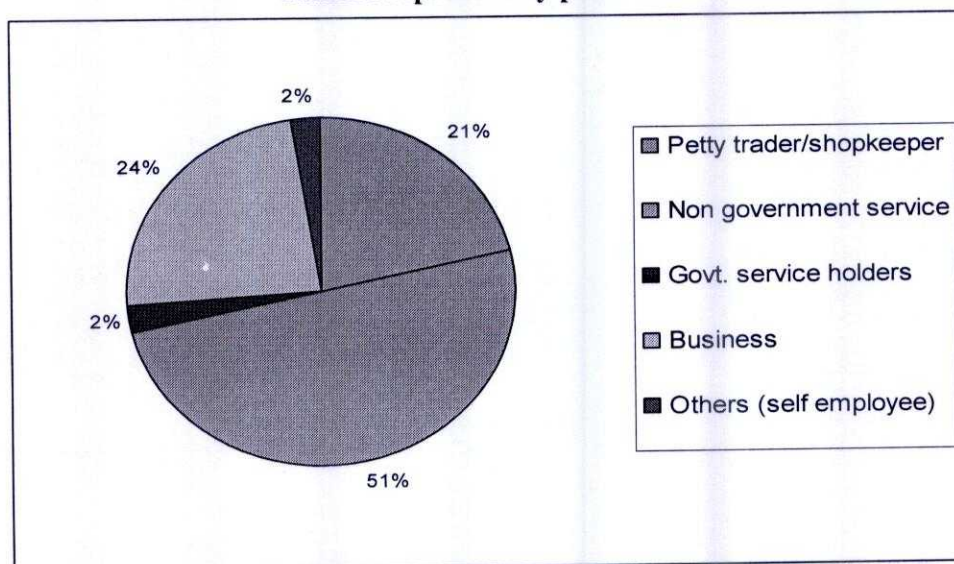


Figure-1

Figure 2 shows the distribution of reported monthly family income of the fathers who participated in this study. More than half of the fathers (54.8%) have income ranging from BDT 25001-30000 (US\$365-US\$438). Among all the fathers 12% respondents had monthly family income BDT 10000-15000 (US\$146-US\$219).

Distribution of total monthly family income of participants

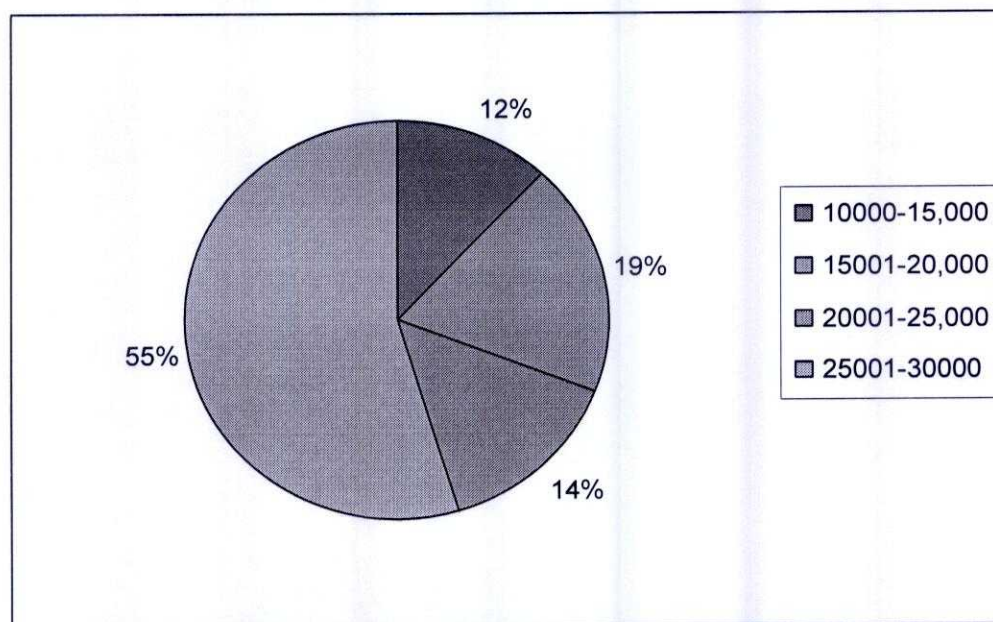


Figure 2

Table 1 shows the socio-demographic characteristics of the study population. The fathers were mostly middle aged, with an average age and SD of 32.79 ± 5.537 years. The average age and SD of the fathers' spouse was 25.71 ± 4.358 years.

The socio-demographic distributions of both the single and wage earner families were similar in all aspects except for the mothers' age (Table 1). Mothers were comparatively significantly younger (24 ± 5 years vs 28 ± 4 years, $p=0.015$) in single wage earner families compared to both wage-earner families.

Table 1: Socio-demographic distribution of by groups and differences between single and dual wage earning fathers

Variable	Single Wage Earner Fathers N=16	Wage Earner Fathers N=16	P value
Father's age in years (Mean±SD)	33±6	35±6	ns
Mother's age in years (Mean±SD)	24±7	28±4	0.015
Education-Fathers : HSC Degree/Graduation Masters	31%	50%	ns
	25%	38%	
	44%	12%	
Job-Fathers: Petty shopkeeper Non government service Govt. service holders Business Others (self employed)	25%	25%	ns
	62%	57%	
	4.8%	0%	
	23.8%	23.8%	
	4.8%	0%	
Income-Fathers in Taka	24812	25000	ns

Age group distribution of fathers was similar in both the groups (Figure 3).

Age distribution of the two study groups of fathers

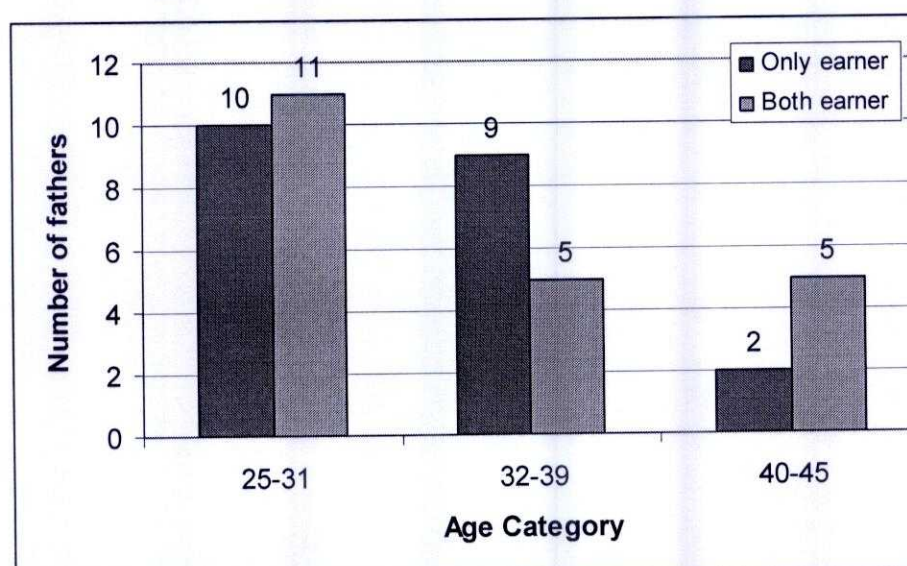


Figure 3

6.2. Qualitative study:

This section presents the perception and practices of fatherhood.

6.2.1. Feelings of being a father

Regarding feelings and emotions of being a father for the first time in their life, all of the participants shared positive feelings such as happiness, joy, excitement, pride, fulfillment, and the owner of wealth, and a result of marriage. Some fathers (4 out of 42, 10%), mentioned that they felt ashamed and an increase in responsibility, and also felt tense, nervous and worried for the safe delivery of a healthy child and mother. In addition, a few participants (2 out of 42, 5%) mentioned that they wanted to have more time before becoming a father since they were not ready financially and they had to have children as their wives and parents were pressuring the father. During in-depth interviews participants mentioned the same patterns of feelings and emotions of being a father. A single wage earning father said: *"I felt like feeling heavenly happiness after having my child. Parents hopes and dreams with their children"*.

The vast majority of fathers (95%) were very happy about the gender of their children regardless if it was boy or girl, although a few who are the father of boys mentioned that they consider it as a matter of honor and pride. One boy's father has mentioned that he would have been happier if the child was a girl as they are more caring and loving to their fathers. He said: *"I am father of a son. My son doesn't wait for me, he goes to sleep. I think it would have been better to have a girl who would wait for me"*.

Regarding the feelings and emotions when called "father" or "daddy" for the first time by their children, most of the participants (95%) reported that they could not even express the true feelings of this experience as it was moment of happiness, pride, pleasure and success. However a few participants (2 out of 42, 5%) reported that they have not yet had this experience. Participants during the in-depth interviews also reported the same kind of feelings on this issue. One father said: *"It can't be expressed in language. There is nothing as sweet like being called "father" in this earth. When she first called me, it was like a heavenly pleasure"*.

There were no group differences between single wage earner father and father with a wage earning spouse regarding feelings and emotions of being father, gender expectation of the child, and being called father.

6.2.2. Views of fatherhood

Almost all of the participants viewed the roles of father as a fatherhood as raising, providing financially, educating, teaching social behaviors and values, giving guidance, decision making, disciplining, taking care, saving money, providing health care and nutritional support. One single earner participant said: *"In our male dominated social conditions, women are not allowed to make any decision. Where the children will go for education will only be decided by the father"*.

