

Short Communication

A study on father's knowledge and attitude towards their role in child care in selected areas of Mangalore with a view to develop an informational booklet.

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Abstract :

"It is a wise father who knows his own child"

- William Shakespeare

In today's modern and fast changing society, families are becoming nuclear; mothers are professionally oriented and having busy jobs. Father's participation in child care is necessary due to progressive involvement of mothers in jobs outside the home. Hence the responsibility of child rearing has extended to fathers also.

In this study father's knowledge is assessed by self structured questionnaire and attitude using attitude scale. The findings revealed that majority of the fathers 88(44%) were in the age group of less than 30 years, 110 (55%) were having more than 2 siblings, 92 (46%) were on the 1st order of birth, (46.5%) completed Secondary school education, 106 (53%) were having private job, 200(100%) were married and living with spouse, 82 (41%) of their children have above 2yrs. 116 (58%) fathers were Hindus, 79 (39.5%) were having monthly income of less than Rs5000/-and 124 (62%) fathers do not have previous information regarding child care. The result also shows 94 (47%) fathers were having average knowledge regarding child care, 69 fathers (34.45%) have poor knowledge and 37 (18.5%) fathers were having good knowledge. There is significant correlation between knowledge and attitude of fathers regarding their role in child care. There is significant association between knowledge and demographic variables but marital status has no significant association between knowledge and also significant association seen between attitude and demographic variables.

Keywords : Knowledge, Attitude, Fathers, Child care

Introduction :

Ancient time onwards it is believed that the father's role is to protect the family. Child rearing and taking care of children during illness is always considered to be mother's responsibility. The parent's role is changing as a result of changing economy. Most of the women are in labour force so father's role is also changing. So now a day's child rearing is not only the responsibility of mothers but also fathers. An

active involvement of the father in infant rearing is important for family's health and well-being.

Fathers can play and interact in different ways that shows their love and affection to

their children. As a father they should know their child's likes, dislikes and routines. Fathers are the important people in their child life like friends, teachers, and coaches. They connect with their children on an emotional and spiritual level and their willingness and active participation is necessary for a proper child care.

Need For The Study :

Nowadays the trends are changing, mothers also have their own jobs besides father and they also earns for their family. Hence father has the responsibility to share with mothers in child rearing and care of the child. It is beneficial for the fathers also. It helps to create a better bonding between father and child and helps him to be aware about the needs and problems of the child. In the psychological aspect also it is very beneficial, which results in better understanding

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between partners and also between father and child. It also helps the fathers to be aware about the growth and development of child, care during minor ailments and the prevailing family situation.

Fathers play a vital role in implementing childcare. They must have an adequate knowledge and positive attitude towards childrearing and child care. Recently some fathers are well educated about child care and have good interest to execute their role without any hesitations. Researches regarding this topic in Indian set up are also very rare.

Thus researcher felt it is necessary to explore fathers' knowledge and attitude regarding child care so that they can rear their children in a better way. It helps them to adopt better ways of child care which enhance father child bonding.

Objectives of The Study :

The study objectives were

- To assess the father's knowledge regarding their role in child care.
- To assess the father's attitude towards their role in child care.
- To find out the association between father's knowledge about their role in child care and selected demographic variables.
- To find out the association between father's attitude regarding their role in child care and selected demographic variables.
- To find out the correlation between father's knowledge and attitude regarding their role in child care.

Hypotheses :

H1: There will be a significant correlation between father's knowledge and attitude towards child care.

H2: There will be a significant association between father's knowledge and selected demographic variables.

H3: There will be significant association between father's attitude and selected demographic variables.

Conceptual Frame Work :

In this study the conceptual framework has been adopted from the health promotion model (HPM) proposed by Nola

J Pender (1982; revised, 2002) was designed to be a "complementary counterpart to models of health protection."

Components of The Health Promotion Model :

The Health Promotion Model classifies health behavior determinants into three specific propositional groupings:

- Individual characteristics and experiences
- Behaviour specific cognitions and affects
- Behavioural outcome

Individual Characteristics And Experiences :

Personal factors It is categorized as physical (e.g. age, number of children, marital status), psychological (e.g. self-esteem, self-motivation), and socio-cultural factors (e.g. religion, cultural beliefs, education, occupation, monthly income, type of family) of fathers.

Prior related behaviors It includes father's previous experience and knowledge regarding child care.

Behaviour Specific Cognitions And Affects :

Perceived benefits of action Anticipated benefits or outcomes affect the father's plans to participate in health promoting behaviors and may facilitate continued practice. Here it includes better cognitive development of the child, father-child bonding, growth and development of the child.

Perceived barriers to action A father's perception about availability of time, inconvenience, expense, difficulty in performing the activity may act as barriers imagined or real. Here it is father's occupation, lack of knowledge, criticism by others, lack of time, failure of expectation of child etc.

Perceived self-efficacy It refers to the conviction that a person can successfully carry out the behavior necessary to achieve a desired outcome. Here it is father's awareness about immunization, feeding and safety needs of the child

Activity related affect: The subjective feelings that occur before, during and following an activity can influence whether a person will repeat the behavior again or maintain the behavior. Here it is interest demonstrated by

fathers to improve knowledge about child care from information booklet.

Interpersonal influences: Interpersonal influences are person perceptions concerning the behavior, beliefs, or attitudes of others. Here it includes family friends, mass media and health personnel.

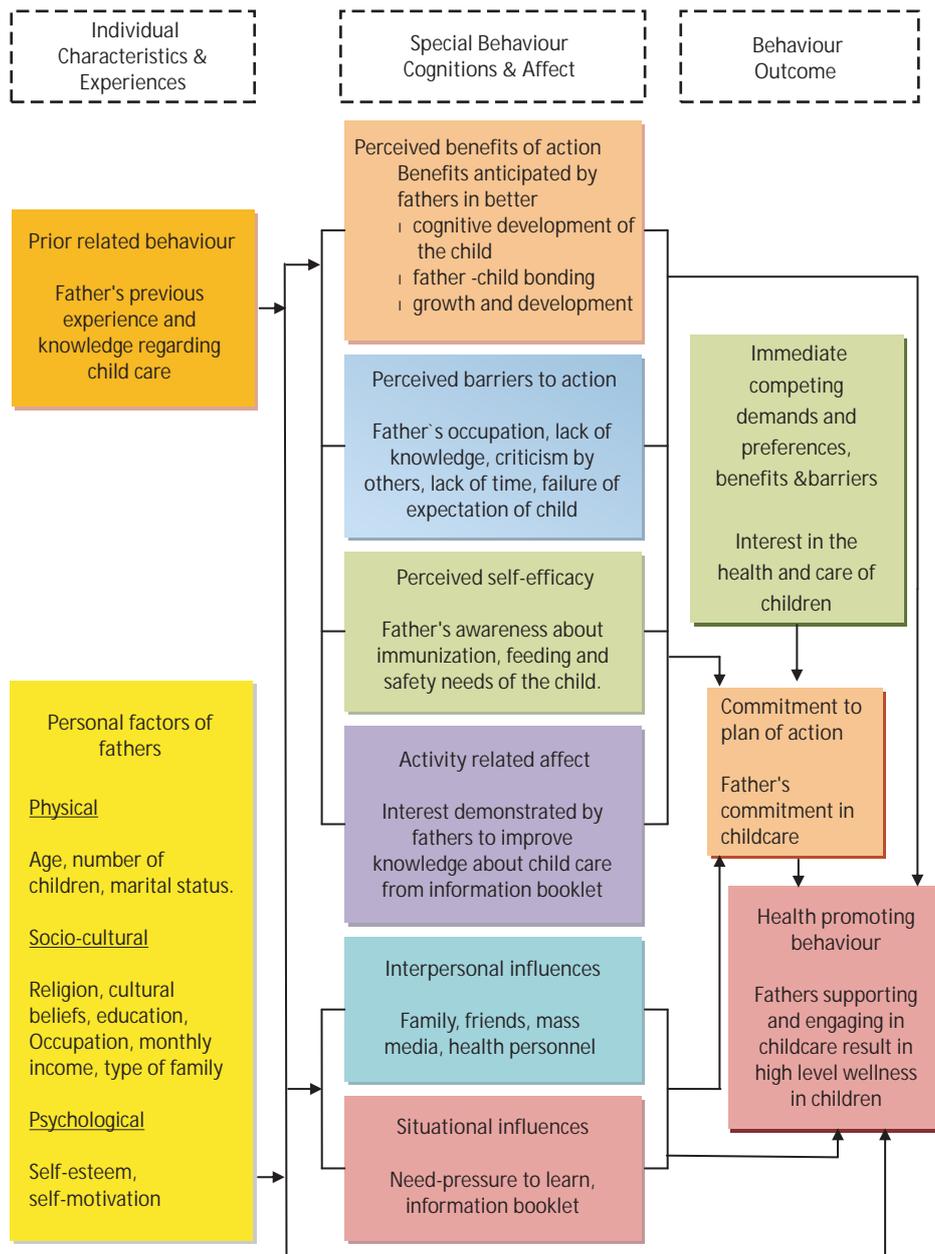
Situational influences: Situational influences are direct and indirect influences in health promoting behaviors and include perceptions of available options, demand

characteristics, and the aesthetic features of the environment. Here the situation influence is the fathers need more pressure to learn information booklet.

Commitment to A Plan Of Action :

Commitment to a plan of action involves two processes: commitment and identifying specific strategies for carrying out and reinforcing the behavior. Strategies are important because commitment alone often results in "good intentions" and not actual performance of the behavior. Here it is father's commitment in child care.

Fig No: 1. Conceptual framework based on Nola J. Pender's revised Health Promotion Model



Immediate competing demands and preferences:

Competing demands are that behavior over which an individual has a low level of control.

Competing preferences are behaviors over which an individual has a high level of control; however this control depends on the individual's ability to be self-regulating or to not give in. Here it is the father's interest in the health and care of the children.

Materials and Methods:

In this study a descriptive research approach and descriptive exploratory research design was adopted to assess the knowledge and attitude of 200 fathers regarding their role in child care selected areas of Mangalore. The setting of the study is OPD of Justice K.S Hedge charitable hospital and Natekal Community area. Non Probability Sampling technique was adopted and Purposive sampling method was used to collect samples. The tools used in the study demographic Performa to assess demographic variables, attitude scale to assess the attitude of the fathers and structured knowledge questionnaire to assess their knowledge

The reliability of the tool was assessed by administering it to 30 fathers in Pediatric OPD of Justice K.S.Hegde hospital Mangalore. Spilt half method was used for knowledge Questionnaire and the value is .851. Cronbach`s Alpha is used for attitude scale and the value is .787. It showed the tool is reliable

The pilot study was conducted in Justice K.S Hedge Charitable hospital and selected community area (Natekal area) after taking formal permission from the hospital authority and DHO. The sample size of the pilot study was 30. The investigator explained the purpose of study to the subjects; confidentiality was assured and informed consent was taken from each. The research tool is found to be feasible and practicable

For the main study was conducted in Justice K.S Hedge hospital during OPD timings and community area at the evening time as per convenience of the respondents and collected the data from the fathers. They were

administered a structured knowledge questionnaire and an attitude scale.

Analysis :

Analysis was done by both descriptive and inferential statistics on the basis of objectives and hypotheses of the study. The plan for data analysis is as follows:

- | Knowledge and attitude was assessed by descriptive statistics. (Mean, frequency, percentage).
- | Association between knowledge and attitude towards demographic variables with Chi square test.
- | The correlation between knowledge and attitude with Karl Pearson's correlation method.

Results :

Demographic Performa of fathers shows 88(44%) were in the age group of less than 30yrs, 110 (55%) were having more than 2 siblings. 92 (46%) were on the 1st order of birth, 93 (46.5%) completed Secondary school education,106 (53%) were having private job, all were married and living with spouse, 82 (41%) fathers were having child above 2yrs. 116 (58%) belongs to the Hindu religion, 79 (39.5%) were having monthly income of <Rs5000/-,124 (62%) do not have previous information regarding child care.

The result also shows 94 (47%) fathers were having average knowledge regarding child care, 69 fathers (34.45%) have poor knowledge and 37 (18.5%) fathers were having good knowledge. In area wise mean percentage score reveal that highest mean percentage was obtained in the area of nutrition (74.67%) and the lowest mean percentage score is 23.5% in the area of toilet training. The result also reveals majority of the fathers 127(63.5%) had favorable attitude, 70(35%) fathers had highly favorable attitude and 3 (1.5%) had unfavorable attitude regarding their role in child care.

There is a significant correlation between knowledge and attitude of fathers and demographic variables. The P calculated value is .000 is less than P (table) value 0.05 and there is significant relationship between knowledge and attitude of fathers and selected demographic variables. The association between knowledge of fathers and

selected demographic variables were analyzed using Chi-square test and the hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. Result shows there is significant association between knowledge of fathers and selected demographic variables (except marital status). There is also significant association between attitude of fathers and selected demographic variables.

Area-wise mean, mean knowledge score, median, standard deviation of knowledge score of the fathers.

n =200

Sl. No	Areas	Maximum Possible Score	Obtained Mean Score	SD	Mean Percentage Score
	Nutrition	3	2.24	0.68	74.67
	Immunization	4	1.96	1.18	48.88
	Growth and development	4	2.05	0.91	51.13
	Toilet training	2	0.47	0.67	23.5
	Sleep	2	0.78	0.77	38.75
	play	3	1.47	0.97	48.83
	safety materials	2	1.01	0.82	50.25
	Total	20	9.96	4.50	49.78

Frequency and percentage distribution of attitude scores of fathers.

n =200

Score Range	Frequency	Percentage
Highly favourable attitude (51-75)	70	35%
Favourable attitude (26-50)	127	63.5%
Unfavourable attitude (25)	3	1.5%

Discussion :

The study result shows fathers were having average knowledge regarding child care. This study is supported by comparative study conducted by S. Beryl Mohanraj, Chellarani Vijayakumar, Bharathy Jacob, and Paul S Russell to determine the role of inexperienced and experienced fathers in infants rearing in the villages of College of Nursing Community Health Centre in CMC, Vellore and also by a longitudinal study conducted by RM Post, GS Leverich , E Fergus ,R Milter , D Luckenbaugh to assess the father's involvement and cognitive & behavioral outcomes of preterm infants in U.K.

The result reveals that majority of fathers had favourable attitude regarding their role in child care. Another cross

sectional study conducted by Karen.F.Pridham, Joan H. Zavoral involving families of 153 infants at 4months of age was done to identify factors associated with lack of active involvement of fathers in infant care in USA revealed that most of the fathers are having unfavorable attitude regarding child care which is contradictory to the present study findings.

This study shows there is a significant correlation between knowledge and attitude of the fathers regarding child care. It is supported by a longitudinal study done by Lauren.B.Childers to assess father's involvement on children's developmental outcome in USA.

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Conclusions :

The findings of this study indicated the need for educating the about child care practices. They must be motivated to participate in the child care . There is a need of proper and regular educational

programs to make awareness in the community about the areas they need to improve and create better awareness among fathers in child care.

There is a need for health personnel to take active part in educational programs in upgrading knowledge of fathers in child care.

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