

Original Research Article

Sociodemographic variables predicting fathers involvement in child rearing in Basavanapura village of Hunasuru taluk, Mysuru district, Karnataka

M. P. Somashekar^{1*}, M. C. Smitha², Nagendra²

¹Department of Social Work, JSS College of Arts, Commerce and Science, B.N. Road, Mysuru, Karnataka, India

²Department of Community Medicine, JSS Medical College, Mysuru, Karnataka, India

Received: 04 September 2017

Revised: 29 September 2017

Accepted: 02 October 2017

*Correspondence:

Dr. M. P. Somashekar,

E-mail: mswsomashekar@gmail.com

Copyright: © the author(s), publisher and licensee Medip Academy. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial License, which permits unrestricted non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

ABSTRACT

Background: Role of parents in upbringing of children is crucial in forming a child's future. In the present generation of increasing nuclear families, father's role in child rearing becomes even more important in deciding the future of a child. Hence in this regard the following study was conducted to determine the father's involvement in child rearing and to determine the socio-demographic variables associated with involvement of father in child rearing.

Methods: It is a cross-sectional study conducted in rural part of Mysuru District. Houses in the village were selected by simple random sampling through lottery method. Data was collected using Inventory of Fathers Involvement (IFI) questionnaire which was self-administered. Information on socio-demographic variables were also collected. Data thus obtained was coded and entered into SPSS version 22 and analyzed using the same. Data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics, viz. percentages and the inferential statistics using Chi-Square test for qualitative data. Mann Whitney U Test was used to know if significant difference existed in various domains of both group (Those with poor and better involvement in child rearing).

Results: 75.9% of fathers had poor in child rearing and the remaining 24.1% showed better involved in child rearing based on scores. The difference was observed in all the domains of IFI in the two groups except Attentiveness domain. Age of the father was found to be significantly associated with 'social encouragement' and 'providing' domains. Birth spacing with 'Mother Support' domain. Socio-economic status with 'praise and affection' domain. Type of family with 'developing talents and future concerns', 'reading and homework support' and Sex of the child was seen to be associated with 'developing talent and future concern' and overall total score.

Conclusions: 3/4th of father's showed poor involvement in child rearing. The individual scores in all domains was statistically significant in both groups. Various socio-demographic variables were found to influence father's involvement.

Keywords: Child rearing, Socio-demographic variables, Father, Rural India

INTRODUCTION

Parents play a very important role in a child's life. While the role of mother is well recognized, the role of father in shaping the future of a child is not less than that of a

mother. Mothers are usually gentler with the children, who also need a firm disciplining hand. Fathers could provide that discipline. Thus a father complements a mother's role.¹ Systematic reviews of longitudinal studies of Fathers involvement and children's developmental

outcome has shown that father's engagement seems to have differential effects on desirable outcomes by reducing the frequency of behavioral problems in boys and psychological problems in young women, and enhancing cognitive development, while decreasing delinquency and economic disadvantage in low SES families.² While the situation is different in urban area, in rural areas the relationship between the father and his children is mostly authoritative. Hence with an intention to understand the involvement of father in child rearing in rural part of India and to explore the socio demographic predictors influencing it we conducted this study.

Objectives

- To determine the fathers involvement in child rearing.
- To determine the socio-demographic variables that predict the involvement of Father in child rearing.

METHODS

It is a cross-sectional study conducted in rural part of Mysuru District in a village Basavanapura of Hunasuru taluk, Mysuru District was selected with a purpose. The study duration was one month from March 2017 to April 2017. All the houses in the village were numbered and 125 families were selected by simple random sampling through lottery method. Fathers having children elder than 5 years were included in the study. Inventory of fathers Involvement (IFI) was used to collect data on involvement of father in child rearing. The interview schedule also contained information on socio-demographic variables associated to the fathers. The interview schedule consisted of questions related to various domains (discipline, school encouragement, mothers support, providing time and talking together, praise and affection, developing talents and future concern, reading and homework support and attentiveness) to measure father's involvement. The total score possible is 210. Those less than 105 (median) were considered to be poorly involved in child rearing and the other counterpart was considered to be well involved in child rearing.

