

EXPLORATION OF FATHER'S PERCEPTION AND PRACTICES REGARDING CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT IN BALOCHISTAN, PAKISTAN

Gohram Baloch

ECD Practitioner

Advanced Diploma in Early Childhood Development

Agha Khan University Karachi.

Abdul Nasir Kiazai

Assistant Professor,

Institute of Education and Research

University of Balochistan.

ABSTRACT:

Early child development starts establishing a country from zero. The main assets of a country are its inhabitants. If the children of a country pass through a favourable early child development in their childhood, their base strengthens and the whole nation succeeds.

Father involvement plays a very essential role in child development during early years. Father's involvement can affect academic achievements and formal education of the children. This research explored the father's perception and practices regarding child care and development in Balochistan. A semi structured guideline was used to interview the fathers. Lots of research has been done on role of Fathers however, very limited data available about Pakistan.. This research was conducted in capital of Balochistan Quetta city. Five IDIs and one FGD were conducted with group of fathers, investigator interviewed the participants individually and, conducted FGD which contained ten participants. Each interview contained one and half hour and FGD took approximately two hour. Exploratory

research study design was used to understand the knowledge, perceptions and practices of fathers.

Father has significant and considerable role and responsibilities in child development reported by participants. Therefore, father should play his role and perform his responsibilities in child care in order to build up his children physically, socially, emotionally and mentally, shared by fathers. Furthermore, father is critical to the optimal development and well-being of a child. Father's role is more than that of economic provider of the past and now includes nurturing, care giving, and emotional support in both obvious and subtle ways. (Margaret Mead 2002)

This study's findings will help Government to develop policy or for NGO to do interventions for fathers regarding child care and development in Balochistan.

Key words: Early Childhood Development, Child Cognitive Development, Child Emotional Development, Perception and Practices, Child Social Development, Child Physical Development, Child Care Development, Father and Child.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The majority of the researches pointing out that father involvement can play a very essential role in child development during early years. Father's strong communication, involvement and quality and quantity of the time and care will help child to develop better socially, emotionally, cognitively and physically (Irum Fatima 2010). In addition, father's involvement can affect academic achievements and formal education of the children. There are a lots of benefits for children resulting from fathers involvement was found in terms of enhancing problem solving skills such as, mathematical or language skills, vocabulary knowledge and cognitive development, stabilizing creative capabilities special talents or better performance in school improving motivation for learning achievements (Seon-young lee 2010). Furthermore, father plays the key role to the development of children in intellectually, socially, emotionally, and physically. Those children who have close attachment and warm relationship with their father they have more chance to have successful life in future in do the same when he becomes a father Now it is believed that father's care, love, and affection and the way father treats to his children really count in child development (Heather Gedde2008).

SIGNIFICANT OF FATHER:

A noted sociologist, Dr.DavidPopene (2006), is one of the founders of the relatively young field of research into fathers and fatherhood. He says, no one can bring positive benefits to their children but, father. Father has a great and direct impact on the good well-being of their kids. Furthermore, father's indirect influences can be counted which is very important as well in this way the quality of their relationships with the mother of their kids. A father who has a positive relationship with the mother of their kids is more actively to be involved and to pass time with their kids and to have kids who are psychologically and emotionally sound enough (Rosenberg, J. willcox, W, Bradford 2006). The mother who is treated with the respect by her kids father

and dealt with conflict within the relationship in an good manner are more likely to have boys who understand how they are to treat women and know the importance of fathers in the healthy development of children are less likely to act in aggressive fashion toward females. Girls who are treated with respect by their fathers then they expect men to treat them more politely and less chance to have unhealthy relationship in future.

A good academic outcome has been shown in those children who get required care by the father. Some of researches suggest that infants who get cared, nurtured by father those kids grow with higher IQs, as well as good linguistic and problem solving capacities. Young children whose fathers are involved get to school along higher levels of school readiness, and can deal the stressful situation than young children who are less involved fathers.

