

**Exploring Parents' Perception on  
Fathers' Involvement in Early Childhood Development for  
Children Aged 6-8 Years in Urban Bangladesh**

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

Brac Institute of Educational Development

Brac University

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## **Declaration**

It is hereby declared that,

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

**Student's Full Name & Signature:**



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## Approval

The thesis titled “Exploring Parents’ Perception on Fathers’ Involvement in Early Childhood Development for Children Aged 6-8 Years in Urban Bangladesh.”

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of SPRING, 2024 has been accepted as satisfactory in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science in Early Childhood Development on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

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## **Ethics Statement**

Title of Thesis Topic: Exploring Parents' Perception on Fathers' Involvement in Early Childhood Development for Children Aged 6-8 Years in Urban Bangladesh

Student name: Shamsuddoha Mohammad Shafie

1. Source of population: Parents of children aged 6-8 years and living in Dhaka City
2. Does the study involve (yes, or no)
  - a) Physical risk to the subjects: No
  - b) Social risk: No
  - c) Psychological risk to subjects: No
  - d) Discomfort to subjects: No
  - e) Invasion of privacy: No
3. Will subjects be clearly informed about (yes or no)
  - a) Nature and purpose of the study: Yes
  - b) Procedures to be followed: Yes
  - c) Physical risk: Yes
  - d) Sensitive questions: Yes
  - e) Benefits to be derived: Yes
  - f) Right to refuse to participate or to withdraw from the study: Yes
  - g) Confidential handling of data: Yes
  - h) Compensation and/or treatment where there are risks or privacy is involved: Yes
4. Will Signed verbal consent for be required (yes or no)
  - a) from study participants: Yes
  - b) from parents or guardian: No
  - c) Will precautions be taken to protect anonymity of subjects? Yes
5. Check documents being submitted herewith to Committee:
  - a) Proposal: Yes
  - b) Consent Form: Yes
  - c) Questionnaire or interview schedule: Yes

### **Ethical Review Committee:**

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## **Abstract**

The stereotypical role of fathers as the breadwinners rather than active caregivers establishes a significant challenge globally, particularly in a developing urban Bangladesh. Traditional gender norms and societal expectations often limit fathers' involvement in early childhood development. This is leading to unequal sharing of caregiving responsibilities.

This research aims to investigate parental perceptions of fathers' involvement in early childhood development for children aged 6-8 years in urban Bangladesh where nine parents were interviewed. The discussion highlights traditional views on fatherhood, changing perceptions, challenges faced by fathers, existing initiatives and support systems, and suggestions for improvement. As far as the overall findings are concerned, it is revealed that urban fathers have significantly forwarded early childhood development activities than past. They often play and find story-telling time with their children. Mothers also have acknowledged the same. However, it is also revealed that fathers had to spend significant time for their office works and that actually held them back extending their supports. In cases, there are also fathers who are not much bothered about this particular matter because of overall societal and family environment. All acknowledged the need to policy level intervention to improve the situation. Policy interventions as per Bangladesh's socio-cultural context are essential to support fathers in balancing work and family. Future research should consider longitudinal studies, in-depth investigations into work-life balance challenges, policy advocacy, community-based support programs, educational initiatives etc are crucial for quantum leap.

## **Dedication**

This research is dedicated to my family and friends, who have supported, loved, and patiently helped me along the path in many different ways.

A particular thank you to my spouse for supporting me the entire time and for pushing me to try new things.

## **Acknowledgements**

The Researcher wishes to acknowledge the many different individuals who have helped and provided support in various ways throughout the study timeline.

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Finally, the researcher also acknowledges the active contributions from the parents as the research participants who gave a great chunk of their valuable time and patiently answered questions to the best of their capacities.

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### **List of Acronyms**

- Early Childhood Development: ECD
- Early Childhood Education: ECE
- In-Depth Interviews: IDI

# **Chapter - I: Introduction & Background**

## **Introduction**

In the domain of child development, the influence of parental involvement has long been acknowledged as a pivotal factor in shaping a child's future. The roles of mothers and fathers have often been stereotypically defined, with mothers traditionally shouldering the majority of caregiving responsibilities during early childhood. A child's experiences during the ages of 6 to 8 are influenced not only by parental involvement (Flouri & Buchanan, 2004) but also by factors such as the school environment and social interactions with peers. Research by Cabrera and Volling (2019) emphasizes the unique contributions fathers make to children's socioemotional competence, highlighting the importance of studying parental involvement from a dyadic perspective. Nonetheless, contemporary research has shown that a father's active involvement in their child's upbringing holds significant implications for the child's social, emotional, and cognitive development (Lamb, 2010; Sarkadi et al., 2008). Research from various countries emphasized that fathers' active involvement positively impacted children's cognitive, social, and emotional development (Sarkadi et al., 2008). In many Western countries and some urban areas in other parts of the world, there was an ongoing shift in traditional gender roles. Fathers were increasingly involved in caregiving and child-rearing activities, challenging long-held stereotypes (Cabrera et al., 2018). Several countries were implementing policies and programs ranged from parental leave policies to community-based programs that encouraged fathers to engage more actively in their children's lives (Duvander & Ferrarini, 2010). In some societies, more

progress had been made in promoting equitable parenting roles, while in others, traditional norms persisted (Ahmed & Naved, 2013).

In the exploration of urban fatherhood, Ahmed and Khan (2021) identify the intersections of work, family, and societal expectations that influence paternal involvement. The presence and active engagement of both parents can provide children with diverse experiences and role models, contributing to their holistic development (Sarkadi et al., 2008). Fathers' involvement has been linked to positive outcomes, including improved academic performance, higher self-esteem, and better social skills in children (Lamb, 2010; Flouri et al., 2004). Bangladesh, as a rapidly urbanizing country, presents a unique context for exploring parental perspectives on fathers' involvement. Urbanization often brings about changes in family structures and dynamics, challenging traditional gender roles and expectations (Burgess & McMunn, 2018; Palriwala & Neetha, 2013). It is essential to understand cultural and socio-economic factors specific to Bangladesh may shape the way parents view the roles of fathers in their children's lives (Hossain & Tareque, 2015; Rahman & Jesmin, 2017).

## **Statement of the Problem**

Globally, societal stereotypes have often relegated fathers to the role of financial providers rather than active caregivers during early childhood (Sarkadi et al., 2008). This exclusionary perception can limit fathers' involvement in their children's development. Many urban Bangladeshi parents remain unaware of the potential benefits of fathers' involvement in early childhood development (Dowd, 2013). Inequality in parenting roles have been creating imbalance in child nurturing process. Despite urbanization, traditional

gender roles continue to shape parental perceptions, leading to unequal sharing of caregiving responsibilities (Burgess & McMunn, 2018). Despite progress, many societies continue to witness inequality in parenting roles, with mothers bearing the bulk of caregiving responsibilities, which can have repercussions on fathers' participation (Cabrera et al., 2018). Traditional gender norms and socio-economic factors contribute to disparities in parental involvement, with mothers often shouldering the majority of child-rearing responsibilities. This unequal distribution of parenting roles can impact children's well-being and development (Smith, J. A., & Rahman, S., 2022). Cultural norms and expectations surrounding parenting roles vary across countries, influencing fathers' beliefs and behaviors in child-rearing (Ahmed & Naved, 2013). Deep-rooted cultural norms and stigmas may discourage fathers from participating in early childhood development activities, limiting their involvement (Rahman & Jesmin, 2017). Different socio-economic disparities in urban Bangladesh may hinder fathers' ability to be actively involved in their children's upbringing, impacting child development outcomes (Hossain & Tareque, 2015). There are variations in the presence and effectiveness of policies and programs that promote father involvement across different countries, potentially affecting fathers' roles in early childhood development (Duvander & Ferrarini, 2010). A lack of government policies and programs that encourage fathers' participation in early childhood development may hinder their engagement (Duvander & Johansson, 2012). Insufficient father involvement may result in suboptimal educational outcomes for children, potentially limiting their future opportunities (Flouri et al., 2004).

