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## Father's involvement in child care and development: A pilot study from Coimbatore

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### Abstract

Now-a-days fathers are gradually more involved in care of their babies and young children than before. Fathers play the important role in child care and development, and family dynamics. Fathers who are involved in child care bring positive benefits to their children that no other person is expected to bring. Father's involvement in child care could enhance in many areas like cognitive, behaviour, social skill, emotional responses and personality development of the child. Keeping this in view, present study has focused on evaluating the level of father's involvement in child development during early years. In this pilot study, total samples of 70 preschool children's fathers were selected randomly to assess their level of father's involvement in child development during early years from Coimbatore city. A self-constructed questionnaire on 'Father's involvement in child development' was used to assess the objectives. The results concluded that educational qualification and number of children in the family showed significant impact on their level of involvement in child care and development. This study also showed that all fathers could provide better involvement and care for overall well-being of their children.

**Keywords:** Father, father's involvement, child development, child care

### Introduction

Father involvement in child care have a direct influence on the wellbeing of their children. Children whose fathers are involved, nurturing, and playful with them tend to have higher IQ level, as well as enhanced verbal and cognitive capabilities. Toddlers with involved fathers could start school with higher levels of academic readiness. Even from the time of birth, children who have an involved father are more likely to be emotionally secure, be confident to explore their surroundings, and, when they are grown-up, have better social relationship with peers (Rosenberg Jeffrey & Wilcox Bradford W, 2006) [6].

Father's educational level could be an important variable in the relationship between father and children (Hofferth *et al.*, 2007) [2]. (Kumari Sonali and Mishra Sunita, 2013) [3] was found that fathers have a critical role play in ensuring overall positive and optimistic outcomes for their children. Father's involvement with their child's academic learning is statistically associated to get better educational results. The father has a vital potential role at each developmental stage of his children.

Fathers who are highly involved in their child's schools were observed that their children are more likely to excel academically, to participate in extracurricular activities, sports and like to enjoy school were less likely to have ever repeated a class or been expelled compared to children whose fathers were less involved in their schools (Nord & West, 2001) [5].

Father's involvement in child care is self-reinforcing and supporting; the more fathers are involved in child care, the more satisfaction they found, and the more they learn about being an effective father and having fun with their children (Ball Jessica *et. al.*, 2007) [1]. Based on this the following objectives were made:

### Objectives

- To find out the influence of educational qualification and father involvement in child development.
- To assess the influence of number of children in the family and father involvement.

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**Hypotheses**

- There is no significant difference observed in educational qualification on father involvement in child development
- There is no significant difference observed among number of children on father involvement

**Method**

Coimbatore was the area selected for conduct of the study. A total of 70 fathers were selected by convenient sampling method. Self-prepared questionnaire on “Father’s involvement in child development” was framed to assess the

quality of father’s involvement with their children. This questionnaire consists of 30 statements in three areas such as basic needs, educational needs and recreational needs. This contains positive and negative statements and can be rated in three point scale. Higher the score in each area better the involvement. Researcher developed rapport with the selected fathers and explained about the purpose of the study. The collected information’s were analysed and appropriate statistical applications were applied to find the results.

**Results and Discussion**

**Table 1:** Background information of the selected respondents

S. No	Variables	Frequency		
		N	%	
1	Educational qualification	SSLC	13	18.57
		PUC	10	14.28
		Degree	28	40
		Master’s degree	19	27.14
		Total	70	100
2	Number of children	1	19	27.14
		2	43	61.42
		3	8	11.42
		Total	70	100

From the above data it observed that the educational qualification of the 14.28 % of the respondents were PUC, 18.57 % were SSLC, 27.14 % were master’s degree and 40 % were degree.

From the above table it is clear that 27.14 % of the respondents have only one child, 61.42 % has two child and 11.42 % has three child.

