



## Factors Related to Father Involvement in Early Childhood Care

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Received: August 15, 2022 / Revised: October 12, 2022 / Accepted: November 17, 2022 / Published: December 30, 2022

**Abstract:** This study aimed to prove what factors influence fathers' involvement in early childhood care. The design of this research was cross-sectional. The population was fathers having the child aged from one month to six years in Bukittinggi. The samples comprised 92 respondents selected through purposive sampling. The independent variables were age at first becoming a father, father's occupation, mother's occupation, father-mother relationship, number of children, father's willingness to be involved, place of residence, and caregiver assistance, while the dependent variable was father's involvement. Data collection used a questionnaire, and the data were analyzed using Spearman's Rho with  $< 0.05$ . The results showed that the number of children ( $OR = 11,449$ ,  $95\%CI = 3,596-36,444$ ) influenced the father's involvement in early childhood care with a probability value of 46.7%. The age of first fatherhood, father's occupation, mother's occupation, number of children, place of residence, and help of caregivers determine the father's involvement in raising the children. The novelty of this research is that health workers need to develop education for families in early childhood care. It is recommended to increase the father's involvement in childcare by increasing the first age of becoming a father to the age of more than 27 years, increasing the willingness of fathers to be involved in childcare, and choosing a place to live separately from parents or in-laws.

**Keywords:** father's involvement, occupation, place of residence, number of children, caregiver.

## 与父亲参与幼儿保育相关的因素

**摘要：**本研究旨在證明影響父親參與幼兒保育的因素有哪些。本研究的設計是橫斷面的。在武吉丁宜，人口是孩子年齡從一個月到六歲不等的父親。樣本包括通過有目的抽樣選擇的92名受訪者。自變量為初為父年齡、父親職業、母親職業、父母關係、子女數、父親參與意願、居住地、看護協助等，因變量為父親參與程度。數據收集使用問卷調查，數據分析使用斯皮爾曼的羅 $<0.05$ 。結果顯示，子女數量（或者=11,449，95%CI=3,596-36,444）影響父親參與幼兒保育的概率值為46.7%。初為人父的年齡、父親的職業、母親的職業、孩子的數量、居住地和照顧者的幫助決定了父親對撫養孩子的參與程度。這項研究的新穎之處在於衛



生工作者需要在幼兒保育方面為家庭開展教育。建議通過將首次成為父親的年齡提高到 27 歲以上、增加父親參與育兒的意願、選擇與父母分開居住或與父母同住等方式來增加父親對育兒的參與度。-法律。

**关键词：**父親的參與程度、職業、居住地、孩子的數量、照顧者。

## 1. Introduction

Father's involvement in child rearing is active participation of the father continuously in all areas of child development physically, emotionally, socially, intellectually and morally [1]. In the process of raising children, the father's presence is as important as the mother's presence and each plays an important role in the child's growth and development process [2]. The results of father's involvement in child rearing are considered not optimal. Differences in the father's involvement in children's lives are based on father's age, marital status, education and race [3]. Many men want to be more involved in their children's lives.

Half or more men say they spend too little time with their children because of work. In the United States, 46% of fathers say they don't have enough time with their children. Father's contact with their children every day is less than 20 min. In families where both parents are present, there are 25% of fathers who make contact with their children an average of one hour per day [4]. Another study found that as many as 20% of children in grades 6–12 only had 10 min to talk with their parents carefully throughout the month [5].

The results of research in the City of Yogyakarta in 2008 showed that 41.32% of families visited playgrounds with children aged less than 7 years without a father. The quality of the mother-daughter interaction tends to be deeper than that of the father-daughter. 10.71% of fathers said that parenting was the mother's job. As many as 78.57% of fathers stated that the task of raising their children was a shared task between father and mother. However, as many as 82.14% of fathers said they had some deficiencies/obstacles in parenting, including being impatient, irritable, easily bored, tired of watching children, not knowing how to teach children, not good at meeting children's needs, not knowing what to do when the child is fussy. This shows that the father's involvement in parenting is considered not optimal [7].