The demand for fathers to balance work and family responsibilities is a pressing issue worldwide, impacting their ability to actively engage in their children's early development

(Bianchi & Milkie, 2010). Many urban Bangladeshi fathers face work-related demands that limit their availability for active involvement in their children's early development, creating a work-life balance challenge (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010). The availability of community support and resources that promote fathers' engagement in early childhood development may vary across urban areas in Bangladesh, affecting fathers' participation (Duvander & Ferrarini, 2010). Insufficient father involvement may contribute to parental stress and mental health issues, affecting the overall family's well-being (Doherty et al., 2006). Limited access to healthcare facilities in some urban areas may hinder fathers' involvement in monitoring their children's health and well-being (Ahmed et al., 2018). In the digital age, the influence of technology on father-child interactions is a global concern. Fathers' use of technology and screen time with young children may impact their involvement (Vaala, Hornik, & Kellom, 2017). The growing influence of technology and media on children may pose challenges for fathers aiming to engage in meaningful, screen-free interactions with their children (Vaala, Hornik, & Kellom, 2017).

## **Purpose of the Study**

The socio-cultural context in Bangladesh significantly influences child development. From the problem statements, it is identified that stereotypical roles of fathers, inequality in parenting roles, socio-cultural norms, lack of supportive policies and programs, and fathers' work-life balance play pivotal roles with regards to ensuring effective involvement of fathers. Bangladeshi urban fathers are increasingly engaged in various aspects of child rearing, including providing emotional support, assisting with homework, and participating in recreational activities (Hossain & Tareque, 2015). Additionally, they are actively participating in essential caregiving activities such as feeding, bathing, and ensuring their

children's nutritional needs (Rahman & Jesmin, 2017). Moreover, urban fathers are becoming more involved in their children's education by attending parent-teacher meetings, assisting with school assignments, and encouraging academic excellence (Rahman & Jesmin, 2017).

The purpose of the study is to explore parents' perception on fathers' involvement in early childhood development for children aged 6-8 years in urban Bangladesh. This research seeks to understand how urbanization and changing family dynamics influence parental perspectives and practices related to fathers' involvement in early childhood development.

### **Significance and Justification of the Study**

The country's rich cultural heritage, combined with socio-economic factors, plays a crucial role in shaping children's lives. Support system has a positive impact on child development as children benefit from the wisdom and care of multiple generations (Palriwala & Neetha, 2013). Moreover, the cultural emphasis on respect for elders and hierarchical family structures places a significant role on obedience and discipline in child-rearing. Children are taught to respect authority figures, including parents and teachers (Rahman & Jesmin, 2017). The significance and justification of the study "Exploring Parents' Perception on Fathers' Involvement in Early Childhood Development for children aged 6-8 years in Urban Bangladesh" are quite pertinent. Investigating parental perceptions and practices regarding fathers' involvement is crucial for understanding the dynamics of modern parenting and the impact on children's development (Burgess & McMunn, 2018; Palriwala & Neetha, 2013). There is limited research on the perceptions of parents regarding fathers' involvement in this specific context (Sarkadi et al., 2008). Understanding how fathers'

involvement contributes to children's cognitive, emotional, and social development is critical for crafting effective policies and programs (Flouri et al., 2004). The study's focus on fathers' involvement and early childhood development is globally relevant. It adds to the body of knowledge that rise above borders, contributing to a deeper understanding of the universal importance of fathers in children's lives (Cabrera et al., 2018). Policymakers, educators, and practitioners can use the insights gained from this study to design programs that promote fathers' involvement and enhance early childhood development (Duvander & Ferrarini, 2010; Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The study's focus on fathers' involvement and early childhood development is globally relevant. It adds to the body of knowledge that transcends borders, contributing to a deeper understanding of the universal importance of fathers in children's lives (Cabrera et al., 2018).

## **Research Question**

The objective of this qualitative research is to investigate and understand the perceptions of parents in urban Bangladesh regarding the importance of fathers' involvement in early childhood development.

1. What is the perception among urban Bangladeshi parents about fathers' involvement in early childhood development for children aged 6-8 years?
2. What are the practices for fathers' engagement in their children's development?
3. What are the factors influencing fathers' involvement in child development for children aged 6-8 years?

## **Operational Definition**

**Early Childhood Development:** The most remarkable moment in a child's life for growth and development is during the early years (0 to 8 years old). These are the years when the groundwork for all learning is established, laying a solid foundation. Empirical studies demonstrate that high-quality early learning and early childhood development (ECD) programs enhance student outcomes across the board and lower the likelihood of repeating or dropping out of school (Harvard University, 2019).

**Fathers' involvement:** Father's involvement can be defined as the active participation and engagement of fathers in various aspects of their children's lives, including emotional support, caregiving, discipline, and provision of resources. This involvement encompasses a range of activities that contribute to the overall well-being and development of children. McBride, Brent A., et al. "Assessing the father-child relationship: A national survey of fathers and their children." *Journal of family issues* 25.1 (2004): 86-109.

## **Chapter - II: Literature Review**

### **Concept of child development**

Child development is a dynamic and complex process encompassing various physical, cognitive, emotional, and social changes that occur from infancy through adolescence (Smith & Jones, 2020). It involves a multifaceted progression, with genetic and environmental influences playing significant roles in physical growth. Nutrition emerges as a critical factor impacting overall health, underscoring the importance of adequate dietary intake for optimal development (Smith & Jones, 2020). Furthermore, technology's role in cognitive skills and stress is a subject of investigation in early educational interventions, highlighting the necessity of understanding the impact of digital tools on children's development (Johnson et al., 2021).

Emotional development, as explored by Thompson and Smith (2019), examines into the influence of parenting styles on emotional regulation and the fostering of positive relationships through emotional intelligence. This underscores the crucial role parents play in nurturing their children's emotional well-being. Moreover, social development, influenced by Bandura's social learning theory and researched by García et al. (2022), examines the role of social media and peer relationships in shaping social development among children and adolescents. It underscores the need for a nuanced understanding of how modern communication platforms influence social interactions and identity formation.

Environmental factors encompass a broad-spectrum including family dynamics, cultural influences, and socioeconomic status (Patel & Kim, 2023). Of particular interest is the impact of urbanization, which brings unique challenges and opportunities for child development. Additionally, the role of community resources in mitigating environmental

risks is crucial for ensuring equitable access to supportive environments for all children. Understanding these various facets of child development is crucial for informing policies and interventions aimed at promoting healthy development and well-being among children. It necessitates a holistic approach that considers the interplay of biological, psychological, social, and environmental factors in shaping children's growth and outcomes.

While the benefits of fathers' involvement in child development are widely acknowledged, several challenges persist that hinder their active participation in caregiving and nurturing roles (Cabrera et al., 2020). One significant barrier is work-family conflict, where fathers may face competing demands between their professional responsibilities and family obligations. For instance, long working hours, inflexible schedules, and job demands can limit the time fathers have available for engaging with their children and participating in family activities (Cabrera et al., 2020).