In describing fatherhood, some participants (3 out of 42, 7%) mentioned that fatherhood is genetic and blood relationship to their off-spring. Two participants specifically mentioned that arranging and handing over their daughters to an appropriate groom is key part of fatherhood. Participants' views on fatherhood during the in-depth interviews were similar to the focus group discussions. There were no group differences on the views except that a few participants mentioned that fatherhood is also sharing the child raising responsibility with their wives. A father with wage earning spouse said: *"Fatherhood is big responsibility. Staring from child birth to as long as I live, I have to look after her by providing food, clothing, expenses, education, raising and welfare. Fatherhood means I must take care of everything and provide complete guidance"*.

6.2.3. Views on qualities of an ideal father and self-qualities as a father

All focus group participants were requested to write on VIPP cards the three main qualities that they consider an ideal father would possess. The most highly valued qualities for an ideal father were: responsible, caring, educated, ideological, honesty, high social and moral values, and friendliness. Other qualities that were also mentioned included religious, disciplining, nurturer, financially solvent, knowledgeable, health cautious, playfulness, well-behaved, trustworthy, sincere, strong civic sense and visioning as qualities of ideal fathers.

With regards to qualities seen within themselves as fathers, the most common traits identified amongst the vast majority of participants (36 out of 42, 86%) were: caring, responsible, providing things, religious, social, educated, spending time with family, and patient and understanding. The range of traits also included financial solvency, loving and affectionate, well-behave, friendliness, health cautious and consulting with doctors, saving money, providing material goods, ideological and honesty, disciplining skills, and the ability to contemplate future opportunities. During the in-depth interviews most participants also prioritized education, religiousness and financial solvency as self-qualities of a father and qualities of an ideal father along with the range of other qualities mentioned by the FGD participants above.

Regardless of wage status, all participants stated that there are barriers to being an ideal father. Most of the participants (38 out of 42, 90%) have mentioned business, economic crisis, nature of jobs and time, as barriers. They reported social environment, insecurity & safety, lack of access to play grounds, family problems, and a lack of confidence in daily child caring activities as barriers to being ideal fathers. The participants of the in-depth interviews mentioned similar barriers being an ideal father except a father with wage earning spouse who said there are no barriers to him. He said: *"To be an ideal father mentality is main thing. Social and economic barriers are not barriers. It's a wrong idea that you can't be an ideal father in bad financial situation. I don't have economic barriers to be an ideal father and there are no barriers to me"*.

Most participants (27 out of 32, 84%) have mentioned that they are taking or have taken steps to overcome the barriers mentioned above by managing, doing the best they can and working hard. Among them, a few participants mentioned that they have managed with domestic helpers, stopped spending time with friends and avoid bad things such as smoking. Some participants (5 out of 32, 16%) have mentioned that they are nothing they could do and few (three) participants have mentioned that they are sharing responsibilities with their wives. Participant's responses are similar in in-depth interviews on barriers and overcoming issues.

There were no group differences between single wage earner father and father with wage earning spouse regarding qualities of an ideal father; self-qualities as a father and barriers for being an ideal father.

6.2.4. Views of father-child relationship

Regarding the way in which participants viewed their relationships with their children, almost all of the participants (39 out of 42, 93%) classified it as a friendly relationship. Yet only a few participants (3 out of 42, 7%) reported that they viewed their relationship with their own children as free, nurturer, discipliner, learning role model and teacher-pupil. The participants of the in-depth interviews expressed the same patterns of responses.

"When you help her with her lessons it has to be a teacher-student relationship. Your views should be presented should be as a teacher. When you care them it has to be in an affectionate manner. She behaves according to her needs and you have to react similarly as a guardian, teacher, or play mate. You have to give time and interact with her play, this encourages her to develop and learn new skills. The bottom line is that it has to be a friendly relationship but you must be flexible and change according to their needs". (from a single income father)

Virtually all participants mentioned that there are positive and negative effects on children from the father-child relationship. Positive outcome of a relationship can include the child sharing everything with their fathers, not hiding anything from them, listening to what the father has to say, being well behaved and do well in their own life and at school. The list of negatives effects if the father-child relationship is not functional was extensive. Participants identified that children can become derailed, tend to be dishonest and do not share with their fathers, they are not respectful to others, they will not be educated, they may become involved with drugs and bad company, society will be affected, their cognitive and physical development will be hampered, and to the extreme that they become involved with terror activities and high-jacking. The responses from the participants of the in-depth interviews covered the same range of positive and negative outcomes from the father-child relationship when it does or does not work effectively. One participant stated *"If you have friendly relationship the child will tell their guardian correctly what he is doing or where they are going. And if he says what he needs or where he wants to go then I can provide and allow. If you don't have friendly relationship then you will not know what he needs and where he is going, it creates problem. If the relationship is friendly he will tell everything and would not lie and I can follow all his activities. You can not keep a gap in your relationship and you have to keep an eye on all activities; what he says,*

what he does and whether he does the things he says to me. This is how you keep the relationship". (Father of a two-year-old son with a working spouse)

There were no differences between the groups of single wage earner fathers and fathers with a wage-earning spouse regarding views of relationship with own children, and its positive and negative effects on their children.

6.2.5. Fathers' and mothers' roles in child rearing

Almost all of the participants (38 out of 42, 90%) think and believe that role differences exist between the father and mother in child rearing. Participants reported mothers' child caring roles are feeding, bathing, nursing, cleaning, giving time and doing household chores. They feel that the mothers' roles are more extensive and mothers' have many inherent qualities such as patience; they have more time for children; they understand children better; they are more caring towards children; they have a closer connection with their children; they know how to feed them; fathers are unable to do what the mother does, and what type of person she/he will become in the future depends on the mother.

A few participants mentioned that they are unable to carry out the caring activities to their children like mother does. A father with a wage-earning spouse said: *'A woman is more caring to children than a man. Like me, I don't look after my child's cleanliness and I cannot feed the way her mother does. If child doesn't want to eat, she makes dolls and tells stories to her to feed her with love, which I can't do. She makes different types of food and feeds her, but I can't do that either'.*

In contrast to mother roles, participants feel their roles as fathers involve playing a provider role; providing financial support; taking children to a park, zoo or other outdoor activity; making decisions about schools, teachers and doctors; disciplining their children; guiding and supervising their spouse. An only wage earner father said: *'I will decide and the mother will implement my decision. I'll decide what to eat and she will feed him. I will decide which school to enroll him and the mother will take him to that school'.*

In-depth interview participants expressed similar kind of roles of the father and mother in child rearing. An only wage earner participant said: *'Child rearing and caring, all these activities must be carried out by the mother. A father's role is to fill-up the needs whenever and whatever it's needed such as with money, food and things.*

If child falls sick mother will inform the father then the father will take the child to the doctor'.

Very few participants (4 out of 42, 9.5%) stated that there are no roles differences between father and mother in child rearing, they mentioned that it is the responsibility of both parents and fathers are able to contribute to daily caring activities. They also believed that spending time with the family and taking part in daily caring activities is part of their roles.

There were no group differences between single wage earner fathers and fathers with a wage earning spouse regarding mothers' roles in child caring and rearing except few participants who have said child rearing is a responsibility for both parents.

6.2.6. Involvement in child rearing

Most of the participants (36 out of 42, 86%) reported that they spent two to three hours per day with their children and during the weekend and public holidays this time increases up to six hours. Three participants reported that they are unable to spend any time with their children during the weekend as they look after their business. Similarly, some participants (6 out of 42, 14%) mentioned that due to nature of their jobs and business, they spend less than two hours per day with their children. There were no differences in daily time spent with children regardless of a single or income father.

The majority of participants (35 out of 42, 83%,) mentioned that they participate in daily caring and rearing activities which mainly included buying toys, books and food items, taking them for a walk, or to the park, zoo and market place, reading to them, talking to them, looking after them and keeping an eye on cleanliness and hygiene. Some of the participants (4 out of 42, 9.5%) reported that they are also involved in hands-on activities such as giving a bath to children, feeding, help them brush their teeth, assisting with homework and preparing the school bag, dressing the child and assisting with shoe tying.

Very few participants (3 out of 42, 7%) mentioned they do not feel confident in participating in hands-on rearing activities but they take part in disciplining the children, teaching social behaviors, and instructing and guiding their spouse. In-depth interview participants indicated a similar trend in the amount of time

spent with their children on a daily basis and during the weekend. They also participate in similar types of caring activities that, in general, are not hands-on activities. One participant with a wage earning spouse stated: *'Everyday I bring some food for my child. I feed them first then I sit with his/her books, show and read about the pictures of animals, birds, plants and trees. Then I go out'*.

There were no group differences between single wage earner fathers and fathers with a wage earning spouse regarding the amount of time spent with their children and their involvement in caring activities.

6.2.7. We are different from our fathers

All the participants (100%) agreed that there has been a generational role change of fatherhood; in the way their fathers behaved to their own modern-day role. When comparing self-roles as fathers with their own father and other fathers from their childhood, participants produced negative statements, such as: they were less educated, they were not aware about education and the future career of their children, they were conservative and superstitious, they were much harsher with discipline, they were not friendly to them, they used physical punishment, they were not health conscious for their children, they did not guide their education and schooling properly, and they were less involved in daily child rearing activities.

Some participants (6 out of 42, 14%) mentioned that their father used to practice and believe in superstitions; they used to have many children in the family; technology and educational systems were less developed in that period and they were scared of them. A participant with a wage earning spouse said: *'The way my father raised me was monotonous. He was hot tempered and strict, and did not behave in a friendly manner. He always kept us fearful of him, he used to stare at us with his big eyes and that's why we could not flourish. The views and mentality they had were if we raise our children that way then they will turn out like us'*.