Many researchers have found that an energetic and nurturing way of fathering is linked with linked with better language skills intellectual functioning, and academic achievement among adolescents. Children who are involved with father after birth get emotionally strong and get confident to explore their around and when they grow older be able to contact socially with friends, and show less trouble at home, school or in the neighborhood children who get great levels of a section from Research suggested that fathers who were not mentioned by mothers as having been involved in their children's literacy were significantly more likely to be on a low income than those who were reported as being engaged with their children in home literacy. In addition it has been shown that those children whose mother and father are more involved in their development are more successful in their school life. Father plays in the literacy development a pivotal role but least involvement of fathers in literacy is making the children weak competitors of the academic activities (Anne Morgan, Cathy, Nutbrown and Peter Hannon 2009). Another research suggests that fathers who were involved early in the child's life about 1.9 times more likely to be involved in sleeping with children and about 3 times more likely to bring the child to medical facilities for immunization. A research study suggests that early involvement of fathers and paternal for immunization should be encouraged by health care providers. The study found that fatherhood in the traditional sense continues to be dominant

although participants considered themselves to be better more involved fathers their own fathers.

Father seems as primary economic provider and do not have much direct involvement in daily care of children during the first five years of life. A

study in Pakistan conducted by Irum Fatima (2010) findings of this study suggest that among rural young children in Pakistan, more supportive fathers roles are associated with children's higher scores on the bayley mental development index and certain others indicators.

Manakshadahal in Nepal mentioned an action research study aimed at increasing father's participation in child rearing. This research supported fathers to be involved in some activities like bathing babies, feeding, telling bed time's stories, and putting children to sleep. The study showed that when fathers were encourage to be more involved in these ways, they spent more time with their children and also that the children became more active and happy. Father involvement makes the great difference in intellectual development ,identification of sex role development t or psychological development it is also noted that children usually do better when they have good and strong attachment with the fathers it does not matter father lives with them are he live away however, the child does better. Father also leaves positive effect on the parent's marriage and on the children when father is actively involved with the children through this process mothers stress level comes down and both of them mother and father get relaxed. This surely gets a positive impact on the parent's marriage and on the children.

In same study children see the father as their play mates. Children like to play with their father more mothers but, they go to mother when they are in stressful situations. Those sons who are nurtured and cared by fathers are more likely to get strong thinking power and problem solving skills. In addition, a study says the closeness of mother and father child relationship has been examined in detail and attachment theory is at the centre of this area

of research. It tells that mother and father sensitivity settle the security of attachments and thus of the child's misbehaviour psychological adjustment.

Father's involvement showed the strong effect on child development, child survival, child mental development and to be a positive father in future life. Another article is shown that positive father involvement is linked with more pleasing result for kids and young children as well as young people in education achievements (Heather Geddes 2008).

Some researchers noted role of fathers in the development of their children's giftedness and talents they found that paternal involvement and impact in the process of children's talent development were positively recorded. It was also found that father positive involvement in way of promoting problems solving skills such as mathematical or language skills ,vocabulary knowledge and cognitive development, facilitating creative potential special talents or better performance in schools and improving motivation for learning achievement. In spite of research on fathers in talent development, results were positive and promising. Although, it is believed still that father's main role is to get the family members financially supported, however, mother has the key role to nurture and care the child. Moreover, father is considered the great source of motivation and support for children's in talent development and professional role model for their children those who are gifted. Father's importance and role in this new era needs to be redefined and re-examined understanding modification and demands in families today by taking account of cultural ,ethnic and societal as well as personal and familial changes. Furthermore ,a search shows that a good father is very much important to the better development and well-being of a child if we have glance over the past then we will come to know that father's role was just financial supporter now in includes nurturing , care giving and emotional support in child development. Successful fatherhood correlates strongly with many attributes of children successfully growing up (Margaret Mead 2002).