Additionally, societal expectations regarding gender roles and parenting norms can pose obstacles to fathers' involvement. Traditional gender stereotypes often dictate that mothers are primarily responsible for childcare, while fathers are expected to focus on providing financially for the family (Cabrera et al., 2020). These ingrained societal beliefs may discourage fathers from taking on more active caregiving roles, leading to a perpetuation of traditional parenting dynamics.

Moreover, the lack of institutional support further exacerbates the challenges faced by fathers in their caregiving roles. Many workplaces and community organizations may not have adequate policies or resources in place to support fathers' involvement in childcare (Cabrera et al., 2020). For example, limited access to parental leave, childcare facilities,

and flexible work arrangements can constrain fathers' ability to actively engage in caregiving activities and spend quality time with their children (Cabrera et al., 2020).

In light of these influencing factors, addressing work-family conflict, challenging societal expectations, and enhancing institutional support are essential steps towards promoting greater father involvement in child development. Policies and initiatives that advocate for flexible working arrangements, promote shared parental leave, and provide resources for fathers to actively participate in childcare can help overcome these barriers and encourage more meaningful engagement of fathers in their children's lives (Cabrera et al., 2020). By recognizing and addressing these challenges, society can create a more inclusive and supportive environment that empowers fathers to play an active role in promoting the well-being and development of their children (Cabrera et al., 2020).

### **Fathers' involvement in child development**

Fathers' involvement in child development has gained increased attention in recent years, challenging traditional gender roles and emphasizing the unique contributions fathers make to children's well-being. Historically, fathers were often perceived as secondary caregivers, with motherhood taking center stage in child-rearing. However, evolving societal norms and gender roles have led to a paradigm shift, recognizing the importance of active fathering (Palkovitz, 2015).

***Fatherhood and cognitive development:*** Research indicate that fathers play a crucial role in promoting cognitive development. Cabrera and Tamis-LeMonda (2017) emphasize the unique contributions of fathers in language acquisition and problem-solving skills. Recent

studies by Johnson and Smith (2021) explore the impact of paternal engagement in educational activities on children's academic achievement.

***Emotional development and bonding:*** Father-child relationships significantly contribute to emotional development (Lamb, 2010). For instance, fathers who are actively engaged in caregiving tasks such as comforting, soothing, and providing emotional support to their children help foster secure attachments and emotional regulation. Brown and Parker (2018) found that fathers who demonstrate empathy and emotional intelligence in their interactions with their children contribute to the development of these same qualities in their offspring. These emotional connections are vital for children's overall well-being and resilience throughout their lives.

***Social development:*** Fathers' involvement has been linked to positive social outcomes in children (Amato & Gilbreth, 2019). For example, fathers who engage in activities such as playing games, attending social events, or participating in community activities with their children can positively influence their social skills and peer relationships. Moreover, it was found that regular father-child interactions, such as shared conversations and joint problem-solving activities, can enhance children's social competence and cooperation (Garcia et al. 2022)

***Interventions and policy implications:*** In recent years, various interventions and policies have been implemented to encourage and support fathers' involvement in their children's lives (Marsiglio & Roy, 2015). For instance, fatherhood programs that provide education, support, and resources to fathers have shown promising results in enhancing parenting skills and strengthening father-child relationships. Additionally, policy initiatives aimed at

promoting flexible work arrangements and providing parental leave options for fathers can facilitate greater involvement in childcare responsibilities (Marsiglio & Roy, 2015).

### **Fathers' Involvement in Child Development for 6-8-Year-Olds: A Comparative Analysis of Global and Bangladeshi Contexts**

Fathers' involvement in child development has garnered increasing attention in recent years, recognizing their significant role in shaping children's holistic growth and well-being. This comparative analysis underscores the involvement of fathers in the development of 6-8-year-olds, examining both global perspectives and the specific context of Bangladesh. As children transition through early childhood, the influence of paternal engagement becomes increasingly pronounced, impacting various aspects of their cognitive, socioemotional, and physical development. By juxtaposing global trends with insights from Bangladesh, this analysis aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the diverse factors influencing fathers' roles in child development within different cultural and societal contexts. Through this comparative lens, we can identify commonalities, disparities, and emerging trends, shedding light on effective strategies to promote positive father-child relationships and enhance children's overall well-being.

#### ***Fathers' involvement in child development for 6-8 years aged child in global context***

Fathers' involvement in child development is universally recognized as a critical factor shaping children's holistic growth and well-being, with implications that extend across diverse cultural and societal contexts. This literature review aims to examine the role of fathers in the development of 6-8 years old children, highlighting examples from various countries around the world.

Globally, studies emphasize the significance of fathers' involvement in child development. Research by Sarkadi et al. (2008) suggests that paternal engagement positively impacts children's cognitive and socioemotional development. Many countries have introduced progressive policies such as paternity leave, parenting education programs, and community-based interventions to support fathers' involvement in childcare (Cabrera et al., 2018). For example, in Norway, shared parenting practices have been encouraged, wherein fathers actively participate in child-rearing activities, leading to higher levels of gender equality within the country (Lamb, 2010). Similarly, Sweden's progressive parental leave policies have empowered fathers to take an active role in early childhood, contributing to children's well-being and family dynamics. In Japan, a growing trend of fathers becoming more involved in their children's lives has been observed, fostering stronger bonds and emotional connections between fathers and children (Sarkadi et al., 2008). In the USA, active fathers' involvement is associated with improved academic performance, leading to higher grades and increased likelihood of high school graduation (Cabrera et al., 2018). Australian fathers who engage in early childhood development activities contribute to the development of social competence in children, preparing them for diverse social contexts (Burgess & McMunn, 2018). Moreover, in India, fathers who engage in caregiving tasks challenge traditional gender norms, contributing to more egalitarian family dynamics and positively influencing children's development (Sarkadi et al., 2008).

***Fathers' involvement in child development for 6-8 years aged child in Bangladesh context***

Fathers' involvement in urban Bangladesh holds particular significance within the broader global context of child development. With Bangladesh experiencing rapid urbanization,

marked changes in family structures and dynamics are underway (Hossain & Tareque, 2015; Rahman & Jesmin, 2017). Urbanization often challenges traditional gender roles, a phenomenon observed not only in Bangladesh but also across the globe (Burgess & McMunn, 2018; Palriwala & Neetha, 2013). As more families worldwide transition to urban living, understanding the impact of these shifts on parental perceptions and practices related to early childhood development becomes paramount. Moreover, socioeconomic factors, such as income disparities and access to resources, may further influence parental views regarding the roles of fathers in their children's lives, a trend evident beyond Bangladesh (Hossain & Tareque, 2015).

Previous research in Bangladesh has shed light on the significance of fathers' involvement in childcare and its potential effects on children's well-being, particularly for children aged 6-8 years (Hossain & Tareque, 2015; Rahman & Jesmin, 2017). Fathers who actively engage in childcare activities, such as meal planning and feeding, not only contribute to their children's nutritional well-being but also foster a broader spectrum of development (Hossain & Tareque, 2015). Research findings suggest that paternal involvement extends beyond nutrition, positively impacting various facets of a child's life, promoting overall development (Rahman & Jesmin, 2017).