There was a single participant who had something positive to say about his own father. He said: *'My father was an ideological High School teacher. I had a very good relationship with him. It was a free and friendly relationship'*.

In contrast to their own upbringing, the majority of participants (39 out of 42, 93%) expressed that they are more friendly to their children; they take them to zoo, park and market place; they are more advanced now in terms of self-development,

awareness about education and future career options; they guide their children on schooling; they own modern technology, and have a changed perception and culture from their fathers.

Participants in in-depth interviews reported similar changes from their father's to their own fathering roles today. This group added dressing the child, transportation facilities, and competition in education and safety issues.

'Earlier children used to go out whenever they wished and they didn't need any guide or guardian. Children are stuck inside the home now; they can't go out with their parents or siblings. When they go to school they are inside the van, everything has changed this way. Dhaka city used to be quiet with no traffic jams but now we are scared to go out due to the traffic jams. When we were sick our parents used to give us medicine from neighborhood pharmacy after two to four days of our illness, because they used to say if you have medicine before that the illness will increase. But now even with smallest sneeze we are taking her to the child specialist at the hospital. Actually it's not the parent's fault, it's societies fault. If society changes we have to change too'.

There were no group differences between single wage earner father and father with a wage earning spouse regarding generational roles changes of fatherhood between the time of their fathers and the participants as fathers.

6.2.8. Both wage earning parents and their children

Regarding problem and affect on children if both parents are at work almost all participants (38 out of 42, 90%) mentioned that it causes problems for them and does affect their children. Stated problems are: they have to depend on domestic help to take care of their children who are not sympathetic to children; the parents can not give time to their children; improper caring for children; bonding and relationship with their children does not strengthen; children do not receive enough attention and affection; meal times are hampered; children miss their parents, and lack of safety issues. Participants reported that these problems have negative effects on their children, such as children becoming depressed; they mix with bad company; they get tired, feel neglected and misbehave for the domestic help; they can not get the food they want; they learn inappropriate behavior and language from domestic helpers;

they suffer from improper cleanliness and they get sick easily; they become misguided and they feel lonely.

Very few participants (4 out of 42, 9.5%) have mentioned that they do not see any problems with both parents working since they are relying upon the grandmother and domestic helpers to care for their children. Participants from the in-depth interviews expressed similar problems and negative effects on children with both parents working. A father of two-year-old son, with a wage earning spouse said: *'The absence of parents is a serious matter. The mother's role in child rearing is incomparable. My son was feed powder milk when he was supposed to have breast-milk; he grew up with powder-milk. If his mother was with him then he would not have received feeder-milk. If I'd had the capability I would not have allowed to my wife to work. When we go out to work we have to leave him with the domestic helper or somebody else. The problem is the domestic helper's mentality affects your child. The way I care, rear and love my son is not the same way someone else would. Children don't usually eat; if we were home we could feed him by any means or give him whatever he wants. Domestic helper or others will not do that, if he doesn't eat it's fine with the domestic helper and she would not care whether he eats or not'*.

There were no group differences between single wage earner fathers and fathers with a wage-earning spouse regarding their views on the effects of both wage earning parents on children.

6.2.9. Summary findings

Being father and being called a father by their offspring were happy and joyful moments for all the participants. Most of them (n=40, 95%) are happy and satisfied with the gender of their children and few (n=2, 5%) even preferred a female child to a male child. Most perceived the role of fatherhood to raise children; earn for the family; educating children; teaching social behaviors and values; providing guidance; decision making for the family; disciplining children; providing things; savings money; ensuring health care and nutritional support, and blood and genetic connection.

For an ideal father participants considered being responsible; caring; educated; ideological; honest; having social and moral values; and friendliness as the highest valued qualities. Most of the participants (n=36, 86%) considered themselves

'average' ideal fathers, having qualities such as caring; responsible; providing things; religious; social; educated; spending time with family; patient and understanding; have disciplining skills; their earnings; and futuristic and visioning as fathers.

Virtually all participants view their relationship with their children as a friendly relationship, with the view that this relationship's outcome will provide a good education; they will be under control and discipline; and expect their children to share everything with them.

The vast majority (n=38, 90%) of the participants think and believe that there are differences exist between the father and mother in child rearing, with the understanding that mothers are patient; they have more time for children; they understand children better; they are more caring towards children; they know how to feed them. The roles considered specific to mothers are feeding, bathing, nursing, cleaning, giving time and doing household chores. In contrast to mother roles participants feel their role is providing things; providing financial supports; taking children out to park, zoo or other outdoor visiting; decision making on school, teacher and doctor; disciplining children; guiding and supervising mothers.

Depending on nature of their jobs the participants spent about three hours per day involved with child rearing activities and caring for their children during the week, however on weekends the amount of time increases. Participants participate in daily rearing and caring activities which includes buying toys, books and food items, taking them for a walk, or to the park, zoo or market places, reading to them, playing, looking after them and keeping an eye on hygiene. The fathers rarely participate in hands on daily caring activities such as bathing the children, feeding and playing with them but they are involved in disciplining them, teaching social behaviors and instructing and guiding their spouse. Participants mentioned that if they play their roles properly and are involved in child rearing, their children will be better behaved; they will do well in their lives and at a school; they will have friendly relationship; they will listen to their parents; they could be good discipliner and nurturer for the children; and they can be good role models to their children. If they are not involved and do not play their roles properly they believe their children will be derailed; dishonest; involved in terrorist and in high-jacking activities; will not be respectful to others; will not do well in school and not become educated; become involved in drugs and mix with bad company; society will be affected; and their cognitive and physical development will be impaired.

Participants highlighted a range of factors that they believed were barriers to their involvement in daily child rearing and caring, and to be an ideal father. These factors were: their business, the economic crisis, the nature of their jobs, time and lack of confidence in hands on child rearing activities are the barriers. They also have reported social environment, insecurity and safety, lack of play grounds and family problems as barriers.

The vast majority of the participants (n=39, 93%) believed that they are generational roles differences of fatherhood between their own fathers and participants as fathers. The modern-day fathers think that they are better fathers than their own and fathers of that generation. Participants reported that their fathers and fathers of that time were less educated; were not aware on education and future career of their children, they were conservative; they were tough with discipline; they were not friendly to them; they used physical punishment; they were not health conscious for their children; they did not guide their education and schooling properly, and they were less involved in daily child rearing activities.

Most of the participants (n=38, 90%) believe that if both parents are working, especially the mother, it causes problems and affects their children as they must depend on domestic help to take care their children; domestic helpers are not sympathetic to children; they can not give time to their children; improper caring for children; bonding and the parental relationship does not strengthen; children do not get enough attention and affection; feeding routines are interrupted; and children miss their parents. These problems have negative impacts on their children such as children become depressed; children get yield or sougled by domestic helpers; neglected and misbehave for the domestic helpers; they learn inappropriate behavior and language from the domestic helper; they suffer from inadequate hygiene and they get sick easily; they become misguided and they feel lonely.

Overall there were no differences on perception and practices of fatherhood between single and income fathers. Only a few participants thought that fathers should share the responsibility of daily caring and rearing activities of children.

7. Discussion

Views on fatherhood

Socio-demographic characteristics were similar between single wage earning fathers and fathers with a wage-earning spouse, except the ages of wives between two groups. Ages of wage earning wives were less than ages of non-wage earning wives. The younger age could be related to having physical stamina to join the workforce. They could be encouraged by their husbands to work to improve the family's economic situation, to provide a better life for their children. It is also possible that this could be related to the women marrying at a younger age, which motivated them to join an income generating activity with their husbands even after having children.

Become a father provided was happy moments that were anticipated with the role of fatherhood, being called 'father' for the first time by their children was a noted pleasurable moment for the participants. The themes identified from the analysis suggest that in general most participants were mentally well prepared for fatherhood. It is a part of the Bangladesh societal expectations and cultural practices that once married, relatives and the community will expect children as a sign of fulfillment of the marriage. It also appears that the participants married to create a family with children, unlike some western societies where marriage does not always precede having children, especially biological children. The participants were all educated and financially ready to have a family. Therefore an additional strong reason why they felt prepared for fatherhood and to raise children could be the socio-economic background of the participants. Happy and positive feelings of being a father are expressions of planned and readiness for their offspring.

Participants' happiness and satisfaction with the gender of their children could be another sign of their preparedness and desired fatherhood. However empirical evidence from the analysis of the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) data from 57 countries by Arnold (1992) shows that son preference remains particularly strong in South Asian countries. Participants' expectation of safe delivery and a healthy child, rather than gender, could be due to awareness, self-development with education and income, and influence of media for the acceptance of a child's gender.

Preferences for a female child instead of a male could be the positive signs of recent initiatives by the Government of Bangladesh, national and international organizations on women empowerment, reducing gender disparities in the workforce, and the priority of girl's education, and creating job opportunities for women. Recent data shows that 56% of women aged over 15 years are economically active and secondary school enrollment rate of girls is higher than boys (50% and 45%, respectively) in Bangladesh (PRB, 2005). In addition, in the Bangladesh society girls usually tend to be more caring towards their parents, especially their fathers, when they are older. This could be another reason for the participants to prefer female child. In addition, bonding between daughters and fathers in this society appears to be stronger than between mothers and daughters.

The participants' perception about fatherhood was centered around raising children; earning for family; educating children; teaching social behaviors and values; providing guidance; decision making for the family; disciplining children; providing material possessions; saving money; providing health care and nutritional support. Unlike reports from western countries, most of the fathers perceived fatherhood and its roles is being the provider for the family; being teachers and/or role models to the children (Este & Tachble, 2009), and promoting a particular role for fathers as educational facilitators to children (Gillies 2009).