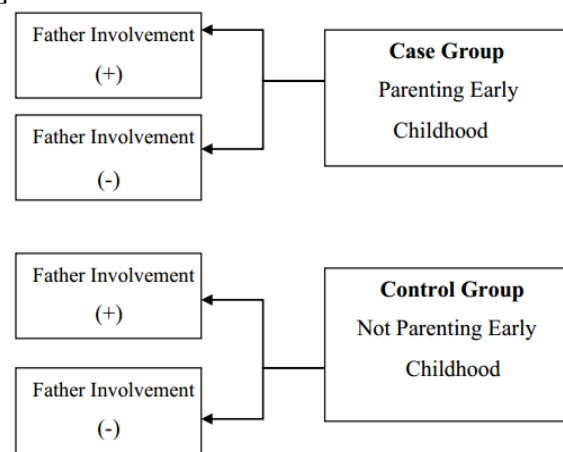
Some motivations for fathers to be involved in early childhood care include being responsible as fathers, realizing that early childhood really needs a father's attention, fathers' feelings of liking for children and feelings related to values that must be carried out by a father. External factors that motivate fathers to be involved in childcare include seeing examples from neighbors and being scolded by neighbors or parents-in-law if a father does not want to be involved in

childcare [8].

## 2. Methods

### 2.1. Design

Design of this study used a cross-sectional approach [9].



**Scheme 1. Skema Research Design Case Control**

Fig. 1 Scheme of research design

In the case control study a group of cases (fathers who were not involved in early childhood care) was compared with a control group (fathers who were involved in early childhood care). In this study, we wanted to know whether a certain factor really influences the occurrence of the effect under study by comparing these factors in the case group with the control group [9].

### 2.2. Population and Study Settings

The population in this study consisted of all fathers who had the youngest children aged from 1 month to 6 years in the City of Bukittinggi. The sample consisted of 92 respondents selected through purposive sampling. The inclusion criteria for determining the sample were that the father had the youngest child aged <6 years and was registered as a resident of the City of Bukittinggi, Indonesia and was willing to be a respondent.

### 2.3. Variables

The independent variables in this study were age at first becoming a father, father's occupation, father's length of service, mother's occupation, father-mother relationship, number of children, father's willingness to

be involved, place of residence and caregiver assistance. The dependent variable in this research is father's involvement in child rearing.

#### 2.4. Data Collection

Research data were collected through structured interviews. Data on father's involvement in parenting were collected using a questionnaire adopted from the Fatherhood Research and Practice Network (FRPN) Father Engagement Scale for fathers who have youngest children aged from 1 month to 1 year and for fathers who have youngest children aged from 1 to 6 years [10].

Data on father's age, father's education, father's occupation, mother's occupation, number of children, place of residence, father's willingness to be involved in raising children, availability of additional labor and closeness of father (childhood) to grandfather was measured using a questionnaire. Father and mother relationship data were measured using a questionnaire based on construct for father's involvement in ECLS – B on the determinants of the characteristics of the mother-father relationship [11].

Data on the willingness and willingness of mothers to share with fathers in parenting (coparenting) were collected using a questionnaire adopted from FRPN Coparenting Relationship Scale [12].

#### 2.5. Data

The SPSS software was employed to analyze the quantitative data. Descriptive data are presented in the form of frequency and percentage. Data analysis was performed using the Spearman Rho statistical test  $\leq 0.05$  [13].

#### 2.6. Ethical Aspects

The Health Research Ethics Committee of Fort De Kock University approved this study.

### 3. Research Results

Most of the respondents (82.5%) are currently >27 years old. More than half of the respondents (54.3%) were >27 years old when they first became fathers. The largest percentage (84.4%) of respondents had a job. Half of the respondents (50%) were working mothers. Most the respondents (92.4%) had a good relationship between father and mother. The largest percentage (64.1%) of respondents had 1–2 children. Most respondents in this study had a father's will in parenting (95.7%). More than half of the respondents (55.4%) had their own/rented residence. The category of caregiver assistance is in the category of caregiver assistance 71.7% (Table 1).

Table 1 Characteristics of respondents (n = 92) (Developed by the authors)

Characteristics	Category	n	%
Child age	<12 months	30	32.6
	$\geq 12$ months	62	67.4
Gender	of boy	36	39.1
	Female	56	60.9
Father's current age	< 27 years	16	17.4
	$\geq 27$ years	76	82.6
Age of the father when he first became a father	< 27 years	42	45.7
	$\geq 27$ years	50	54.3
Father's Occupation	Work	78	84.8
	Not working	14	15.2
Mother's Occupation	Working	46	50
	Not working	46	50
Father-mother relationship is	Not good	7	7.6
	Good	85	92.4
Number of children	1–2 children	59	64.1
	>2 children	33	35.9
Residence	Parental/in-law's house	4	4.3
	Own/rented	88	95.7
Willingness of father to be involved	No will	41	44.6
	There is a will	51	55.4
Assistance by caregivers	Yes	66	71.7
	None	26	28.3

Bivariate analysis was conducted to determine the relationship and magnitude of the odds ratio value of each risk factor (independent variable) with father's involvement in early childhood care (dependent variable), with a significance level of 95%. The

relationship between each risk factor and father's involvement in early childhood care is indicated by a p-value < 0.05; OR > 1 and 95% CI excludes the value of 1. The results of the bivariate analysis are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Bivariate analysis of factors influencing fathers' involvement in early childhood care (Developed by the authors)

Risk Factors	Less Involved		Moderately Involved		OR	95% CI	p-value
	n	%	n	%			
<b>Father's current age</b>							
< 27 years	12	75	4	25	3.162	0.936–10.686	0.101
≥ 27 years	37	48.7	39	51.3			
<b>Age of father at first fatherhood</b>							
< 27 years	35	83.3	7	16.7	12,857	4.638–35.642	0,000*
≥ 27 years	14	28	36	72			
<b>Father's occupation</b>							
Working	48	61.5	30	38.5	20,800	2.587–167.240	0,000*
Not working	1	7.1	13	92.9			
<b>Mother's occupation</b>							
Working	38	82.6	8	17.4	15.114	5.450–41.910	0.000*
Not working	11	23.9	35	76.1			
<b>Father-mother relationship</b>							
Not good	5	71.4	2	28.6	2.330	0.428–12.677	0.543
Good	44	51.8	41	48.2			
<b>Number of children</b>							
1–2 children	44	74.6	15	25.4	16.427	5.373–50.222	0.000*
>2 children	5	15.2	28	84.8			
<b>Residence</b>							
Parents/in-laws' house	34	82.9	7	17.1	11.657	4.326–32.077	0.000*
Own/rent	15	29.4	36	70.6			
<b>Father's willingness to be involved</b>							
No will	4	100	0	0	1.956	1.594–2.399	0.161
There is a will	45	51.1	43	48.9			
For caregivers							
Available	45	68.2	21	31.8	11.786	3.605–38.532	0.000*
None	4	15.4	22	84.6			

Table 2 shows the results of the statistical analysis of each independent variable, namely father's age, age at first becoming a father, father's occupation, mother's occupation, father-mother relationship, number of children, place of residence, father's willingness to be involved in raising children, the availability of additional personnel to care for children. The results of the bivariate analysis proved that the age of the first father become a father as a factor influencing father's involvement in early childhood care, with a pvalue = 0.000, OR = 12.857 and 95% CI = 4.638–35.642. Fathers who have 1–2 children are almost 16 times more likely to be less involved in early childhood care than fathers who have >2 children. Father's work to be involved in raising children is proven to be a factor influencing father's involvement in early childhood care, with p-value = 0.000, OR = 20.800 and 95% CI = 2.587–167.240. Fathers who work to be involved in parenting are twenty times more likely to be less involved in early childhood care than fathers without jobs to be involved in childcare. A mother's work to be involved in raising children is proved to be a factor influencing father's involvement in early childhood care, with p-value = 0.000, OR = 15.114 and 95% CI = 5.450–41.910. Mothers who work and are involved in caring for children are fifteen times more likely to be less involved in early childhood care than mothers without jobs involved in childcare. The place of residence as a factor influencing father's involvement in early childhood care with a pvalue = 0.000, OR = 11.657 and 95% CI = 4.326–32.097. Caregiver assistance to be involved in raising children is proved

to be a factor influencing the father's involvement in early childhood care, with p-value = 0.000, OR = 11.786, and 95% CI = 3.605–38.538. Of the 9 independent variables, six variables are statistically proven to be related to or influence father's involvement in early childhood care in the Bukittinggi region. The six variables are the father's age at first becoming a father, father's occupation, mother's occupation, number of children, place of residence, and assistance from officers.

Multivariate analysis was conducted to determine the most influential variables on father's involvement in early childhood care. Analysis was performed using multiple logistic regression tests with the Enter method at a significance level of 95%.

The candidate variables are those that have been analyzed bivariate and have a p-value <0.25. Of the 9 independent variables, there were two independent variables included in the multivariate analysis, namely, father's occupation (p-value = 0.074) and number of children (p-value = 0.000). The final model is completed after several stages of removing variables with a p-value > 0.05. The variable removed gradually is the number of children (p-value=0.000). The final results of the multivariate analysis showed that of the eight candidate variables after being analyzed together, one variable was proved to influence fathers' involvement in early childhood care, namely, the number of children.

Table 3 Final model multivariate analysis with enter method factors influencing father's involvement in early childhood care (Developed by the authors)

Risk factor	B	Adjusted OR	95% CI	p-value
Number of children	2,438	11,449	3,596-36,444	0,000

The number of children proved to be a factor influencing the father's involvement in parenting early childhood, with  $p\text{-value} = 0.000$ , Adjusted OR = 11.449 and 91% CI = 3.596–36.444. The adjusted OR was lower than the value of the OR results of bivariate analysis (16,427). Fathers who have 1–2 children to be involved in parenting are 11 times more likely to be less involved in early childhood care than fathers who are willing to be involved in parenting.

#### 4. Discussion

The age of the father in this study was divided into two, namely the age of the father when the research was carried out and the age of the father when he first became a father. In the Heuristic Model of the Dynamics of Parental Behavior and Influence on Children Over Time, there are direct and indirect determinants that are interrelated with each other and affect the involvement of fathers in child rearing [14]. Factors that are directly related to the father's involvement in parenting include the father's characteristics including age. A significant relationship exists between the ages of 26.2 to 35 years with the father's involvement score ( $p\text{-value} = 0.042$ ) [14]. Father's age is significantly related to father's involvement in parenting. The median age of the father who obtained the highest engagement score (score 8) was 31. Fathers who live with their children and older fathers are more involved in raising children [15].

The age of first fatherhood is a risk factor for fathers' lack of involvement in early childhood care. Fathers who have an age of first fatherhood <27 years are at risk of being less involved in early childhood care almost three times greater than fathers who have an age of first fathering >27 years. This is in accordance with the psychological review of the ideal age for a man to become a father-to-be is two years older than the ideal age for a woman to become a mother-to-be. A woman is mentally ready to become pregnant and give birth at the age of 25–27 years, while a man is mentally ready to become a father at the age of 27 years. The mental readiness of a man to accept the presence of a child has a positive and optimal impact on the role of a man as a father [16]. [17] stated that the average ideal age for marriage for men was 26.3 years, while the average ideal age for marriage for women was 23.98 years.

Living in parents'/in-laws' homes is a risk factor for father's lack of involvement in early childhood care. Fathers who have early childhood and live in other

people's homes parents/in-laws are three times more likely to be less involved in parenting older children earlier compared to fathers who live at home alone or rent. Data from this study shows that the percentage of fathers who are sufficiently involved in early childhood care is higher in the group of fathers who live at home alone/rent (95.7%) compared to fathers who live with their parents/in-laws (4.3%). The percentage of fathers who are less involved in early childhood care more in the group of fathers who live in parents/in-laws' homes (82.9%) than fathers who live in their own house/rent (29.4%).

The results of the study agree with the research [19], which shows that couples who live separately from parents/in-laws get higher scores in disciplining children and parenting because couples will educate their children together from small to large without help/interference from parents/parents in law. Aspects of child and parenting in couples who live separately from parents/in-laws are the most influential aspects of marital satisfaction. Spouses feel more satisfied, comfortable and calm living separately from parents/in-laws. Couples will solve all kinds of problems alone without having to ask for help from parents/in-laws, including in establishing relationships and raising children [19]. This research agrees with the author of [18], who stated that external factors such as social sanctions in the form of embarrassment toward neighbors, in-laws' intervention also play a role in encouraging fathers to be involved in childcare.

Father's occupation and father's length of service were not proven to be factors influencing father's involvement in early childhood care. The duration of the father's work in this study was categorized into two, namely, > 10 h and < 10 h and did not consider the length of time the mother worked. The results of the study agree with the research [20], which states that there is no significant difference in the father's involvement in childcare based on income level and type of father's work. The results of this study are different from the results of [6] that stated that the father's job can affect his involvement in childcare, seen from the working time, which is not too tight and quite flexible.

Mother's occupation is categorized into two, namely, unemployed mother and working mother. Based on the results of bivariate and multivariate analysis showed that the length of time the mother had not worked was not proven to be a factor influencing the father's involvement in early childhood care. This agrees with the results of research [18] which states that in working families (mothers and fathers working) mothers still play a higher role in raising children than fathers. Status Mother's occupation also influences the incidence of malnutrition. The research [21] results show that the percentage of fathers who are fairly involved in raising children is even greater in families

with non-working mothers (76.1%) compared to families with working mothers (17.4%). Father percentage those who are less involved in early childhood care are also more mothers with working status (82.6%) compared to mothers who do not work (23.9%). This condition is possible because the status of the mother work is not the only factor influencing the father's involvement in parenting early childhood. Many factors are interrelated and influence the father's involvement in early childhood care.

In this study, only one of 92 fathers admitted that there was a problem in the relationship with the mother (relationship is not good). Although the relationship with the mother is not good, however fathers remain moderately involved in early childhood care, so a moderate percentage of fathers are involved in parenting is greater in fathers whose relationship with the mother is not good (28.6%), compared with fathers who have a good relationship with their mother (48.2%). The number of children in the study was categorized into two, namely, the number of children 1–2 and > 2 children. Based on the results of bivariate analysis, the number of children is 1–2 proven to be a factor influencing the father's involvement in early childhood care. Father who have 1–2 children are almost five times more likely to be less involved in childcare at an earlier age than fathers who have >2 children. Factors directly related to father's involvement in parenting is a family characteristic, including the number of children a dad who having 1–2 children tend to be less involved in parenting. This is possible by the father's perception that when the number of children was still 1–2, the mother was considered capable and adequate in taking care of children, in addition to generally having 1–2 children still living at home with parents/in-laws or there are additional personnel to care for children. With that father tend to be less involved in parenting in families with 1–2 children compared to families with >2 children. The research results are different from Usmarni's research and Rinaldi, who stated that there was no difference in father's involvement in parenting was reviewed from father's educational level and number of children [20].

Mother's beliefs about how involved her partner should be in parenting related to father's involvement in child rearing. The positive interaction with a partner can influence the father's mind and strengthen the interest in be involved in all aspects of life family, including parenting. Cabrera's research results show that the role of the father in parenting improves when mothers respond positively to father-child interactions. The evaluation of the general effect on fathers' parenting skills as a whole is a contributing factor effect on father's involvement [23]. The availability of assistance in caring for children This research was categorized into two, namely, there was assistance and there was no assistance for personnel parenting. Based on the results of the bivariate analysis, the availability

of assistance for caring for children is not proven to be a factor influencing the father's involvement in early childhood care. Statistically, the availability of additional staff for caring for children has not been shown to affect father's involvement in parenting. Fathers can still be involved in raising children even though there is power addition to parenting. The research results are different from Shapiro's, the influencing factors father's involvement in childcare is the availability of additional assistance. [7] Research results show that the father in the family who is available to help raise children, it turns out stay involved in childcare. Fathers in families where power assistance is not available to care for their children are not necessarily involved in child care [22, 23].

Based on the results of multivariate analysis, the closeness experience of father (childhood) with grandfather does not statistically affect father's involvement in early childhood care. This became possible because of other confounding factors, including having power in addition to caring for children, living in the house of parents/in-laws. If there are no other factors, then Childhood fathers not close to grandparents were almost four times more likely to be less involved in early childhood care compared to fathers whose childhood was close to their grandfathers. Factors that indirectly affect the father's involvement in childcare are father's childhood, culture, and father's biological environment [24].

## 5. Conclusion

The final results of the multivariate analysis showed that of the eight candidate variables after being analyzed together, one variable was proved to influence fathers' involvement in early childhood care, namely the number of children. Several factors were proved to jointly influence father's involvement in early childhood care are the number of children with  $p\text{-value} = 0.000$ , Adjusted OR = 11.449 and 91% CI = 3.596–36.444. It is recommended for fathers who have early childhood to increase their involvement in childcare. Men are advised to have their first child at a minimum age of 27 years. Fathers are advised to continue to increase their willingness by having the belief that fathers can play a role and be directly involved in early childhood care and families live separately from parents/in-laws to increase the father's involvement in early childhood care. In the future, the output of this research can be used as a guide for the government in making father's role programs in early childhood care.

## Acknowledgments

We would like to thank all who have participated in this research, the health faculty, the education office, the University of Fort De Kock, Indonesia.

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