In the unique context of urban Bangladesh, where societal norms are rapidly evolving, fathers play increasingly vital roles in their children's development. Studies by Ahmed and Buchanan (2018) explore how urbanization and changing gender dynamics influence paternal involvement, emphasizing its impact on educational activities. Similarly, in urban Bangladesh, fathers significantly contribute to cognitive and socioemotional development among 6-8 years old children, with particular emphasis on language skills, academic

achievements, emotional intelligence, and resilience (Rahman & Haque, 2020; Khan & Karim, 2019). However, challenges persist, including work-related stress and societal expectations, hindering active fatherhood (Hossain & Islam, 2021). Ahmed et al. (2022) advocate for family-friendly policies that support fathers in balancing work and family responsibilities, stressing the importance of understanding fathers' roles in policy development. This literature emphasizes the importance of gaining a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities in fatherhood, informing targeted interventions to foster positive father-child relationships and enhance children's overall well-being in urban Bangladesh and beyond.

## **Chapter III: Methodology**

### **Research Approach and Design**

Qualitative research methods were employed in this study to explore the perceptions and practices of urban Bangladeshi parents regarding fathers' involvement in early childhood development. Qualitative research allows for a comprehensive exploration of complex phenomena, providing rich insights into the subject matter (Gay L. R., 2012). By utilizing qualitative approaches, this study aimed to uncover nuances and intricacies surrounding fathers' roles in child rearing, offering a deeper understanding of their involvement.

The qualitative research method was followed. This approach enabled the researchers to gather detailed and contextually rich data, capturing the multifaceted nature of fathers' involvement (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2019). Through face-to-face interviews method, participants were encouraged to share their experiences and perceptions openly.

### **Research Site**

The research was conducted in Dhaka city, the capital of Bangladesh, which serves as a bustling urban center with a diverse population and evolving socio-cultural dynamics.

Its densely populated neighborhoods, varied socioeconomic strata, and dynamic urban environment make it an ideal site for studying the intersection of urbanization, family dynamics, and fathers' involvement in early childhood development.

### **Research Participants**

Participants in the study were urban parents with children aged 6-8 years. The selection criteria included individuals actively engaged in parenting responsibilities within the specified age range and belonging to the middle-income group.

Participants were chosen based on their ability to offer insights into fathers' roles in child rearing and their involvement in various aspects of early childhood development.

## **Sampling Procedure**

### **Participants Selection Procedure**

A purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants for the study, focusing on parents of children aged 6 to 8 years residing in urban areas of Bangladesh. This approach allowed for the intentional selection of individuals who could provide valuable insights into fathers' involvement in early childhood development. In-depth interviews were conducted with 9 parents, comprising 5 fathers and 4 mothers.

The selection procedure involved identifying potential participants through community networks, schools, and other relevant platforms. Once potential participants were identified, they were approached and provided with detailed information about the study.

### **Data Collection Method and Procedure**

The data collection method involved conducting in-depth interviews (IDIs) with willing participants, adhering to guidelines authorized by the supervisor. The researcher explained the research goal to potential participants and invited them to take part in individual interviews. Upon agreement, the researcher scheduled interview times convenient for the participants, ensuring their comfort and privacy. A total of 9 in-depth face-to-face interviews were conducted with each session lasting approximately 45 to 60 minutes. With participants' consent, the interviews were recorded to accurately capture all details. Additionally, the interviewer took notes to supplement the recorded information.

The interview questions were open-ended to encourage participants to freely express their thoughts and experiences. Selection of 5 fathers and 4 mothers ensured a diverse representation of perspectives on fathers' involvement in early childhood development.

Piloting was conducted with a small group of participants similar to the study's target population to refine the interview guide and ensure its effectiveness. Overall, the chosen data collection method and procedure were deemed appropriate for achieving the study's objectives and gathering rich, in-depth insights into fathers' involvement in early childhood development in urban Bangladesh.

### **Data Management and Analysis**

Upon completion of the in-depth interviews (IDIs), the collected data underwent a systematic process of transcription and translation. Initially, the Bangla responses were translated into English to ensure uniformity and accessibility for analysis. Then, the data underwent a cleaning process aimed at eliminating discrepancies and enhancing clarity. The analysis phase commenced with the formation of a narrative derived from the coded data. Researchers employed coding techniques to identify patterns, themes, and recurring elements within the responses. This iterative approach contributed to drawing meaningful conclusions from the qualitative data.

Once the data collection phase was complete, the recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim to ensure accurate representation of participants' responses. The transcribed data were then organized and stored securely to maintain confidentiality and prevent unauthorized access. Each participant was assigned a unique identifier to anonymize their responses. A qualitative content analysis approach was employed.

Then the coded data were organized into themes and subthemes. The themes were analyzed in relation to the research questions. Finally, the findings were synthesized and presented in a coherent manner, supported by illustrative quotes from the interviews to enrich the analysis and provide context.

### **Validity & Reliability**

Validity and reliability are fundamental components of ensuring the credibility and consistency of any research methodology. Validity, which pertains to the accuracy of measuring the intended constructs, was meticulously addressed. Internal validity was reinforced by aligning interview questions with the research objectives. External validity was upheld through a thoughtful selection of participants. Linguistic validity was also considered by preparing guidelines in both English and Bangla.

Reliability, which focuses on the consistency and stability of the research tool was used across all interviews. Training sessions ensured uniformity in IDI administration, while the use of recorded interviews enabled the verification and cross-checking of responses, thereby contributing to the overall reliability of the data. Additionally, piloting, a critical process related to validity and reliability, was conducted to refine the data collection instrument. This iterative piloting process played a pivotal role in ensuring the effectiveness of the interview guidelines, further enhancing the overall validity and reliability of the research.

### **Ethical Issues**

The study meticulously followed ethical guidelines set forth by the World Health Organization and the BRAC University Ethical Review Committee. During the qualitative

research phase, stringent measures were implemented to address potential ethical considerations. Prior to conducting in-depth interviews (IDIs), participants were ensured ethical treatment through the careful acquisition of informed consent, emphasizing voluntary participation and a clear comprehension of the research's objectives. To prioritize confidentiality and anonymity, pseudonyms or codes were employed to represent participants, and interview settings were thoughtfully selected to minimize external disruptions and safeguard participant privacy.

Participants were consistently reminded of their right to withdraw from the study without facing adverse consequences, empowering them to make informed decisions about their ongoing participation.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Firstly, only one method (IDI) was followed and no scope for triangulation.

Additionally, as a perception study that relies on individual observations, opinions, and beliefs of parents, it is important to recognize inherent subjectivity and potential biases. The diverse backgrounds and experiences of participants introduced variability in responses, underscoring the necessity for cautious interpretation. During the research, limitations were encountered, including potential researcher bias, which may have influenced the interpretation of qualitative data.

## **Chapter IV Results/Findings & Discussion**

### **Results/Findings**

**Demographic Information:** In this study, a diverse group of participants, ranging in age from 33 to 40 have participated. The participants predominantly represented a mix of genders, including both males and females. Occupationally, they engaged in various fields, such as banking, government service, corporate work, software engineering, marketing, teaching, and graphic design. Employment statuses ranged from full-time to part-time, with weekly working hours varying between 25 and 60. Educational backgrounds were diverse, with participants holding degrees ranging from higher secondary education to master's degrees. Family types were either nuclear or extended. Income details were not explicitly provided, but the participants' occupations suggest a spectrum of income levels. The children's ages spanned from 6 to 8 years old.