Role of the father

Throughout the history every society and in every culture, men's family roles are shaped by social, economic and cultural pressure, resulting in a unique perception of fatherhood. Traditionally in Bangladesh, fathers as the head of the family will make decisions on all family matters without any discussion. Fathers in Bangladesh have started to step outside of these usual cultural and family traditions of fatherhood and the role as the sole decision maker. Changes in roles of the economic provider, responsibility of raising children and family guardian, and other findings support this trend (Summers, Boller, Schiffman & Raikes, 2006)). Education, income, modernization and society's changing perspectives are playing key roles to shift the views of fatherhood. There are many similarities of the perception of fatherhood between the east and west, in the west fathers are a source of stability—"being there", providing support; as a mentor and teacher—guiding, shaping values, teaching children; as a caregiver—engaging in physical interactions, providing care; and as a

nurturer—providing emotional support and love (Summers, Boller, Schiffman & Raikes, 2006).

The gap come from fathers looking at themselves at the top of the family and their perception of fatherhood needs to includes the daily caring activities of children; engaging in hands-on activities; providing emotional supports and physical interactions apart from the existing understandings of fatherhood and its role which are also beneficial for children.

An ideal father

Most of the fathers in this study considered being responsible; caring; educated; ideological; honest; having social and moral values; and friendliness as the most prioritized qualities for an ideal father. These findings are similar to the findings of other studies undertaken with the fathers in India (Saraff et al, 2008). In contrast research from western countries identify a good man as a caring, loving father who stands up to his responsibility whether in the home or outside; stands up for his partner during and after her pregnancy; and providing her support for everything (Johnston-Pitt & Jiji, 1996). According to Lamb (2000), fathers have historically been cast in one of four main roles: moral guide, breadwinner, sex-role model, and, most recently, nurturer. The qualities identified for an ideal father by participants were: responsible, caring and educated. These specific qualities could come from the fathers' realization and present demands of society where children need to be educated to survive and obtain a good job in future; children need to be taken care of and to fulfill their materialistic and financial needs; and the father taking responsibility for the all family matters.

Prioritizing qualities such as ideological, honest, and having social and moral values for an ideal father could stem from the desire in the participants sub-conscious mind to raise their children well to help eliminate corruption, dishonesty, malpractices, unhealthy competition, disrespect and lack of moral values in people in the modern-day Bangladesh society. It is plausible that today's parents want to instill these qualities in their children so that in the future society can overcome these current issues of national concern. Considering "friendliness" in the father-child relationship could be the new addition of qualities of an ideal father, which is intended to supersede the relationship participants had with their own father. Self-awareness and changes in opinions on father-child relationships could have initiated

the desire to have this kind of trait. Most of the participants considered themselves as “average ideal fathers” having qualities such as caring; responsible; the ability to provide goods; religious; social; educated; spending time with family; patient and understanding; have disciplining skills; their earnings; and futuristic and visioning as fathers. According to their perception of an ideal father, participants have added the “religiousness” this also indicates a need to deal with an overarching, ongoing social expectation.

Identifying spending time with family and income earning as qualities of an ideal father could be in response to the commitment towards family responsibility and considering themselves in a better position with their economic situations to fulfill the needs of children in order to raise them well. This could be related to research findings whereby fatherhood encourages men to increase intergenerational and extended family interactions and participate in service-oriented activities and increased earnings (Knoester & Eggebean, 2006; Lerman & Sorensen, 2000).

The fathers in this study highlighted time constraints as their main barriers to be an ideal father. This could be because of nature of their jobs, distance of workplace and traffic jams they faced daily on the way to and from the office. Due to increasing migration of population to Dhaka city for lifestyle and income, the city is becoming more unlivable day by day. The distance that would take fifteen minutes less than decade ago, it can now take around two hours depending on the congestion. Participants also mentioned the economic crisis as a barrier that forced them send their spouse to earn an income, to work longer hours and engage themselves in alternative income generating activities. Time constraints could also be related to the economic crisis, this requires taking time to look for increased income opportunities that may have taking away times that would have been spent with their children and family. However, participants also mentioned the living environment, safety and social insecurity are not always favorable to do activities that their ‘ideal’ fathers should do with their children. They cannot allow their children to go out for play as there are hardly any playgrounds or open spaces for children. Families also live in small houses or apartments where they cannot accommodate free play for their children. In addition, road safety and child trafficking issues are also a huge concern for parents, who often feel insecure in their local neighborhoods.

Apart from the barriers outlined above, the qualities the fathers mentioned indicate that they have positive intentions to contribute more for more well-rounded

upbringing of their children. However the focus needs to deal more with the child's involvement and any amount of spent with their children should be quality time. For the fathers to have qualities such as to being an active playmate, storyteller and nurturer would contribute to healthy and holistic upbringing of their children.

The father-child relationship

Results shows that participants view their relationship with their children as a 'friendly relationship' with the belief that as a result of this relationship there will be positive outcomes on their children, such better education; they will be under control and well disciplined; and the children would share everything with them. The significance of this view is that it seems that the Bangladesh fathers' point of view has started to shift from their traditional views of father-child relationship. They have clearly linked their personal objectives and intentions of this idea that it is for the betterment of their children in terms of educating them well, controlling and disciplining them.

In many parts of Asia, the traditional father tends to be absent from child-rearing because it is seen as one of the mother's obligations and it is rare to find an outward demonstration of a close father-child relationship or the father acting like a friend to the child (Huang et al., 2001). This finding shows that study group of fathers are actively involved with their children and they have a positive view of their relationships. This research findings support that involved fathers are more likely to be more attentive to their children's development and enjoy closer, richer father-child relationships (Lamb, 1987; Snarey, 1993).

This richer father-child relationship can be used as a platform for instilling other elements of child developmental other than solely focusing on institutional education. Fathers who choose to stay involved in their child's life might make some adjustments to their lifestyles and their perception of themselves as responsible fathers. Overall this would result in more involvement and accessibility to their children through a close and fulfilling relationship.

It is possible that the education levels of participants may have contributed to their classification of their relationship with their children as a 'friendly' one. Extant research suggests that a father's education and his relationship with his partner predict his commitment to, and involvement with, his child (Cabrera, Shannon, West, & Brooks-Gunn, 2006; Cook, Jones, Dick & Singh, 2005; Cummings, Goeke-Morey, &

Raymond, 2004; Pleck, 1997; Tamis-LeMonda et al., 2004). The weakness of this view of relationships is that fathers are still considering it as a one-way freeness, where they expect their children to share each and everything with them. This can be related to the traditional ways of raising and controlling children by fathers or parents. A clear concept and knowledge of the benefits of children's developmental of a strong father-child relationship seems to be low to this study group of fathers. Further research could be conducted to explore their deep-rooted intention of focusing on education, discipline and control through a close and relaxed relationship. However the study group demonstrated some understanding of the result positive and negative effects of having a strong father-child relationship, this provides a clear message that this group of fathers are aware of their responsibilities as fathers and future outcomes for their child are linked to the relationship they have with their children. This awareness can be utilized for the overall improvement of the lives of children and families.

Parenting roles

The participants' firm beliefs about the role differences between fathers and mothers in child rearing are a reflection of the natural understanding of the traditional father and mother roles in context of the Bangladesh family structures and societal practices. Perceptions about mothers and their roles in child rearing are typically that mothers are patient; they have more time for children; they understand children better; they are more caring towards children; they know how to feed them, expressed obvious views of fathers about the mother's role in child rearing. These views are not different from the usual views of fathers. Research shows that in many parts of Asia, traditionally, the men are expected to work hard and make money to support and protect his family, show filial piety, and respect for his parents (Huang, Lin, Tien & Chen, 2001).

The positive side of this understanding is that the fathers are respectful and appreciative of the mothers' qualities and capabilities in child rearing. The participants' perceived roles for fathers in child rearing are providing material goods; providing financial supports; taking children out for leisure activities; decision making on school, teacher and doctor; disciplining children; guiding and supervising mothers. These findings are similar to the study on Indian fathers, who have identified seven dimensions of the ideal fatherhood; father as caretaker, surety, economic

provider, playmate and friend, role model, family head, and as a resource (Saraff & Srivastava, 2008).

Working long and hard hours to earn wages to support a child and family is also a very important way to demonstrate how much the fathers care and how they believe they are also demonstrating being a 'positively involved' father. However in Bangladesh the focus of the fathers' beliefs and perceptions were about their actual and potential roles in more direct forms of involvement with their children, for example, in performing daily care-giving tasks, engaging in play, and accompanying their children on excursions outside the family home. It seems father's roles are going beyond the traditional economic supporter and decision-making roles for the family and children of the previous generation. In these perceived roles they are considering taking out their children to the zoo, park, market places and visiting places which will entertain children, create opportunities for exploration and breaking the monotony of staying inside the home. Eventually it will contribute to mental and cognitive development of their children.

Even though half of the participants' wives are involved in wage earning, the fathers still considered the mothers' primary roles in child rearing as feeding, bathing, nursing, cleaning, and doing household chores. This could be a direct influenced of current family structures and the traditional roles women play in society and therefore the dominant females' roles that are observed in daily life. Research findings support the evidence that across many cultures fathers are less involved than mothers in the care of children (Whiting & Edwards, 1988). Even if it is the father's intentions of caring more for their children, they are generally not confident enough in intensive childcare like their spouse. Intensive mothering refers to the ideology that appropriate child rearing is "emotionally demanding, financially draining," and "labor-consuming" and that it is mothers who should be primarily responsible for the task (Hays, 1996). Participants have seen their mothers and grandmothers playing these roles, which are still strong memories in their minds and influences their current-day thinking, beliefs and values.