It is a common phenomenon that a mother invariably plays an impressive role in the development of a child. It was believed that in past father's role was a just an economic provider (Margaret Mead 2002). However, father, role now includes nurturing, care giving and emotional support in both obvious and subtle ways. Successfully fatherhood correlates strongly with many attributes of children successfully growing upon the reference of above mentioned statements one can say that a father just does not play the role of an economic provider. In fact, he plays very important role to develop his child socially, physically and emotionally. Father's role must not be underestimate in development of the child since, he has the equal responsibility also to give the quality and quantity of care and attention to the children so that children grow and develop well.

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH:

The reason to have chosen this topic is that since, there were not many research conducted on the significant of father role in child care and development at Pakistan particularly in Baluchistan scenario. Furthermore, this research was conducted in Baluchistan where people do not have the knowledge about the importance of father's role in child development although he plays a very much important role in child development. In this research father's perception and practices were explored to better understand their role and practices in child care and development. This study would give us understandings about father's role and responsibilities in child care.

Research Question was:

What are father's perception and practices regarding child care and development?

Objectives:

- To explore father's perception and knowledge about child care and development
- To explore father's role and responsibilities in child care.
- To explore father's perception and practices related to child physical, social mental and emotional development.
- To list down challenges face by father interims of child care
- To identify strategies that enhance father role in child care

METHODOLOGY:**RESEARCH APPROACH:**

Qualitative research approach was proposed for the study as it provides rich contextual information about the problem under consideration. It seeks to understand the norms, culture, belief and behaviours of a particular individual or group. Furthermore, the qualitative study involved face to face interviews and FGD. The interviews and FGD were designed to explore father's perception and practices regarding child care and development in Balochistan. Research approval was received from Ethical Review Committee Aga Khan University KARACHI.

DATA MANAGEMENT AND ANALYSIS:

The audio-tape was used to record the data all the information of the participants both notes and recorded data was protected with a password. Then data was transcribed manually MS word was used by using roman English for transcription. . Manula analysis has been done, Thematic codes were generated for each node and a thematic analysis was done.

Ethical considerations:

- The study was approved by the ethical review committee of The Aga Khan University, Karachi.

- Written consent has been obtained from the participants during FGDs and IDIs
- Confidentiality and anonymity was maintained throughout the course of the study. Participants were responded for any concerns that may arise and were allowed to withdraw from the study at any time.
- There was no harm to study participants in any kind.
- Pseudonyms were used while transcribed and reporting the results.

RESULT:

Six Major Themes Emerged After The Analysis. The Description of Findings areas below:

1. UNDERSTANDING ABOUT ECD

All Participants highlighted that ECD is related to the age from birth to eight years. Majority of the father highlighted that, all care givers play a very important role such as, parents, uncle, aunty, grandparents, siblings, another members of the family. However, father plays a very important role in early ages. Since; he is responsible to bring fresh food for child, without father proper care, child cannot develop in a good way. Father plays a very vital role in child's social emotion and physical development hence, father should develop a strong rapport with his child and should give time to his children to educational activities such homework and visit to children school asking about his child behaviour ,performance in school and attend events whenever he is called. Few participants highlighted that It is a common phenomenon in our Society that mother has responsible for child care and development however; father has equally responsible for child development and care as mother. Some fathers reported that Early childhood is the beginning of life in

fact, this is the base of life in this age father has the most important role for child development.

2. PRACTICES ARE DONE WITH CHILDREN BY A FATHER.

Respondents revealed that they play with their children at home in the afternoon. They play football /cricket with plastic ball and bat or other such kind of games with their children to make them physically active at homes highlighted by the participants. Fathers shared stories to their children in their own local languages at bed time. They also help their children in homework. Few fathers highlighted that sometimes, they take their children to park or picnic in order to get better social development. All of the father said that they tried to spend much time with children so that children have good attachment with us. When the baby is small help the child to walk and talk take them outside sometimes. Father also play important role in religious development, father get listened the child local stories and religious things such, kalama when child is about to sleep, specially, father does help the child in homework shared by fathers. Few fathers reported that they play puzzles games with the children, also plays videos games with the children. And take the children to the guest when guest come to home these practices are done by fathers reported by the participants. Some verbatim from fathers are as below:

3. UNDERSTANDING ABOUT CHILD' SOCIAL EMOTIONAL, PHYSICAL, and MENTAL DEVELOPMENT

Fathers reported that social emotional development is child's ability to be adjusted in the social environment in which emotions play a very important role if child is emotionally developed itself esteem would be strong. Cognitive, mental development is child be able to solve the problems. Physical development refers to changing in body size, height, weight. Father plays a very important role to get the child developed physically, socially,

emotionally, mentally reported by fathers. Fathers recommended that father should take his children to outside and teach him/her to how to deal with the people so that child be strong socially, father provide opportunity to child play freely ,provide him, her play martial so that the child could explore them and be strong cognitively/mentally. Father play important role in social emotional development reported by father, they shared that father should have strong communication with the child in order to child can express his feelings, when a child does a good job he, she be appreciated or encouraged by father in order to get the child emotionally strong. Father has to provide balance diet to his children so that they are strong physically. Most important father should spend the quality of time with the children so that child get strong rapport with the father which is most important for a child to develop socially, emotionally, physically, cognitively/psychologically reported by few fathers.

4. EXPANSION OF FATHER ROLE AT HOME, SCHOOL, AND COMMUNITY LEVEL

Regarding expansion of their role in school and community level, participants said that father has to visit school and meet the teacher and ask him/her about child performance, overall behaviour, attitude toward education teacher be asked that about child likeness and dislikes in this way father can expand his role at school level. Likewise, at home father has to try spending as much time as he can and help the children in homework and play with him and talk to him/her try to give importance to child opinion if he/she something demands. If the baby is small then father loves her/him. Also help the children to develop timetable in order to get disciplined reported by the fathers. At community level child goes out of home father follows the child what type of play group the child has, takes the child to relatives home or marriage ceremony playground and other community level events.

5. DIFFICULTIES FACED BY FATHER IN CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT

Study participants shared the limitations of their role by saying that grandparents some time say do not take the child outside (nazar lag jay a gi) etc. sometimes they face financial problems, since, fresh food/balance diet direct has linkages financially, balance diet leaves a great effect on child growth physically. They also highlighted the communication gap between father and mother due to education status of both parents; this is also a big limitation of father role.

6. FATHER'S ROLE IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Father has a great role in child care and development since, father is the owner of the home reported by participants". Few fathers reported that father cares his wife when his wife is pregnant this directly affects child development since, child care and development starts from pregnancy, hence, husband proper care, leaves a positive affection child development when child gets birth shared by father. Father is role model of his children specially; if the child is boy he tries to copy his father reported by participants. Father becomes the hero of his children. Father has a great impact over his children future. If father plays his role responsibilities surely the children will be the good citizen of this Society some fathers highlighted. This is also reported by the participants those children who live or get less time from their fathers they face many problems in their lives.

DISCUSSION: The research aimed to explore father's perception, knowledge and practices regarding childcare and development .This study also explored father's perception and practices related to child physical, social mental and emotional development.

This research revealed that fathers play very important role in child care and development, father play with the kids whenever they get free time which can

be caused of strong bonding between child and father, in addition kids love to play with fathers, play between children and father can be just not source of physical development in fact, social and emotional development can be increased. Our findings are consist with findings of others, this finding supported that play can be very important in a child's life physical play not only builds muscles and coordination but can often be used to teach rules. As a play mate a father can encourage his child's sense of autonomy and independence which is a major milestone of social and emotional growth. (Fogarty,, F, Garret D.Evans. year?????The Common Roles of father). This research finding conclude father thought that the more fathers involves with in his child, the better child get physically, emotionally, mentally, socially developed. Father's involvement in child care plays a very important role in child development. This findings is supported by previous study father's involvement can affect children's social cognitive development and academic achievement. The earlier fathers became involved with their children's learning and socialization the better (Fatima, Irum 2010).The current study found that father helps the children in school activities and plays the role to ready the child for school and child performs better when the father is involved in child education.in addition, fathers helped their children in homework and had communication with child's teachers regarding child performance this was also found in this research. This study is supported by Children whose parents are actively involved in their development are more likely to succeed in school (Anne Morgan,Cathy, Nutbrown and Peter Hannon April 2009). Another research and comment concerning the role and importance of fathers which indicates that „positive" father involvement is associated with more desirable outcomes for children and young people in education and achievement In particular. (Heather Geddes 2008).This research revealed that father has the responsibility to run the home financially

however; father has the role in child's emotional, social development and physical development. This finding supported by other findings that father's role is more than an economic provider as seen in the past and now includes nurturing, care giving, and emotional support in both obvious and subtle ways. Successful fatherhood correlates strongly with many attributes of children successfully growing up. . (Margaret Mead 2002).The current research suggests that the more time father spends with the children for example, father shares stories, talks, eats, and plays with the children the children become happy and develop a strong relationship with the father and can express their feeling freely and get activeness. It was revealed through this research fathers tried to spent time with their children fathers eat with children, shared local stories with children at bed and sometimes they sleep with the children. This finding supported by fathers to be involved in some activities like bathing babies, feeding, telling bed time's stories, and putting children to sleep. The study showed that when fathers were encourage to be more involved in these ways, they spent more time with their children and also that the children became more active and happy. Father involvement makes a real difference (Jessica Ball Irum Fatima Shantimoy Chakama 2012).The current study found that father has great influence over his child life since, the father becomes role model of his children in addition those kids who live without father faced many problems rather than who live with fathers. This findings supported by previous study Children who live without their fathers are more likely to experiences related problem. (Sarah Allan, Phd And Kerry Daly Phd....2007). This study revealed that father role starts when the mother is pregnant ,father proper care ,for example, father helps mother in cooking ,and other works at home ,make her psychologically relaxed take care of her food this really helps the child development this is also supported by When fathers are emotionally supportive of their spouses,

wives are more likely to enjoy a greater sense of well-being good post-partum mental health pregnancy, delivery process maintain or adopt healthy pregnancy behaviours. (Sarah Allan, Phd And Kerry Daly Phd...2007). This study reports that father has a great importance in child upcoming life since, father is the hero of his children most of the time kids love to follow fathers, hence, father has a great role in child's life to be a good citizen in future this statement supported by father's involvement has been shown in research to have the potential to impact child development, child survival and health and the child emerging capacity to become an effective parent for the next generation (Jessica Ball M.P.H, P.H. Dken Mosella. Ph.D 2007)

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION:

This study would help to improve parenting educational program for fathers in communities since there is a dire need to make fathers realise that they should be a part of all endeavours related to their child. Moreover, People would be able to get the perception and practices about child care and development what they are doing. This study enhances information of the people about child development and role of father. Actual benefits of the study are the findings of the research, father's perception and a practice regarding child care in Baluchistan context information has been obtained. Fathers would reflect on the current level of their involvement and would be able to understand the significance of their participation in the development of children particularly in child care. However, it was observed fathers are not providing proper ECD practices to their children due to, lack of awareness and resources. There are not many researchers conducted on the significant of father's role in Balochistan context in Pakistan. In future, such kind of researches should be conducted on this topic with the purpose of people get benefit and knowledge about it. Besides, this research surely somehow helps the people to get information/knowledge about father's

perception regarding child care and development, and practices being performed in Balochistan. This was the first study conducted in Balochistan context regarding father's perception and practices in child care and development, nevertheless, such kind of research has to be conducted in Balochistan.

RECOMMENDATION:

- Workshops should be organized for ECD awareness among stakeholder.
- Students should be encouraged to conduct research particularly on ECD as very less Literature available in Pakistan Context.
- Father role as important as mother in child development, hence, awareness program should be conducted at Schools, colleges, universities, and community level or other Available Platform so that significant of father role be known to larger population.

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