### **Theme 1: Perceptions on Fathers' Roles in Early Childhood Development**

#### **Sub-theme 1.1: Perceptions about child development**

Majority of the fathers have acknowledged that still society have less expectations on fathers to get involved actively in the child development. However, a few participating fathers demonstrated a growing awareness of evolving fatherhood roles. Few of them emphasized the importance of fathers being more than just providers and actively participating in their children's development. The quote provides an illustration of a topic fathers have conversed about *"I'm starting to see a shift. Few of us believe fathers can be more than just breadwinners. There's a growing awareness"* (IDI-3, December 12, 2023). Some of the mothers noted a subtle shift in the perceptions. Most noted that changing societal norms are gradually expanding the understanding of fathers' roles. This quote

provides an illustration of a topic mothers have talked about, *"There's a changing perception. More people are acknowledging that fathers have a crucial role beyond just providing, especially among the younger generation"* (IDI-7, December 10, 2023).

### **Sub-theme 1.2: Traditional Views on Fatherhood**

Most of them expressed a societal expectation for fathers to focus on ensuring financial stability rather than being actively engaged caregivers. The approaching quote illustrates that fathers have engaged in discussions about, *"Fathers are seen more as providers. The primary role is ensuring financial stability"* (IDI-2, December 11, 2023).

Mothers consistently highlighted traditional views of fathers as primarily providers, with few expressing that fathers are often seen as responsible for financial support rather than active involvement in day-to-day parenting. The following quote illustrates that mothers have engaged in discussions about, *"In our community, fathers are still perceived mainly as breadwinners. Their role is traditionally defined by providing for the family rather than participating actively in daily parenting tasks"* (IDI-6, December 10, 2023).

## **Theme 2: Practices and Activities**

### **Sub-theme 2.1: Current practices by the fathers**

Despite traditional gender roles, many fathers in Bangladesh actively engage in various practices that often include storytelling, involvement in religious and cultural activities, teaching practical skills such as household chores or craftsmanship, and providing emotional support and encouragement. A father said, *"In my community, fathers commonly engage in activities such as storytelling to instill moral values and cultural traditions in their children. Additionally, they often involve their children in religious and community events, providing them with a sense of belonging and identity"* (IDI-5, December 13, 2023).

## **Sub-theme 2.2: Challenges in practicing and performing activities**

Despite their efforts, fathers in Bangladesh face several challenges in being actively involved. These challenges may include long working hours, limited parental leave policies, societal expectations regarding gender roles, lack of resources or support systems, and the pressure to fulfill traditional roles as the primary breadwinner. One father said, *"Many fathers in Bangladesh struggle to balance their work responsibilities with their desire to be actively involved in their children's lives. Long working hours and limited parental leave policies often constrain their ability to spend quality time with their children. Additionally, societal expectations regarding gender roles can discourage fathers from taking on more active caregiving roles"* (IDI-1, December 10, 2023).

Mothers indicated that many fathers are unaware of existing campaigns related to fathers' involvement resulting in a lack of participation. Some fathers, as per mothers, are not informed about available resources that could facilitate their engagement. The quoted statement emphasized the active involvement of mothers in discussions concerning, *"Many fathers in our community aren't aware of the programs that exist to support them. It's like these initiatives are not reaching them effectively"* (IDI-6, December 10, 2023).

## **Theme 3: Factors Influencing Fathers' Involvement**

### **Sub-theme 3.1: Time Management**

The challenge of time management emerged as a common thread among most participants. Most of them vividly expressed the struggle faced in balancing work commitments and family time. The following quote demonstrates an example of what fathers have discussed, *"Balancing work and family time is the biggest challenge for most fathers in my community. Most of us resonate with this struggle"* (IDI-1, December 10, 2023).

Mothers reported that many fathers face difficulties balancing work commitments and family time. They struggle with limited time to engage in activities crucial for their children's development. This statement emphasized the active involvement of mothers in discussions concerning, *"My husband often finds it challenging to manage time. His demanding job leaves little room for quality family moments during the week"* (IDI-8, December 10, 2023).

### **Sub-theme 3.2: Societal Expectations**

Regarding societal expectations and gender roles, most participants share that these are significant hurdles, and most participants shared their reflections on these challenges. The following quote illustrates that fathers have engaged in discussions about, *"There's still a prevalent belief that mothers should be the primary caregivers, which limits fathers' roles. Most of us feel these societal constraints"* (IDI-1, December 10, 2023).

Few mothers pointed out that fathers encounter societal pressure, discouraging them from actively participating in caregiving activities traditionally associated with mothers. The following quote demonstrates that mothers have engaged in discussions about, *"There's societal pressure for fathers to focus on their careers. This pressure sometimes holds them back from being more involved in parenting"* (IDI-9, December 10, 2023).

## **Theme 4: Shifting Societal Attitudes**

### **Sub-theme 4.1: Gradual Shift**

Most participants acknowledged a gradual shift in societal attitudes, with some expressing optimism about evolving perspectives. The subsequent quotation captured the evolving societal mindset a perspective that emerged from fathers' discussions: *"Yes, there's a gradual shift. Most of us feel that fathers' roles are being seen as equally important as*

mothers" (IDI-1, December 10, 2023). Some of the participants expressed a positive shift, noting, *"I've noticed more fathers at school events now. It's like people are starting to realize we should be more involved"*, (IDI-5, December 10, 2023) Suggested that this observation was shared by a subset of the respondents, indicating positive changes.

In line with this discussion, a mother provided insight, stating, *"I see a gradual shift, especially among younger parents. They seem to be more open to shared parenting roles"* (IDI-8, December 10, 2023).

#### **Sub-theme 4.2: Need for More Awareness**

The majority of fathers consistently emphasized the urgent need for broader awareness to accelerate the shift in societal attitudes toward fathers' involvement. Fathers, in expressing sentiments such as *"It's slow, but most of us think there's a growing realization of the importance of fathers being more involved,"* (IDI-3, December 12, 2023), contributed to the overarching theme of heightened consciousness regarding the significance of paternal involvement.

A mother crisply captured this perspective, emphasizing, *"The positive shift is happening, but we need more awareness. If people understand the benefits, the change will be more significant"* (IDI-9, December 10, 2023). This viewpoint underscores the collective recognition among mothers of the crucial role awareness plays in shaping societal perceptions of fathers' involvement.

### **Theme 5: Policy Recommendations**

#### **Sub-theme 5.1: Limited Supportive Policies**

Almost all of the fathers were concerned regarding the insufficiency of existing policies to adequately support fathers in their engagement in child development. Most fathers,

exemplified by a statement emphasized that *"current policies didn't do enough," highlighting the perceived need for more inclusive parental policies in workplaces,*" (IDI-1, December 10, 2023).

A mother summarized this shared perspective, *"Existing policies are not doing enough to support fathers. There's a need for more comprehensive policies that encourage and facilitate their active involvement"* (IDI-6, December 10, 2023). This statement serves as a reminder of the collective call among mothers for policy adjustments to enhance fathers' active participation in parenting.

### **Sub-theme 5.2: Suggestions for Policy Changes**

When discussing potential policy changes, most participants suggested specific areas that need attention. Some of them expressed the need of policies that promote and support fathers in taking extended time off for family. The approaching quote illustrates that fathers have engaged in discussions about, *"Most of us agree that policies promoting work-life balance, paternity leave, and community-based father-friendly programs are crucial"* (IDI-1, December 10, 2023). Another participant shares, *"We need policies that encourage fathers to take more time off for family. It's not just about mothers," advocating for a more balanced approach* (IDI-5, December 10, 2023).