**Table 2:** Father involvement in child care with respect to educational qualification

Education qualification	Father involvement					
	Low		Medium		High	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
SSLC (13)	1	7.69	11	84.61	1	7.69
PUC (10)	0	0	8	80	2	20
Degree (28)	1	3.57	16	57.14	11	39.28
Master’s degree (19)	1	5.26	6	31.57	12	63.15
Total(70)	3	4.28	41	58.57	26	37.14

Table- 2 shows father involvement in child care with respect to educational qualification. Majority of fathers with SSLC (84.61 %) shows moderate father involvement and only 7.69 % of fathers provided high as well as low level of father involvement in child care respectively. Majority of fathers with PUC (80 %) shows moderate father involvement and (20 %) provided high involvement in child care. Most of the

fathers with degree (57.14 %) shows moderate father involvement, 39.28 % of fathers given a high level of father involvement and only 3.57 % fathers provided low involvement in childcare. Majority of the fathers with master's degree (63.15 %) shows high father involvement, 31.57 % of fathers given moderate level of father involvement and only 5.26 % fathers provided low involvement in child care.

**Table 3:** Mean, SD and F values of father involvement with respect to educational qualification

Education qualification	Father involvement				
	N	Mean	SD	Df	F
SSLC	13	65.84	7.57	3	2.50*
PUC	10	65.10	7.15		
Degree	28	69.17	8.11		
Master’s degree	19	72.26	8.51		
Total	70	68.81	8.26		

\*significant at .05 % level

Table- 3 gives the mean, SD and F values of father involvement with respect to educational qualification. The mean value of fathers with SSLC, PUC, degree and master’s degree were obtained 65.84, 65.10, 69.17 and 72.26 respectively. The SD value of fathers with SSLC, PUC, degree and master’s degree were obtained 7.57 %, 7.15 %, 8.11 % and 8.51 % respectively. The calculated F value is

2.50 which is significant at 0.05 % level. Thus hypotheses-3 could be rejected. From the above results we can conclude that fathers with master's degree followed by under graduate degree are having higher involvement in child care than fathers with SSLC, PUC qualification. Thus hypothesis- 2 could be rejected.

This result was supported by the study conducted by

(Sandberg and Hofferth, 2001) [7] and it was found that educated fathers spend more time with their children than their counterparts. This may be because higher educated

fathers have an opinion that father involvement and child development as more valuable.

**Table 4:** Father involvement with respect to child

Number of Child	Father involvement					
	Low		Medium		High	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
1 (19)	0	0	7	36.84	12	63.15
2 (43)	3	6.97	26	60.46	14	32.55
3 (8)	0	0	8	100	0	0
Total (70)	3	4.28	41	58.57	26	37.14

Table 4 shows the father involvement in child care concerning number of children. Majority of fathers who has one child (63.15 %) shows high father involvement and 36.84 % of fathers given moderate level involvement. Majority of fathers who has two children (60.46 %) shows moderate involvement, 32.55 % of fathers given a higher level of involvement, and 6.97 % fathers provided low involvement in child care. All fathers who have three children showed moderate involvement in child care.

involvement in child care through its programs and through its own workforce policies.

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**Table 5:** Mean, SD and F-values of father involvement with respect to number of child

Number of Child	Father involvement				
	N	Mean	SD	Df	F
1	19	73.36	7.23	2	4.34*
2	43	67.14	8.70		
3	8	67.00	2.50		
Total	70	68.81	8.262		

\*Significant at 0.01 % level

Table 5 gives the mean, SD and F-values of father involvement concerning number of child. The mean and SD values of fathers who has 1 child were 73.36 and 7.23, fathers who has 2 child were 67.14 and 8.70 whereas fathers who have three child obtained 67.00 and 2.50 respectively. The calculated F-value is 4.34 which is significant at 0.05 % level. Thus hypohese-3 could be rejected.

From this result it could be concluded that fathers with one child provide higher and better involvement in child development rather than others.

**Conclusion**

In the present study it is concluded that there is a significant difference in educational qualification and number of children of fathers on their involvement in child care. It is found that higher the educational level of the fathers better the involvement in child development and also fathers who have one child has given higher involvement in child development than other counterparts.

**Limitations**

- Father involvement in later years could be focused.
- Living area (rural, urban, slum) of family could be analysed.
- Mother’s support in father involvement could also be assessed

**Recommendations**

- Fathers should receive the education and support necessary to prepare them for the responsibility of parenthood.
- Government can encourage and promote father