It is very difficult to bring drastic and immediate change in Bangladesh but there are sign of hope that small changes are underway, as fathers have started to take a more active part in parenting roles. It seems, however, that a gap still exists that needs to be addressed. In addition to the traditional roles of the mother, the father's parenting activity can contribute more to children's development; this needs to be

instilled in fathers of the current generation. Studies on female-dominated parenting found that men are as capable as women of behaving in sensitive, responsive, nurturing, and stimulating ways with babies and children (Belsky, 1979; Conner, Knight & Cross, 1997; Lamb, 1997). Studies also have shown that, as with mothers, sensitivity, responsiveness, and stimulation by interaction with fathers predict better cognitive outcomes for infants and young children (Shannon, Tamis-LeMonda, London & Cabrera, 2002; Tamis-LeMonda, Shannon, Cabrera, & Lamb, 2004). These strengths of fathers can be transferred to all fathers in Bangladesh to benefit more children.

Quality time

It is very encouraging to see that the participants are involved in child rearing and caring activities for approximately three hours per day during the week, while during the weekend the amount of time may increase or decrease depending on nature of the father's jobs. This definitely highlights father's increasing commitment towards their children. This amount of time is far more than recorded in earlier studies by Haider (2003), which showed on average, fathers in Bangladesh spent less than one hour a day with their children. This change could be due to the fact that the participants had a high education level, income and self-awareness on child rearing and family issues, which encouraged them to actively make more time to spend with their children.

Apart from providing material goods, activities fathers chose to engage in with their children included reading stories; interacting; and keeping an eye on hygiene, and taking them for outdoor activities. The fathers tend to be responsible for most of the parental advice and decisions. The fathers emphasized disciplining children, teaching social behaviors, and instructing and guiding their spouse, which is a common demonstration of a father's desire to show he cares for his family. This view also highlights that the mothers tend to provide more direct care for children where the fathers tend to be more active in the training and tutoring of children.

Research findings also support that men are the moral teachers and family heads. Fathers were thought to have greater responsibility for, and influence on, their children than mothers (Pleck, 1987; Coltrane & Adams, 1999). Reading to children and playing with them by the participants indicates that are able to participate in caring activities and they are capable. Another clear message from these fathers is that

teaching and molding their child is a central feature of their fatherhood role. For some, this meant emphasizing education and learning social behaviors, such as how to get along with others in life.

Within the issue of being more directly involved and hands-on with childcare, the notion of “spending time” and taking their children on outings also had an underlying teaching intent. Fathers were also keenly aware of the teaching effect of their presence — the importance of their actions as role models for their children. Participants also believed that if they are not involved and do not play their roles properly their children could become derailed; dishonest; involved in anti-social activities; disrespectful to others; will suffer at schools; and their cognitive and physical development will be impaired. This indicates that they are very aware about their involvement with children.

Empirical research also says that children living without their fathers are at risk for low school achievement and behavioral or emotional problems (Astone & McLanahan, 1991; Cabrera, Tamis-LeMonda, Bradley, Hofferth, & Lamb, 2000; Gabel, 1992). The emphasis by the participants on education, teaching values and respect for others suggests that through participation in caring activities, these skills and attributes can be observed and absorbed. Encouraging prospects are that these fathers have the desire to build their own capacity to be directly involved with their children.

Fatherhood between generations

When they were asked talked about their fathers and fathers of their childhood period, surprisingly, most of them emphasized that their fathers were less educated; they were not aware of education and future career options; they were conservative; they were tough with discipline; they were not friendly to them; they used to believe and practice superstitions; they used physical punishment; they were not conscious of healthy options for their children; they did not guide their education and schooling; and they were less involved in daily child rearing activities.

These comments indicate an overall dissatisfaction and unfulfilled desires with their own fathers. In general, it indicates the change in society's values regarding the traditional inherent respect old aged people. This change began after the independence of Bangladesh in 1971 when some older people who were in powerful positions were identified as war criminals and as a collective people started to show disrespect to

them. It also indicates that the relationship between the participant's and their fathers' were not very strong or friendly. These feelings may be rooted in memories of negative experiences from their childhood regarding physical punishment, disciplining or not receiving desired things from their parents. In the Bangladesh society it is common for fathers to have a closer relationship with their daughters than sons. This factor might have also created the distance between the participants and their fathers even though it was not intentional.

These findings are different from Rabe's (2006) research findings on gold-mining workers and their concept about own fathers in South Africa. They have identified their father as "the father was like a lion", "he was a good person" even though they mentioned that they suffered due to a financial crisis (Rabe, 2006). It is clear that there was a relationship gap between the participants and their fathers when they grew up. However, it seems that the traditional values of respecting others and elders is decreasing in the current society due to lack of practice of ethics and moral values; over exposure to corruption and 'self-centered' mentality in daily lives.

The gap could also be due to a pressure in traditional family dynamics and structure of the families in society where men take the all responsibilities for the family which includes looking after aged parents, sisters and young brothers, and his own family. This overburdening of responsibilities forces men to look for more work and to earn a higher income, which take away time from his children and family. These ideas that are imprint from a young age give the fathers the sense of responsibility and idea they should be the main providers, breadwinners and out-of-home caring parents. On the other hand mothers are leveled as direct in-home care providers and household worker.

In comparison with their own fathers, participants claim that they are far better as fathers of new generation, they are much more considered, they are more friendly to their children; they take them on outings; they are more advanced in terms of self-development, awareness on education and future career; they are guide their children on schooling; and they own and use modern technology.. These findings are similar to the empirical research evidence on new generation fathers. In the twentieth century the term "new fatherhood" was used to describe a father who was involved in the different phases of the child's life and who took responsibility for the physical and emotional care of children (Lamb, 1986; Bronstein, 1983; Coltranc, 1995.) Though participants gave high priority to education, school and future career of their children,

they are also take their children out of home for exploration, and participating in caring activities. These findings support the earlier research that despite certain skepticism regarding involved fathers (LaRossa, 19988) there is undeniable evidence that, overall, men are more involved than previous of fathers in sharing the responsibilities of the household and childrearing (Popenoe, 1996; Coltrane & Collins, 2001).

Even though these fathers are involved to some extent and consider their relationship with their children is friendly, it is possible it is not viewed the same or as satisfying by their children. Further thoughts and exploration needs to by applied to help the next generation to have clearer concept of fatherhood and understand the importance of the father-child relationship.

The working parent

Participants expressed concerns about children and the level of care they received if both parents are at work, which indicates a strong level of care for their children and they want to do more if they could. It also illustrates their insecurity; dissatisfaction and tension about leaving their children at home, especially leaving them under care of domestic helpers. Expressing overarching negative feelings and dissatisfaction about domestic helpers could have many associations. These domestic helpers are hired or arranged from very poor and marginalized families where they grow up with poverty, family conflict, social discrimination, and without any education. When they are hired to serve as domestic helpers in the families who enjoy a higher standard of living, the domestic help may get more focused on fulfilling their own needs (income generation, for example). The way they behave around young children they may consider appropriate as it was how they were treated themselves and they do not know any different.. Since most of these domestic helpers come from village and slums they have different language and dialects, which they use with the children they care for, this is generally not appreciated in the educated and affluent levels of society.

It also very common in these families, and society, that domestic helpers are look down upon, maltreated, disrespected, and sometimes physically punished by the employers which may happen in front of the children. This means that directly or indirectly the parents are transferring these attitudes and behaviors to their children, which will in turn affect their children's thinking and views of respecting and treating

others. The children may then practice this behavior in their own lives as adults. Immediate initiatives need to be taken to help the parents, children and domestic helpers. For example, domestic helpers can be trained in appropriate child rearing and caring strategies. If the Government wants to have women contribute to the economy, encourage more women to engage in wage earning activities along with men, and want to ensure gender equity, initiatives to support children at home are essential.

Income generation and parenting

Regardless of the fact if father is a single wage earner or dual wage earning father, their capacity and knowledge needs to build around the concept of spending quality time with their children. Emphasis should be on what and how they do it, rather than how long they spend and, ideally, provided by both parents. Research shows that toddlers with two supportive parents scored a higher Bayley Mental Development Index (MDI) at the age of 24 and 36 months than all other children with two unsupportive parents (Ryan, Martin, & Brooks-Gunn, 2006).

Comparing single wage earning fathers and fathers with a wage earning spouse, it was found that the ages were less for the spouse in a wage earning family than the spouse of a single wage earning father. However, fathers who have younger wives and prefer them to join the workforce to improve the economic situation of the family, which eventually supports the children.

It was unsurprising to find no differences existed on perception and practices of fatherhood between single wage earning fathers and fathers with a wage-earning spouse. It reflects the inherent practices of fatherhood by the fathers that men roles are traditionally the 'breadwinner', provider, and decision makers in the family. This is not different from research evidence that describes how fathers and society views fatherhood and its roles. When focusing on the social construction of fatherhood, the breadwinner (or economic) role of fatherhood is found to be salient in several societies (Bruce, Lloyd, Leonard, Engle & Duffy, 1995; Marsiglio et al 2000). Generally, the Bangladesh society still views that child caring and doing household chores as the mother's jobs and the father's roles is to provide support and undertake out-of-home activities, reinforced by research findings across cultures where fathers are less involved than mothers in the care of children (Whiting & Edwards, 1988).