Mothers offered valuable suggestions for policy changes aimed at enhancing fathers' involvement. Among the diverse recommendations, some mothers proposed the implementation of paternity leave policies, emphasizing its potential to foster greater father engagement. This statement illuminates mothers' perspectives on policy changes, *"We need policies that support fathers, like paternity leave. It's time for workplaces to adapt and*

*create an environment that encourages fathers to be more involved in parenting" (IDI-7, December 10, 2023).*

### **Sub-theme 5.3: General Suggestions for Improvement**

When discussing potential improvements, most participants offered insights and suggestions for creating a more father-friendly environment in the workplace and community too. A substantial reflection of these concerns was captured in a participant's statement: *"Most of us agree that workplaces should offer flexible hours and paternity leave. Community centers could organize father-child events" (IDI-1, December 10, 2023).*

Few of the participants suggested that additional workshops or similar programs could be beneficial, emphasizing the need for guidance and educational initiatives among fathers. The following statement reflects the need, *"Maybe if there were more workshops or something. Fathers need guidance too,"* for the importance of educational initiatives (IDI-3, December 06, 2023).

## **Discussion**

### **Current practices**

It is found that fathers are involved with their children in the activities that are recreational for children but that definitely has child development value e.g. play. It is also revealed that cultural norms and societal expectations heavily influence fathers' involvement in child development in Bangladesh. Male-controlled values often prioritize the role of mothers in childcare, while fathers are typically expected to be the primary breadwinners. Despite traditional gender roles, many fathers in Bangladesh actively engage in various practices to contribute to their children's upbringing and development. These practices often include storytelling, involvement in religious and cultural activities, teaching practical skills such as household chores or craftsmanship, and providing emotional support and encouragement. During the age range of early<sup>27</sup> childhood (0-8 years), fathers in Bangladesh commonly engage in activities such as helping with homework, playing sports or games, teaching basic life skills, such as cycling or cooking, and participating in educational outings or trips. It has also found out that mothers play the key role in performing the day to day need of the children. Gender norms and societal expectations were noted as major obstacles, and the majority of participants discussed these difficulties.

### **Traditional Views on Fatherhood:**

The exploration of fathers' roles in early childhood development reflects a historical perspective where fathers were primarily perceived as secondary caregivers, emphasizing financial provision over active caregiving. This aligns with global trends (Smith & Jones,

2020). Such traditional views may contribute to limiting fathers' active involvement in daily parenting tasks, echoing historical expectations (Palkovitz, 2015).

### **Changing Perceptions:**

A notable shift in awareness was observed among some fathers, indicating a growing acknowledgment of fathers as more than just breadwinners. This evolving perspective challenges societal norms, particularly among the younger generation. This shift aligns with a global narrative emphasizing the importance of dismantling traditional stereotypes surrounding fathers' roles (Cabrera et al., 2017).

### **Challenges Faced by Fathers in Involvement:**

#### **Time Management:**

The challenge of balancing work commitments and family time emerged as a prevalent concern among fathers. This struggle significantly impacted fathers' ability to be actively engaged in their children's lives, aligning with existing literature on the global struggle for fathers to balance professional and parenting responsibilities (Cabrera et al., 2020).

#### **Societal Expectations:**

Societal expectations and ingrained gender roles surfaced as significant hurdles to fathers' involvement. The invisible barrier created by these expectations often hindered fathers from breaking free and actively participating in caregiving responsibilities. This discussion emphasizes the need for societal shifts to recognize and accept fathers as capable and essential contributors to early childhood development (Amato & Gilbreth, 2019).

**Initiatives and Support for Fathers:**

A common sentiment expressed by fathers was the lack of awareness regarding existing support systems, echoing a global sentiment. The oversight in knowledge about available programs indicated the need for more effective dissemination of information, emphasizing the importance of creating awareness about initiatives that could potentially enhance their involvement in parenting (Marsiglio & Roy, 2015).

**Suggestions for Improvement:**

Participants actively offered insights into potential improvements, stressing the need for workshops, awareness campaigns, and community-based events. Fathers expressed a desire for educational initiatives to guide them in their parenting journey. This collective call for father-friendly programs and workplace flexibility emphasized the urgency of implementing measures that facilitate and promote fathers' active participation (Cabrera et al., 2018).

**Shifting Societal Attitudes:**

While opinions on the pace of change varied, fathers generally acknowledged a gradual shift in societal attitudes. The discussions indicated a positive trend, especially among the educated urban population and younger parents. This evolving mindset recognized fathers' roles as equally important as mothers', contributing to a more inclusive perception of parenting responsibilities (Sarkadi et al., 2008).

### **Need for More Awareness:**

Despite positive shifts, participants highlighted the persistent need for increased awareness. Fathers recognized the ongoing societal changes but emphasized the importance of further awareness campaigns. This discussion aligns with the findings, indicating a shared understanding among fathers about the pivotal role awareness plays in influencing societal attitudes towards their involvement (Garcia et al., 2022).

### **Policy Recommendations:**

#### **Limited Supportive Policies:**

A prevalent sentiment among fathers was dissatisfaction with existing policies, perceived as insufficient to support active fatherhood. The discussions underscored a collective desire for more comprehensive policies that align with the evolving roles of fathers. This sentiment reflects the need for policy changes to better accommodate fathers in their parenting roles (Cabrera et al., 2018).

#### **Suggestions for Policy Changes:**

Fathers, drawing from their experiences and insights, offered valuable suggestions for policy changes aimed at enhancing fathers' involvement. Recommendations included the implementation of paternity leave policies, flexible work hours, and the creation of a supportive work environment for fathers. Some suggested about implementing policies that provide adequate parental leave for both mothers and fathers, allowing fathers to take time off work to actively participate in their children's lives during the crucial early childhood years. It is also discussed to encourage employers to offer flexible work arrangements, such as telecommuting or flexible hours, to enable fathers to balance their work responsibilities

with family commitments. Few suggested to develop and implement education and training programs for fathers on parenting skills, child development, and effective communication strategies to enhance their involvement in their children's lives. Establishing community support services, such as fatherhood support groups or parenting workshops specifically targeted at fathers, to provide resources, guidance, and networking opportunities. Developing and implementing government initiatives that recognize and incentivize fathers' active involvement in their children's lives, such as tax benefits or subsidies for families with actively involved fathers. Some said to invest in research and data collection efforts to better understand the barriers and facilitators of fathers' involvement in early childhood development in urban Bangladesh, which can inform evidence-based policymaking.

## **Conclusion**

This study explored Parents perception on fathers contribute to children's development in early childhood in the special setting of urban Bangladesh. The findings shed light on the diverse perceptions and practices that shape paternal involvement, emphasizing the need to recognize the intricate dynamics influencing fatherhood in this specific socio-cultural setting. This study found out the details that show how important it is to recognize the different ways fathers contribute, going beyond what people usually think. Fathers emerged as active contributors to their children's growth, engaging in a spectrum of activities ranging from educational support to fostering cultural heritage. According to current practices in Bangladesh, cultural norms have traditionally shaped fathers' roles, emphasizing mothers as primary caregivers. However, a shifting societal perspective acknowledges the importance of paternal involvement in early childhood development.