Ethics statement

Confidentiality and voluntariness were the guiding principles of the study. Informed consent was obtained from each of the study participants. The study was approved by the Institution's Ethics Committee.

Statistical analysis

Data thus obtained was coded and entered into SPSS version 22 and analyzed using the same. Data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics, viz. percentages and the inferential statistics using Chi-Square test for qualitative data. The difference in proportion was considered statistically significant whenever $p \leq 0.05$.

Mann Whitney U test was used to know the statistical significant difference in various domains of both groups.

RESULTS

The average age of the fathers included in the study was 42.7 ± 10 years with minimum age of 28 yrs. and maximum of 75 yrs. 84.4% lived in nuclear families, 14.9% lived in three generation families and the remaining 0.7% stayed in joint families. 21.3% were illiterates, 77.2% had attained education till under graduation and 2.1% had finished under graduation and post-graduation. 24.8% were illiterate and 2.8% had completed under graduation/postgraduation. 41.1% were manual laborers and 58.2% practiced agriculture for their primary source of income and the remaining engaged in one or the other skilled labor. 46.1% belonged to lower middle class, 16.3% had single child, 63.8% had two children and 19.3% had three or more children. 51.1% had both male and female children, 31.2% had only female children and the remaining had only male children. 88.7% had birth spacing of equal to three years or less. The average age of children they had was 13.16 ± 7.16 yrs. with minimum age of 2 yrs and maximum of 35 yrs. The median score obtained from IFI was 142 with inter quartile range (IQR) of 135-148. 75.9% of Fathers showed poor involvement in child rearing and the remaining 24.1% were well involved in child rearing (Figure 1).

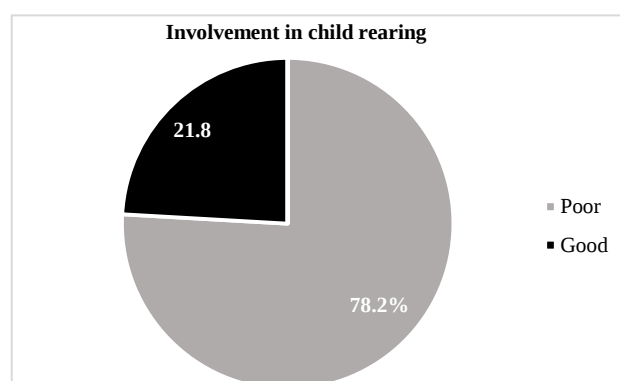


Figure 1: Fathers involvement in child rearing.

Age of the father was found to be significantly associated with 'social encouragement' and 'providing' domains. Birth spacing with 'Mother Support' domain. Socio-economic status with 'praise and affection' domain. Type of family with 'developing talents and future concerns', 'reading and homework support' and Sex of the child was seen to be associated with 'developing talent and future concern' and overall total score (Table 1). The median scores in all the domains of Father's Involvement was statistically significant among both the groups except attentiveness domain inferring that the those fathers with poor involvement in child rearing had statistically significant lesser score compared to the scores obtained by those with better involvement in child rearing in all domains (Table 2).

Table 1: Association of various domains with socio-demographic variables.

Domains	Socio-demographic variables statistically significant	Chi-square value	P-value#
Discipline	None		
School encouragement	Age	20.431	0.05
Mother Support	Birth spacing	26.480	0.022
Providing	Age	14.157	0.026
Timing and talking together	None		
Praise and affection	Socio-economic status	51.626	<0.001
Developing talents and future concern	Type of family	13.7	0.008
	Sex of the child	9.628	0.038*
Reading and homework support	Type of family	10.312	0.014*
Attentiveness	None		
Total Score	Sex of the child	5.791	0.04

#Chi-square test, * Fischer exact test.

Table 2: Shows the difference in the median scores among various domains in involvement of father's in child rearing.