Though participants' claims that they are far better than their own fathers, they are contributing more to the family and children, they are spending time with them,

and they have friendly relationship with their children but there is still a gap between their beliefs and actions. Some participants mentioned that they are involved in direct caring occasionally and in absence of mothers, which needs to be converted into the regular practice. Then children and family as a whole will benefit regardless of single wage earning or wage earning family. Research shows that there is a strong correlation of involving men with their children indicate and positive father involvement and children's cognitive, emotional, relational and physical wellbeing (Vogel, Boller, Faerber, Shannon, & Tamis-LeMonda, 2003).

8. Implications of the findings

The primary aim of the current exploratory study was to examine how single wage earning fathers and fathers with a wage-earning spouse from a middle-class socio-economic background perceive fatherhood and their fatherhood practices. In this analysis, I have examined these perceptions and practices in two ways: *what* they believe and *how* they practice it. By focusing on some of the common themes across a sample of two groups of fathers, my intention was to emphasize some of the basic principles for policy consideration. My purpose here, however, is to explore the policy implications of these broad themes that appear to cut across different parenting conditions.

The fathers' levels of commitment and priorities to the parenting endeavor are quite common; they want to raise their children well, they want to see them educated and they want to be involved as much as they can. The fathers in this study talked about what they understand about fatherhood, qualities and actions of ideal fathers, the roles of fathers and mothers, their behavior and activities with their children, which does not include direct care for children or spending quality time with them.

The media needs to provide exemplary role models on direct caring of children for fathers to understand child focused interactions and to demonstrate positive father-child relationships. Focus need to be given on the importance of supporting fathers in the one-on-one relationships with their children and building their confidence in hands on childrearing.

Previous research has indicated that new fathers identify with the process of "trial-and-error" learning with their new infants (Steinberg, Kruckman & Steinberg, 2000). Fathers need to be encouraged and supported by their spouse to join in these activities. Furthermore, this can be seen as part of a broader "moral transformation of fathers," who are increasingly actively involved in the care of their children and who increasingly value the opportunity to provide care to their children (Doucet, 2007). This could be accomplished through greater inclusiveness of fathers in various parenting support programs, parenting magazines, and television shows. As Fagan and Palm (2004) have suggested, fathers are typically more tentative about asking for

help or revealing some of their own needs for information because of the female-dominated nature of parenting services. As a result, fathers need to be engaged in defining and shaping programs and services that meet their needs.

The shift in focus of the fathers from 'self' to 'other' (being the child) is a central part of the fathering experience. When this topic was introduced during the study, fathers spoke about their feelings, the change within leading to a greater sense of moral responsibility and community engagement. This finding is supported by previous research that argues that healthy father involvement is related to generativity (Eggebeen & Knoester, 2001; Hawkins and Dollahite 1997; Snarey 1993). As this would suggest, public campaigns that support father involvement may be effective not only in strengthening families but also by indirectly strengthening the broader community.

This study suggests that Bangladeshi fathers are ready to give more for children, despite their commitments to work and their lack of confidence. Consistent with other research, it is apparent that fathers are increasingly interested in being more involved in their children's lives (Daly 1996; Russell and Hwang 2004). One of the policy implications of this is the need for policy supporting responsible fatherhood as has been instituted in India. The 'Indian National Population policy for responsible fatherhood' (2000) is a program that focused on male involvement in family affairs. These areas included the equal participation of women and men in all areas of family and household responsibilities, including family planning, childrearing and housework and it should be promoted and encouraged by the local Government.

The findings of this study can inform further research and may be useful in considerations of policy and program initiatives. If policy exists to support fathers, those who are already willing to participate in family activities will feel encouraged and those who are not yet motivated will feel reinforced. The gap between the beliefs and practices of fatherhood needs to be addressed. Research indicates that children have a positive influence on men's overall health and development (Palkovitz 2002; WHO 2007). Therefore there is strong rationale to build public campaigns and initiatives to increase awareness of the health benefits of active father involvement, as a way of further encourage engagement of fathers in their children's lives.

In the situation where both parents are working there is a clear need for access to adequate day care facilities for their children. Government and non-government organizations can work together to create infrastructure and build capacity to run day

care centers. Furthermore, there is a need to explore ways to train the domestic helpers in appropriate childcare behavior. Public-government initiatives and awareness also needs to be created to change the views and attitudes towards the domestic, which will help build a more respectful future generation.

9. Limitations

A serious limitation to the current study was the time available to complete it. However as an inaugural study that was intended as a preliminary examination of the father's role in a Bangladesh context, the study has been extremely useful.

Another limitation was the nature of the participant mix recruited to participate in this study. Further research should explore diverse father populations by recruiting those with different level of income, education and those without education. At the same time including rural fathers and fathers from Indigenous communities would have added more diversity to the perception and practices of fatherhood in those contexts.

Including mothers views on father's roles in child rearing and obtaining information from the mothers about their husbands' child rearing activities would have also enriched this study. It would have been useful to gain an insight from the mothers about the childrearing activities with which the fathers are currently involved. In addition, it would have also helped to explore the mothers' perception and practices of their own roles.

10. Conclusion

Overall, this study aimed to understand the different perceptions and practices of fatherhood prevalent in urban fathers, in single and income families, from a middle socio-economic background. Though the sample size of the study is relatively small, yet, it does present an important insight into the perceptions of fatherhood.

Perception and practices of fatherhood in the traditional sense continues to be dominant with the fathers, who consider themselves better than their own fathers. Except for the caretaker role, the perception and practices they viewed were primarily within the roles of 'supporter', 'decision maker' and 'economic provider' without having much involvement in daily or direct care of their children. Traditional female childcare tasks such as feeding and bathing the child are not considered within the purview of 'their involvement' fatherhood. Much effort is still required to remove the cultural barriers and bring a change in men's attitudes to prepare them for the new fathering role.

The participants in this study displayed an obvious and strong commitment to their children. Lack of sufficient time, insecurity and expectations of the social environment were been found to be the most important challenges reported by the fathers. Yet the availability of the fathers to their children showed a positive relationship to their perception of their involvement with their child's life. Both these aspects, when looked in conjunction to each other, bring out the need for fatherhood policy. There is gap between the belief and practices of fatherhood.

In conclusion, children of middle-income families in Bangladesh do not receive quality care from their both parents. Fathers are in a transition period to fully understand the importance of their role and relationships with their children. Overall, the full extent to which active parenting can contribute to the holistic development of their children is still not very clear. In order to ensure the optimum development of a child, programs supporting fathers need to be established, to increase awareness and participation in childrearing activities. There is a gap between the perception of fatherhood and practices of fathers towards child-focused interaction, caring and nurturing that contributes to the raising of healthy of children.

Future research examining this gap and ensuring male participation in childcare should include men's understanding of fathering and assess the impact broader understanding would have on paternal behavior. It is the task of policymakers and service providers to develop constructive solutions to support these fathers for the improvement of the lives of children and families in Bangladesh.

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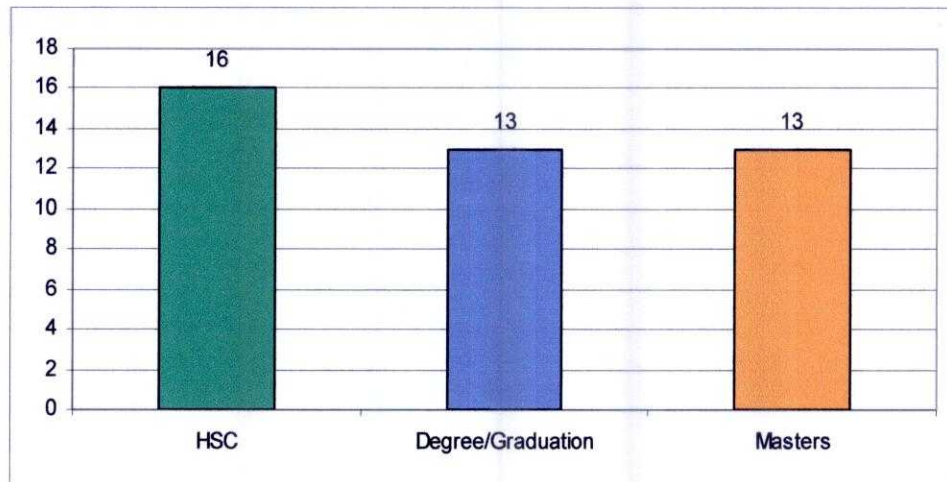
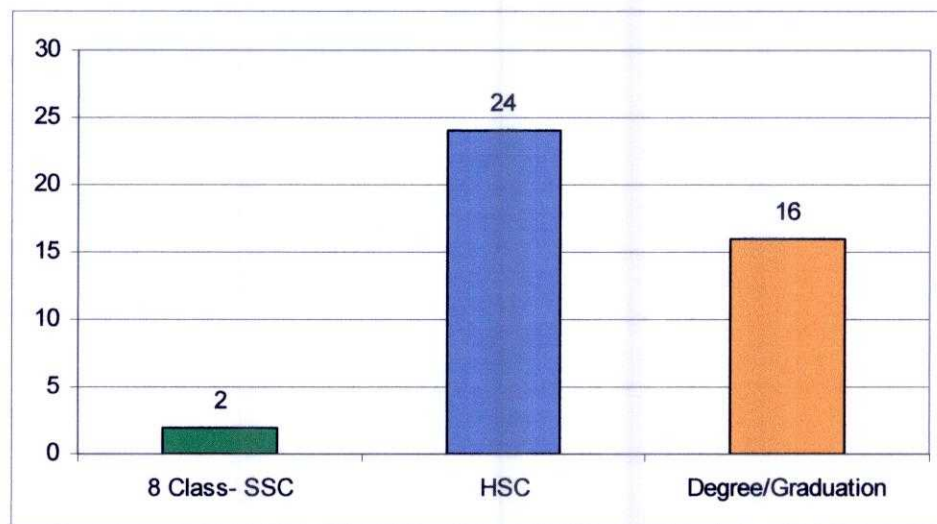
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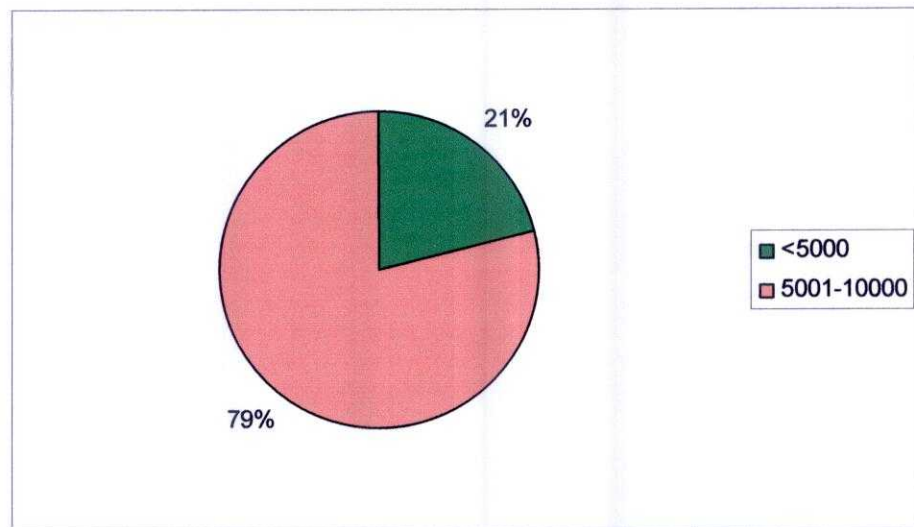
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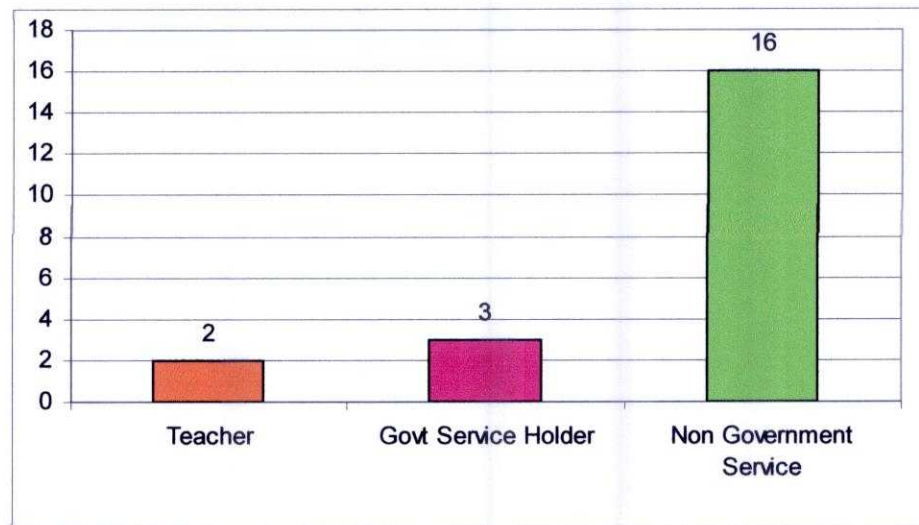
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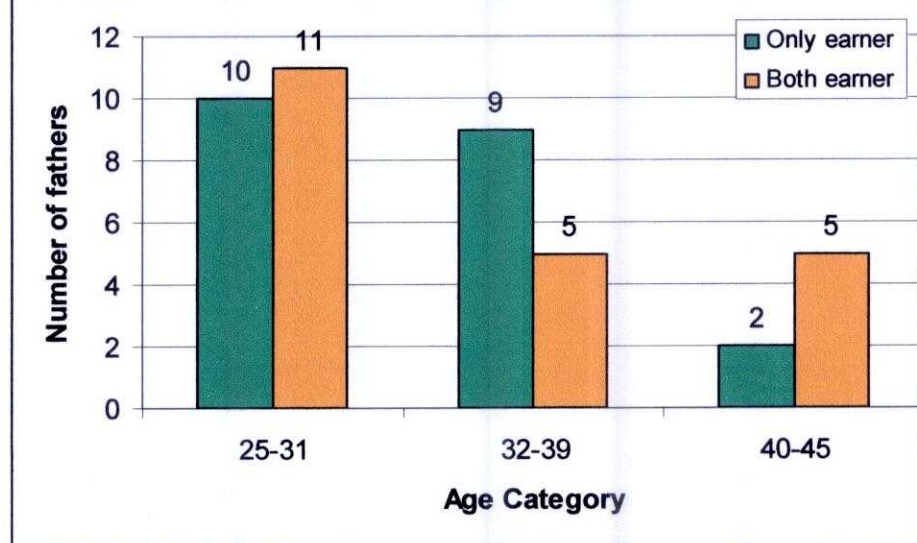
Demographic Information in Graphs**Father's Education Level****Mother's Education Level**

Mother's Earning per/month those who are working



Mother's Profession





Study Instruments

FGD Topic Guide

Objective	Issues
Exploring about the emotional experiences of Fatherhood from urban Fathers.	• Feelings and emotions of being a Father. • Feelings/Emotions about hearing the first call of “dad” from the child.
Exploring into the views, Perceptions of Urban Fathers about Fatherhood, qualities and some queries into the obstacles and the reasons behind those obstacles	• What do you think about fatherhood? ◦ Understanding of fatherhood responsibilities ◦ Various Duties of Fatherhood • Father’s role and behavior towards a child/children, which only a father can attain (in giving social, moral, religious and cultural education and disciplining them etc) • What do you think should be the qualities of an ideal father (give each of them viip cards and ask them to write three such qualities they priorotized) Tell us something about your own qualities as a father. • We all want to be the ideal or the best father that can be, but for something or the other, the reasons behind our inability to perform our duties like an ideal father (give a clue if need; Social /Personal /Financial/Gender Related or Family Reasons) • What roles do you play in overcoming these obstacles? • What do you think about a father-childrelationship? Does the type of relationship have any effect on the child? • Are there any sort of problems when you cannot play your roles or fulfill your duties as a father towards your child?How does this affect your child?
Different involvement and caring activities of fatherhood among the urban fathers	• In a particular day, how much time do you spend with your child/children / and how much time you spend in a week? • How do you usually involve yourself in the daily care of your children? ◦ Before leaving for office ◦ After getting back from the office ◦ During the weekends • You have seen your own father and other fathers from the neighborhood (around the time of your father) when you were children, are the behaviorial patterns, attitudes, views, and roles of the present-day fathers still the same, or have they changed? If they have changed, in what ways have they changed? (Probe about – concerns with education, daily caring, taking them out, disciplining them, etc.)
Perception of father-mother roles and views of both parents wage earning & about children of those parents	• In your point of view, are there different roles for a mother and a father in bringing up a child? If yes what are the differences? • If both the parents are involved in wage earning, are there any difficulties in playing your roles as parents to you children? If so, what are they? And what effect do these have on the child.

Semi-Structured Questionnaire for In-Depth Interviews**Emotions & Feelings of Fatherhood**

1. Tell me about your feelings and emotions of being a father (about emotions, feelings- what you did, expectations- did you get what you expected, etc. for the 1st children)
2. How was it, when you heard your child calling your Dad/Father for the first time? What was going on in your mind then?
3. As a father, when you do something for your child, how do you feel? You can tell me about something you did recently in relation to this (it could be anything; buying a book/toys or taking him out etc).

Perception:

4. In your point of view what are the roles of fatherhood/a father? You have seen your own father performing so many/various roles in your life, in what ways do you think, your roles as a father are different from your own father?
5. As a father what duties and responsibilities do you think, you have for your child? Why do you feel that these duties and responsibilities are important?
6. What do you understand by "Fatherhood"? How do you see fatherhood? (about – Biological father – related by blood, financial father and social father)
7. Which attitudes or roles do you think are only played by a father in a child's life? (ask about the types of development and education of a child, a father plays a role in, for example – in giving moral, religious, cultural, social education and disciplining them or something else)
8. In your point of view what are the differences between the roles of a mother and of a father in bringing up a child? In what areas can these differences be seen?
9. If both the parents are involved in wage earning, are there any problems in playing these roles by parents? If so, then what sort of problems may arise? In what ways do these affect a child?
10. Father and child – how do you see at this relationship? Does the type of relationship have effect on the children?

11. If you cannot properly fulfill your duties/responsibilities as a father towards your child, do any problems arise? How does this affect your child?
12. What sort of qualities should be there in an ideal father? (Our virtues and vices make us human – we are good at something and there are some areas that we are not good compared to other fathers) Tell me something about your own qualities (which you have) as a father.
13. We all want to become a successful/ideal father, but due to some difficulties or obstacles, we could not/cannot play that role to the fullest, so in this case, did you/do you face any such obstacles? If you did, then what do you think are the reasons? (probe about social reasons, personal reasons, financial, gender-related or family related reasons – the mother or your wife doesn't let you do it for example.)
14. Should these obstacles be overcome? What are the reasons because of which you think these obstacles need to be overcome? Do you try on your own?
15. How much time do you spend in a day and in a week? Do you feel that it's enough?
16. In what daily caring activities of your child, do you usually involve yourself in? (Probe about – playing, reading to them, feeding, talking and listening, bathing, entertainment – telling stories, taking your child out, etc.)
17. What do you do for your child before going to your work, after coming back from your work, during the weekends or during your free-time?
18. You have seen your own father and other fathers from the neighborhood (around the time of your father) when you were child, are the behavioral patterns, outlook, attitudes and roles of the present-day fathers still the same, or have they changed? If they have changed, in what ways have they changed? (probe about – concerns with education, daily caring, taking them out, disciplining them, etc.)

Coding Scheme

Objective	Issues	Coding	Definition
Exploring about the emotional experiences of Fatherhood from urban Fathers.	- Feelings and emotions of being a Father - Feelings/Emotions about hearing the first call of “dad” from the child.	FHFEEL FHGENEX FHCALL	Feelings and emotions of being a Father for the first time Fathers of expectations gender of their children Feelings and emotions of being called Father for the first time
Exploring into the views, Perceptions of Urban Fathers about Fatherhood , qualities and some queries into the obstacles and the reasons behind those obstacles	- What do you think about fatherhood? - Understanding of fatherhood responsibilities /duties - Father’s role and behavior towards a child/children, which only a father can attain (in giving social, moral, religious and cultural education and disciplining them etc) - What do you think should be the qualities of an ideal father (give each of them viip cards and ask them to write three such qualities they priorotized) Tell us something about your own qualities as a father. - We all want to be the ideal or the best father that can be, but for something or the other, the reasons behind our inability to perform our duties like an ideal father (give a clue if need; Social /Personal /Financial/Gender Related or Family Reasons) - What roles do you play in overcoming these obstacles? - What do you think about a father-childrelationship? Does the type of relationship have any effect on the child?	FHUNDS FHRESPON FHRELCH FHAMBCH FHOTRS ONFHROL QUIDFH FHQUL BARIDEFH STPOVBAR FHCHREL RELEFF	Understanding of fatherhood Responsibilities of Fatherhood Indications of relationship with children as a father Fathers ambitions on their children Others understanding of fatherhood Only father’s role towards children such as socialization, Teaching and practicing religion or disciplining Qualitis of Ideal Father Qualities as a Father Barriers of being an ideal Father such as economic, social and other personal barriers Steps taken for

	Are there any sort of problems when you cannot play your roles or fulfill your duties as a father towards your child? How does this affect your child?	TYPPRO	overcoming the Roles Barriers Views and preceived relationship of fathers with their children Father-Child Relationship Effects on Children Types of impact on children if fathers does not play his role properly
Different involvemen t and caring activities of fatherhood among the urban fathers	- In a particular day, how much time do you spend with your child/children / and how much time you spend in a week? - How do you usually involve yourself in the daily care of your children? - Before leaving for office - After getting back from the office - During the weekends - You have seen your own father and other fathers from the neighborhood (around the time of your father) when you were children, are the behaviorial patterns, attitudes, views, and roles of the present-day fathers still the same, or have they changed? If they have changed, in what ways have they changed? (Probe- concerns with education, daily caring, taking them out, disciplining etc.)	FHDATIM FHREACT GENROLDF	Father's daily time for children Father's Rearing Activities & Practices to their children Generational Roles Differences of Fathers
Perception of father-mother roles and views of both parents wage earning & about children of those parents	In your point of view, are there different roles for a mother and a father in bringing up a child? If yes what are the differences? If both the parents are involved in wage earning, are there any difficulties in playing your roles as parents to you children? If so, what are they? And what effect do these have on the child.	FHMORODF FHCHROL MOCHROL PROBPJOB IMBPJOB	Roles Differences between Father and Mother on Child Rearing Father's beliefs and perception of their own roles on child rearing Father's beliefs and perception of mothers roles on child rearing Problems of Both Parents Working Impacts on Children for Both Parents working
		FHQUATS	Verbatim statements of father on fatherhood

Recruitment Form

For official purpose:

The child's father's name:

Serial number:

The child's mother's name:

Area code:

Address (Detailed)
.....
.....

Telephone Number (If any):.....

1. Working member	
The child's father is a working member.	1
The child's both father and mother are working members.	2
2. The relationship between the head of the family and the candidate.	
Husband/Wife	1
Son/ Daughter	2
Others (mention)	3
3. Candidate's age	
.....	
4. Candidate's occupation : (one answer will do)	
House wife	1
Student	2
Others (Mention)	3
.....	
5. Age of the child's father	
.....	
6. Age of the child's mother	
.....	
7. The occupation of the child's father	prof
Small entrepreneur / Petty traders	01
Teacher	02
Skilled worker	03
Junior officer/ Executive	04
Middle Ranked Officer/ Executive	05
Supervisor	06
Shop keeper (Shop's owner)	07
Government Officer/Worker	08
Senior Officer/ Executive	09
Business man/ Industrialist	10
1-2 / Industrialist	11
Businessman or industrialist having 10 or more employees	12
Self-employed profession (i.e. doctor/engineer/lawyer etc.)	13
Others (please specify).....	14

Microwave oven	10
Toaster	11
Mobile Phone	12
Dish washing machine	13
Camera/Digital Camera	14
10. Total Family Members (Those who always have meals together)	
Up to 5 yearsperson	1
6-8 years person	2
9 years and above person	3
Total Members person	4
# of children below 5 and ages	
No.	Age
Boy	
Girl	
11. Father's approximate monthly income (Excluding house rent)	
Tk. 10,000-15,000	1
Tk. 15,001-20,000	2
Tk. 20,001-25,000	3
Tk. 25,001-30,000	4
12. Approximate monthly income of mothers' those who are in job	
Below 5,000 Taka	1
Tk. 5001 - 10,000	2
Tk. 10,001-15,000	3
Above Tk.15000	4
13. Monthly family income (Taka).....	
14. House Rent (Taka).....	
15. Monthly family income excluding house rent (Taka)	
16. The house you are staying in	
Self Own	1
--- Rented	2
17. Approximate payable house	

		rent..... (Taka)			
8 Mother's Profession					
Teacher	01	18. No. of rooms in the house (Except toilets and kitchen)			
Skilled worker	02				
Government employee/officer	03	19. Earning members..... Person			
Non-government service / officer	04				
Others (please specify).....	05	20. Educational Qualifications		F a t h e r	Mother
		Below grade (class) eight			1
9.Durable assets/goods		Grade eight to SSC (secondary school certificate)			2
CD/DVD player	01	HSC (Higher secondary certificate)		1	3
Television (Color/Black & White)	02	Diploma		2	4
Fridge	03	Degree / Honors		3	5
Deep Fridge	04	Masters		4	6
Motor Cycle	05	Others (please specify).....		5	7
Car/Microbus	06				
Computer	07				
Air Cooler	08				
Washing Machine	09				

Note: Middle class nuclear family father's who have at least an under 5 children at home
Group 1: Father is the only wage earner in the family
Group 2: Father with wage earning spouse

Voluntary Consent Form**Institute of Educational Development- BRAC University**

Title of the Research Protocol: Perception and practice of Fatherhood among Urban Fathers in Bangladesh

Principal Investigator: Shantimoy Chakma

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

Fathers' role in every young child's life is a crucial factor in Bangladesh particularly in early years. Father's contribution is significantly associated with children's mental, physical, social and cognitive development.

Purpose of the research

I am from the Institute of Educational Development- BRAC University is conducting a research to know fathers' knowledge, attitudes and practices on fatherhood.

Why selected

I am screening fathers who have at least one under five and fathers who are only wage earner for the nuclear family, and fathers of earner (children's mother is also earning) nuclear families. You will be invited in a group of discussion to share your knowledge, attitudes and practices about fatherhood.

What is expected from the respondent?

If you agree to participate you will expected to share your knowledge, attitudes and practices about fatherhood with other fathers like you for a session of 60 to 90 minutes in length (only once).

Risks and benefits

There is no risk to you for participating in this study and but directly or indirectly fathers and children may be benefited in future if any intervention programs incorporate your experiences and views on fatherhood

Privacy, anonymity and confidentiality

All information collected from you will remain strictly confidential. We would be happy to answer your questions about the study and you are welcome to contact me; Dr. Shantimoy Chakma at Nayantara Communications (Phone # 9861770) 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

Date:

Signature of Subject/ Participant

Date:

Annexure-VI

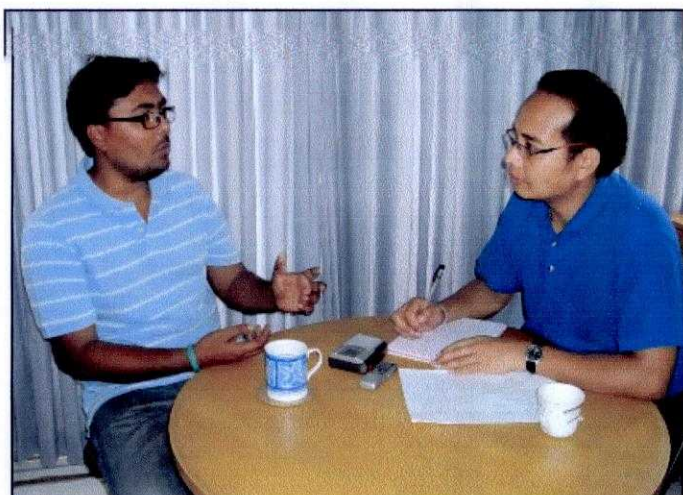
Photographs



A focus group discussion with fathers at Banani



A focus group discussion with fathers at Banani -



An in-depth interview with an only earner father at my work place Banani



An in-depth interview with a father with wage earning spouse at interviewee's workplace