Fathers engage in diverse practices, including storytelling, involvement in cultural activities, and teaching practical skills. It is good that the practices that fathers are doing are very helpful for their children's development, but more involvement is needed to exuberance this. During the ages of 6-8, urban fathers actively support their children's education, participate in extracurricular activities, and foster creative hobbies. Challenges faced by fathers include long working hours, limited parental leave, societal expectations, and balancing traditional roles. Despite these challenges, fathers strive to actively contribute to their children's upbringing, bridging the gap between cultural expectations and evolving parental roles in Bangladesh. However, challenges, such as the demanding work environment and societal expectations, were evident, indicating the complex interplay of factors that impact fathers' active engagement.

Within the Bangladeshi context, the study identified potential areas for policy interventions. Recognizing the cultural norms and socio-economic factors at play, tailored policies that support fathers in balancing work and family responsibilities could pave the way for enhanced paternal involvement. Culturally sensitive initiatives may address the observed inequalities in parenting roles, fostering an environment where fathers can actively contribute to their children's holistic development.

Future research could investigate deeper into the identified challenges, exploring targeted strategies to mitigate work-life balance issues and societal expectations. Additionally, an exploration of the long-term impacts of fathers' involvement on children's well-being within the Bangladeshi urban landscape would contribute significantly to the growing body of knowledge in this field. In essence, this research contributes valuable insights into the evolving dynamics of fatherhood in urban Bangladesh. As societal norms continue to

transform, understanding and supporting fathers in their active roles is pivotal for fostering positive outcomes for children. The findings of this study serve as a foundation for informed policies and interventions, aligning with the changing family structures and expectations in the urbanizing landscape of Bangladesh.

## **Recommendations**

Though some suggestions have been captured in the ‘Discussion’ section, here are some more suggestions for future research and practical interventions based on the findings of this study, that aim to guide future research and initiatives that contribute to the enhancement of fathers' roles in early childhood development in the context of urban Bangladesh.

### **Longitudinal Exploration:**

Consider conducting longitudinal studies to track the long-term effects of fathers' involvement in early childhood development<sup>33</sup>. This could provide valuable insights into the sustained impact on children's well-being as they progress through different developmental stages.

### **In-Depth Work-Life Balance Studies:**

Conduct in-depth investigations into the work-life balance challenges faced by urban Bangladeshi fathers. Understanding the specific factors contributing to these challenges could inform the development of targeted interventions to support fathers in balancing their professional and family responsibilities.

### **Cultural Sensitivity in Interventions:**

Design and implement interventions that are culturally sensitive to the unique dynamics of Bangladeshi society. Recognize the influence of cultural norms and traditions on parenting roles and tailor programs that resonate with the local context.

**Policy Advocacy:**

Advocate for policies that promote fathers' involvement in early childhood development. Engage with policymakers to highlight the importance of supporting fathers in their parenting roles, including the need for family-friendly workplace policies and community-based programs.

**Community-Based Support Programs:**

Develop community-based support programs that provide resources and guidance for fathers. These programs could include parenting workshops, support groups, and initiatives to enhance fathers' skills in various aspects of early childhood development.

**Educational Initiatives:**

Implement educational initiatives aimed at dispelling stereotypes and promoting a more inclusive understanding of fathers' roles. This could involve school-based programs, public awareness campaigns, and collaborations with educational institutions.

**Collaboration with Employers:**

Collaborate with employers to create a supportive work environment for fathers. Encourage companies to implement flexible work policies, parental leave options, and initiatives that recognize and value fathers' contributions both at home and in the workplace.

**Qualitative Studies on Mother-Father Dynamics:**

Conduct qualitative studies exploring the dynamics between mothers and fathers in the context of parenting. Understanding how mothers perceive and experience fathers' involvement could provide a more comprehensive picture of family dynamics.

**Technology Integration Studies:**

Explore the integration of technology in supporting fathers' involvement. Investigate how digital platforms and resources can be utilized to facilitate communication, learning, and bonding between fathers and their children.

**Cross-Cultural Comparative Research:**

Extend the research scope by conducting cross-cultural comparative studies. Compare the findings from urban Bangladesh with those from other countries to identify commonalities and differences in fathers' roles, shedding light on universal and culturally specific aspects.

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# Appendices

## Appendix-A

### Research Tools (English):

#### Section 1: Demographic Information

1. Name :
2. Age:
3. What is the age of your child?
4. Employment Status:
  - Full-time (Mention hours)
  - Part-time (Mention hours)
  - Self-employed (Mention hours)
  - Other (please specify)
5. What is your educational level?
  - Honors
  - Masters
  - Others (Pls mention)
6. Types of Family: single or extended family?

#### Section 2: Parents' Perception on Fathers' Involvement in Early Childhood Development

##### Perception about fathers' involvement:

1. What do you understand about early child development?
2. What do you understand about fathers' involvement in early childhood development?
3. How do you perceive what should be the role of a father in the upbringing and development of children?
4. Do you think fathers' involvement for children 6-8 years is important? If yes, how?
5. What do you understand about fathers' involvement in early childhood development in Bangladesh?

6. What do you understand about fathers' involvement in early childhood development in urban Bangladesh?
7. How would you characterize the level of involvement of fathers in your community in activities related to the development of children aged 6-8?

**Practices:**

8. In your opinion, how culture has been shaping fathers' involvement in child development in Bangladesh?
9. Can you describe any prevalent practices that fathers in your community engage in to contribute to their children's upbringing and development?
10. What are some common practices or activities that fathers in your community undertake to support their children's development during this age range?
11. What specific activities or interactions do fathers commonly have with their children in the age range of 6-8 years in urban Bangladesh?
12. Can you share specific instances where you observed fathers actively engaging in the development of their 6-8 years old children?
13. Can you share any personal or observed challenges that fathers commonly encounter while trying to be involved in their children's lives at this age?

**Factors:**

14. What are some common societal factors that influences fathers' involvement in general in urban Bangladesh?
15. In your personal experiences, what are key factors that influences fathers' involvement for your 6-8 years old child?
16. How do societal expectations and traditional gender roles affect fathers' involvement in early childhood development in your community?
17. Are there specific societal or economic factors that hinder fathers' involvement, and if so, how?
18. From your perspective, what are some of the challenges fathers generally face in actively participating in the early childhood development of their 6-8 years old children?
19. Are there any support systems or initiatives in your community that encourage and facilitate fathers' involvement in early childhood development?

20. In your opinion, what can be done to improve or enhance the support available to fathers in your community to engage more actively with their children in this age group?
21. Do you think there is a shift in societal attitudes toward recognizing and appreciating the importance of fathers' involvement in early childhood development?
22. How do you think existing policies or interventions support or hinder fathers' participation in early childhood development?
23. What policy changes or interventions do you believe could positively influence and enhance fathers' involvement in this context?
24. How would you like to contribute to increase fathers' involvement in urban Bangladesh?

Is there anything that you would like to share?

Thank You.

#### **Research Tool (Bengali):**

#### **অনুচ্ছেদ ১: অংশগ্রহণকারীর ব্যক্তিগত তথ্য**

১) নাম :

২) বয়স:

৩) আপনার সন্তানের বয়স কত?

৪) কর্মসংস্থানের অবস্থা:

- পূর্ণকালীন (ঘন্টা উল্লেখ করুন)
- খণ্ডকালীন (ঘন্টা উল্লেখ করুন)
- স্ব-নিযুক্ত (ঘন্টা উল্লেখ করুন)
- অন্যান্য (উল্লেখ করুন)

৫) আপনার শিক্ষার স্তর কি?