Domain	Fathers involvement		P value #
	Poor involvement Median (IQR)	Good involvement Median (IQR)	
Discipline and teaching responsibility	28 (26-30)	25 (24-26)	<0.01
School encouragement	15 (12.75-16)	12 (12)	<0.01
Mother support	15 (14-17)	12 (12-13)	<0.01
Providing	11 (10-12)	8 (8)	<0.01
Time and talking together	36 (33-38)	29 (28-31)	<0.01
Praise and affection	18.5 (16-19.25)	15 (14-16)	<0.01
Developing talents and future concerns	15 (13.75-16)	12 (11-12)	<0.01
Reading and homework support	14 (13-15)	11 (11-12)	<0.01
Attentiveness	11 (10-12)	10 (10-11)	0.149
Total score	314 (300.75-327.5)	265 (259-269)	

*IQR- Inter Quartile Range; # Mann-Whitney U Test.

DISCUSSION

Opondo et al study showed that the children of fathers with high scores on involvement in child activities had 14% (OR 0.86, 95% CI 0.79 to 0.94, $p=0.001$) and 13% (OR 0.87, 95% CI 0.79 to 0.96, $p=0.006$), respectively, lower adjusted odds of behavioral problems at 9 years.³ It is also seen in a systematic review that father's engagement seems to have differential effects on desirable outcomes by reducing the frequency of behavioral problems in boys and psychological problems in young women, and enhancing cognitive development, while decreasing delinquency and economic disadvantage in low SES families.⁴⁻⁷ Harris, Morgan et al study showed that Fathers were more involved with sons than with daughters and they disengage from adolescents with increasing marital conflict.⁸ With limited studies in this regard we would like to conclude that age, birth spacing, socio-economic status, type of family and sex of the child are seen to be influencing Father's involvement in taking care of the child through their effects on various domains. Strength in our study is that no such studies are

conducted in rural. Our study also tries to explore the association of various socio-demographic variables influencing Fathers involvement in child rearing. Limitation would be that the data is collected by self-administered questionnaire which is often subjected to bias. It is our personal opinion that qualitative study would be a better way to assess and interpret the results of such studies.

CONCLUSION

In our study 75% of father's showed poor involvement in child rearing. The individual scores in all domains was statistically significant in both groups and significant association was found between socio-demographic variables and father's involvement in child rearing.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We the authors take this opportunity to acknowledge the support extended by a group of 24 MSW students of PG Department of Social Work, JSS College of Arts,

Commerce and Science, B.N. Road, Mysuru in conducting data collection for this article (2017-18 Batch).

Funding: No funding sources

Conflict of interest: None declared

Ethical approval: The study was approved by the Institutional Ethics Committee

REFERENCES

1. A father's role. The Hindu. 2017. Available at: <http://www.thehindu.com/features/friday-review/religion/A-fathers-role/article15535395.ece>. Accessed on 4 August 2017.
2. Sarkadi A, Kristiansson R, Oberklaid F, Bremberg S. Fathers' involvement and children's developmental outcomes: a systematic review of longitudinal studies. *Acta Paediatrica*. 2008;97(2):153-8.
3. Opondo C, Redshaw M, Savage-McGlynn E, Quigley M. Father involvement in early child-rearing and behavioural outcomes in their pre-adolescent children: evidence from the ALSPAC UK birth cohort. *BMJ Open*. 2016;6(11):012034.
4. Harris KM, Furstenberg F, Marmer J. Paternal Involvement with Adolescents in Intact Families: The Influence of Fathers over the Life Course. *Demography*. 1998;35(2):201.
5. Amato, P. R, Rivera, F. Paternal involvement and children's behavior problems. *J Marriage Family*. 1999;61(2):375-84
6. Effects of Father Involvement. [Internet]. 2017 [cited 24 July 2017]. Available from: http://www.fira.ca/cms/documents/29/Effects_of_Father_Involvement.pdf. Accessed on 4 August 2017.
7. Aldous J, Mulligan G. Fathers Child Care and Childrens Behavioural Problems. *J Family Issues*. 2002;23(5):624-47.
8. Harris KM, Morgan SP. Fathers, sons, and daughters: Differential paternal involvement in parenting. *J Marriage Family*. 2004;66(4):40-5.

Cite this article as: Somashekar MP, Smitha MC, Nagendra. Sociodemographic variables predicting fathers involvement in child rearing in Basavanapura village of Hunasuru taluk, Mysuru district, Karnataka. *Int J Community Med Public Health* 2017;4:4250-3.