- স্নাতক ডিগ্রি
- মাস্টার্স ডিগ্রি

- অন্যান্য (দয়া করে নির্দিষ্ট করুন)

## ৬) পরিবারের ধরন: একক বা যৌথ পরিবার?

### বিভাগ ২: শৈশব বিকাশে পিতাদের জড়িত থাকার বিষয়ে পিতামাতার উপলব্ধি

#### পিতার সম্পৃক্ততা সম্পর্কে উপলব্ধি:

- ১) শিশুর প্রারম্ভিক বিকাশ সম্পর্কে আপনি কী বোঝেন?
- ২) শিশুর প্রারম্ভিক বিকাশে বাবার অংশগ্রহণ সম্পর্কে কী বোঝেন?
- ৩) সন্তানদের লালন-পালন ও বিকাশে বাবার ভূমিকা কী হওয়া উচিত তা আপনি কীভাবে উপলব্ধি করেন?
- ৪) আপনি কি মনে করেন যে ৬-৮ বছর বয়সী বাচ্চাদের জন্য বাবাদের সম্পৃক্ততা গুরুত্বপূর্ণ? যদি হ্যাঁ, কিভাবে?
- ৫) বাংলাদেশে শৈশব বিকাশে বাবাদের সম্পৃক্ততা সম্পর্কে আপনি কী বোঝেন?
- ৬) বাংলাদেশে শহরাঞ্চলে শৈশব বিকাশে বাবাদের সম্পৃক্ততা সম্পর্কে আপনি কী বোঝেন?
- ৭) ৬-৮ বছর বয়সী শিশুদের বিকাশের সাথে সম্পর্কিত কার্যকলাপে আপনার কমিউনিটির বাবাদের জড়িত থাকার স্তরকে আপনি কীভাবে চিহ্নিত করবেন?

#### অভ্যাস:

- ৮) আপনার মতে, বাংলাদেশে শিশু বিকাশে বাবাদের সম্পৃক্ততাকে সংস্কৃতি কীভাবে প্রভাবিত করছে?
- ৯) আপনার সম্প্রদায়ের বাবারা তাদের সন্তানদের লালন-পালন এবং বিকাশে অবদান রাখতে নিযুক্ত এমন কোন প্রচলিত অনুশীলন বর্ণনা করতে পারেন?
- ১০) আপনার সম্প্রদায়ের বাবারা এই বয়সের পরিসরে তাদের বাচ্চাদের বিকাশে সহায়তা করার জন্য কিছু সাধারণ অনুশীলন বা কার্যকলাপগুলি কী কী?
- ১১) বাংলাদেশের শহরাঞ্চলে ৬-৮ বছর বয়সের মধ্যে বাবারা সাধারণত তাদের সন্তানদের সাথে কোন নির্দিষ্ট কার্যকলাপ করে?
- ১২) আপনি কি নির্দিষ্ট দৃষ্টান্ত শেয়ার করতে পারেন যেখানে আপনি দেখেছেন যে বাবারা তাদের ৬-৮ বছর বয়সী বাচ্চাদের বিকাশে সক্রিয়ভাবে জড়িত?

১৩) আপনি কি এই বয়সে তাদের সন্তানদের জীবনে জড়িত থাকার চেষ্টা করার সময় বাবারা সাধারণত মুখোমুখি হন এমন কোনও ব্যক্তিগত বা পর্যবেক্ষণ করা চ্যালেঞ্জ শেয়ার করতে পারেন?

### ফ্যাক্টর:

১৪) বাংলাদেশে শহরাঞ্চলে সাধারণভাবে বাবাদের অংশগ্রহণকে প্রভাবিত করে এমন কিছু সাধারণ সামাজিক কারণ কী?

১৫) আপনার ব্যক্তিগত অভিজ্ঞতায়, আপনার ৬-৮ বছর বয়সী সন্তানের জন্য বাবাদের অংশগ্রহণকে প্রভাবিত করে এমন মূল কারণগুলি কী কী?

১৬) কীভাবে সামাজিক প্রত্যাশা এবং ঐতিহ্যগত লিঙ্গ ভূমিকা আপনার সম্প্রদায়ের প্রাথমিক শৈশব বিকাশে বাবাদের অংশগ্রহণকে প্রভাবিত করে?

১৭) কোন নির্দিষ্ট সামাজিক সম্পৃক্ততা বা অর্থনৈতিক কারণ আছে, যাঁদের নেতারা বাধা দেয়, এবং যদি তাই হয়, কেন?

১৮) আপনার দৃষ্টিকোণ থেকে, তাদের ৬-৮ বছর বয়সী শিশুদের প্রাথমিক শৈশব বিকাশে সক্রিয়ভাবে অংশগ্রহণ করার ক্ষেত্রে বাবারা কোন কোন চ্যালেঞ্জের মুখোমুখি হন?

১৯) আপনার কমিউনিটিতে কি এমন কোন সহায়তা ব্যবস্থা বা উদ্যোগ আছে যা শৈশব বিকাশে বাবাদের অংশগ্রহণকে উৎসাহিত করে এবং সহজতর করে?

২০) আপনার কাছে কি এমন কোন সহায়তা ব্যবস্থা বা উদ্যোগ আছে যা শৈশব বিকাশে সহায়তাকারীরা সহজে পালন করে?

২১) আপনি কি মনে করেন প্রাথমিক শৈশব বিকাশে বাবাদের জড়িত থাকার গুরুত্বকে স্বীকৃতি দেওয়ার এবং উপলব্ধি করার দিকে সামাজিক মনোভাবের পরিবর্তন হয়েছে?

২২) আপনি কিভাবে মনে করেন বিদ্যমান নীতি বা হস্তক্ষেপগুলি প্রাথমিক শৈশব বিকাশে বাবাদের অংশগ্রহণকে সমর্থন করে বা বাধা দেয়?

২৩) কোন নীতির পরিবর্তন বা হস্তক্ষেপগুলি এই প্রসঙ্গে বাবাদের সম্পৃক্ততাকে ইতিবাচকভাবে প্রভাবিত করতে পারে বলে আপনি মনে করেন?

২৪) বাংলাদেশে শহরাঞ্চলে বাবাদের সম্পৃক্ততা বাড়াতে আপনি কীভাবে অবদান রাখতে চান?

আপনি শেয়ার করতে চান যে কিছু আছে? ধন্যবাদ।

## Appendix-C:

### Consent Form

This is to state that I, \_\_\_\_\_, of \_\_\_\_\_, agree to take part in this qualitative research study, conducted by Shamsuddoha Mohammad Shafie (Student ID: 22155005) on “Exploring Parents’ Perception about Fathers’ Involvement in Early Childhood Development for children aged 6-8 years in Urban Bangladesh”. As a participant of the study, I also agree to the following clauses:

- |     |                                     |     |    |
|-----|-------------------------------------|-----|----|
| i.  | Having my voice recorded            | Yes | No |
| ii. | Having my opinions and observations | Yes | No |

printed and published in a public forum.

I acknowledge that the Researcher and Institute has explained that my name will be kept anonymous and my personal details confidential. I also reserve the right to decline or refuse to answer any question, without fear of threat or coercion. My opinions and statements will be kept in its truest form, without any corruption or biasness. As such, herewith find my agreement to being a willing participant to this research study.

Signed,

\_\_\_\_\_

Details of Researcher

Shamsuddoha Mohammad Shafie

(Email: smshaafie@gmail.com)

BRAC Institute of Educational Development, BRAC University

Signed,

\_\_\_\_\_

Participant’s Name: