### Original Article

# PARENTING ATTITUDE AND SELF-CONCEPT OF FATHERS HAVING ADOLESCENT

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#### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Parents play a unique role in child-rearing. Though the mother plays a vital role, no one can replace a father's contribution to rearing a child. The purpose of this study was to see whether fathers' self-concept was associated with their parental attitudes.

**Methods:** This was a cross-sectional study conducted during the period from January to December 2021. A total of 188 fathers having at least one adolescent were selected from selected rural areas of the Jashore district in Bangladesh. Data were collected by face-to-face interviews with a semi-structured questionnaire and using convenient sampling technique. The behavioral qualities of the fathers were measured using a variety of scales, including the attitude toward parenthood scale, Campbell's self-concept clarity scale. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used to analyze the data in accordance with the study's objectives. Before data collection, informed consent was taken, and ethical concerns were addressed at different stages of the study.

**Results:** The findings revealed that the mean age of the fathers was  $44.55\pm8.515$  years and the highest frequency (59.6%) was in the age group 30-45 years. The study finding showed that 94.1% were Muslim and the main occupation of 41.5% of them was agriculture. Among the fathers, a large number had no formal education (33%), 38.8% completed their primary education. The mean working duration was  $8.56\pm1.868$  hours. The attitude towards parenthood scale had an average score of  $6.45\pm0.512$ , mean self-concept score was  $46.13\pm6.169$ . Fathers' parenting attitude were unaffected by their socio-demographic characteristics such as occupation (p = 0.329), monthly income (r = 0.046, p = 0.534), or expenditure (r = 0.033, p = 0.655), working duration (r = -0.117, p = 0.110). Fathers' self-concept was an important variable that showed a significant correlation with fathers' parenting attitude (r = 0.158, p = 0.031). The participating fathers' parenting attitudes did not exhibit substantial mean disparities between their educational status (p = 0.055) and their wives' educational status (p = 0.202).

**Conclusion:** This study revealed that father with better self-concept had enhanced their adolescent care by involving in active parenting.

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# INTRODUCTION

Parenting includes the involvement of both father and mother. In child-rearing, the shift in focus on fathers was accompanied by an increasing interest in the interdependence of both parents' involvement. Active participation of the father has to build a strong path for a family systems perspective on parenting and parent-child relationships. Fathers' contribution to parenting cannot be replicated.<sup>1</sup>

Attitude is a psychological construct, a mental and emotional entity that inheres in or characterizes a

person. They are complex and are an acquired state through experiences. It is an individual's predisposed state of mind regarding a value and it is precipitated through a responsive expression towards oneself, a person, place, thing, or event which in turn influences the individual's thought and action. Parenting attitude involves both parenting skills and behavior.<sup>2</sup> Positive parenting practice brings about a healthy parent-child relationship through a positive parenting attitude. On the other hand, negative attitudes towards parenting end with a low-level outcome.<sup>3</sup>

In traditional society, the dualistic belief that fathers should take on the role of breadwinner and moms should take primary responsibility for child upbringing has dominated. With the changing family structure, the reduced number of children, more dual-income couples, and the growth of the idea of feminism, there was an increased desire for fathers to participate jointly in child-rearing as the industrial society approached.<sup>4</sup> In such a fast-changing modern culture, a shift toward family sharing and division of responsibilities rather than traditional gender roles based on patriarchal ideology is necessary. In other words, instead of being a helper, fathers are expected to play a more developed and altered role in co-parenting as their children grow and mature.<sup>5</sup> In this context, the desire for a new gender-based child-rearing system stresses fathers' participation as a key variable in addressing issues such as gender inequality and a care gap, leading to debate over the definition and role of fathers' child-rearing.<sup>6</sup>

As a result of this paradigm change, contemporary society prefers a caring and pleasant father to one who asserts his patriarchal authority and creates a sense of detachment. Good fathering has a favorable impact on many aspects of his children's development as well as his spouse's satisfaction with family life. It also has a positive impact on his own adult development.<sup>7</sup>

In this context, one of the most crucial and fundamental components in becoming a 'parenting father' as the times demand is awareness of the role fathers themselves feel about child-rearing. That is, when fathers first become conscious of their responsibility in child upbringing, they become more engaged in participatory activities. The ability to successfully conduct fathering in child-rearing is dependent on fathers' knowledge of their fathering function. In other words, because the subjective aspect of 'consciousness' is used to propel certain acts ahead, fathers' awareness of their involvement in childrearing has a direct impact on their participation.

However, most studies on fathers focus on the effects of fathers' real parenting time and parenting patterns on their children's development, with researchers reporting mixed results.<sup>4</sup> These studies contributed to a greater appreciation of the importance of fathers' roles, but they ignored internal elements like as personal awareness, perception, and belief, which motivate actions required to carry out responsibilities.

As a result, the goal of this study is to see how fathers' role awareness influences parental participation among fathers of adolescent children who require the most care. The findings of this study will reveal a desirable fathering role in child-rearing and provide preliminary data for developing a strategy to encourage good parenting engagement.

#### **METHODS**

## Study design and study population

This descriptive type of cross-sectional study conducted during a one-year period, from January 1 to December 31, 2021 in Selected rural area of the Jashore district of Bangladesh. In this study, fathers having an adolescent were selected as the study population. Fathers who were mentally unfit and not interested to participate were excluded from the study.

# Sample size and sampling

Total 188 father were included in the study. Participants were selected by convenience sampling.

#### **Data collection**

The data was collected by face-to-face interview of the father of adolescent. The interview was conducted in household from fathers having adolescent. Before proceeding the data collection, the detail of the study was explained properly to each respondent and written consents were taken from them. Collected data was checked and verified at the end of the work in each day.

The questionnaire was developed by using the selected variables according to the specific objectives and was developed from a review of qualitative and quantitative literature for relevant items. The questionnaire contained questions related to find out the role of fathers in parenting by attitude towards parenthood scale. The attitude toward parenthood scale was used and the fathers were asked to respond to nine statements on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree to evaluate their parenting attitudes in this study. To determine selfconcept by Campbell self-concept clarity scale among fathers of adolescent. Campbell's self-concept clarity scale was used which had 12 assertions, with some of them reverse-coded (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12) to examine the participants' self-concept. On a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), these findings were tabulated.

#### Data analysis

SPSS was used as a tool for data analysis. Frequency tables and pie charts were employed for the descriptive statistics. For categorical variables, the proportion was shown in the tables, whereas for continuous variables, the mean  $\pm$  SD was presented. The study objectives were met through the use of Pearson's correlation analysis, t-tests, and ANOVA testing.

#### **Ethical considerations**

For conducting the study, formal ethical approval was obtained from the Institutional Review board (IRB) of the NIPSOM. Before data collection informed written consent was obtained from every respondent after

explaining the aim and purpose of that study. All the participants were treated equally and with respect. The privacy and confidentially were maintained strictly and they were interviewed in a separate place with care. Some of the self-concept and self-esteem questions may have been humiliating, but they were asked in a reasonable manner. Prior to the interview, the participants were informed that they would have the freedom to withdraw from the study at any moment. They were told once again that the information gathered during the course of the study would not be shared with anyone other than the research team and would be used in such a way that the participant's name would not be revealed.

#### **RESULTS**

#### Sociodemographic characteristics of respondents

The age of the respondents ranged from 30 to 67 years. The mean age of the respondents was  $44.55\pm8.515$  years. Among 188 respondents 59.6% (112) were between 30-45 years of age group. A large number of respondents have no formal education (33%).

Maximum fathers completed their primary education (38.8%). Among others, 16.5% completed secondary. 3.7 % higher secondary, 4.3% graduated, and 3.7% postgraduate respectively. The main occupation of a large number of 78 (41.5%) of them was agriculture. Among other occupations were, 42 (22.3%) businessmen, 31 (19.7%) service holders, and 37 (16.5%) were in other occupations. Among the respondents' wives, 71 (37.8%) completed their primary education, 78 (41.5%) completed their secondary education. Among others, 27 (14.4%) had no formal education, 3 completed graduations, and 5 completed post-graduation. Among the respondents' wives, 183 (97.3%) were housewives and only 5 (2.7%) of them were working mothers. The average working hour of the father was 8.56±1.868 hours. Among 188 fathers, 58 (30.9%) fathers worked 5-7.9 hours a day, 101 (53.7%) fathers worked 8-10.9 hours a day and 29 (15.4%) fathers worked 11-14 hours a day. Among all, 146 (77.7%) fathers had an income of monthly 5000-15000 taka, 25 (13.3%) in between 15001-30000 taka and 17 (9%) are above 30000 taka. The minimum income was 5000 taka and the maximum income was 65000 taka.

Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents

Characteristics		Frequency	Percentage
Age (Years)	30-45	112	59.6
	46-60	68	36.2
	≥61	8	4.3
	Mean(±SD)	44.55±8.515	
Educational	No formal	62	33.0
qualification	education		
	Primary	73	38.8
	Secondary	31	16.5
	Higher Secondary	7	3.7
	Graduate	8	4.3
	Postgraduate	7	3.7
Educational No formal		27	14.4
Qualification	education		
(respondents'	Primary	71	37.8
wives)	Secondary	78	41.5
	Higher Secondary	4	2.1
	Graduate	3	1.6
	Postgraduate	5	2.7
Occupation	Businessman	42	22.3
	Service holder	31	16.5
	Agriculture	78	41.5
	Others	37	19.7
Working duration	5-7.9	58	30.9
	8-10.9	101	53.7
	11-14	29	15.4
	Mean±SD	8.:	56±1.868

Monthly income	5000-15000	146	77.7	
(Taka)	15001-30000	25	13.3	
	30000-65000	17	9.0	
	Mean±SD	13542.55±9462.891		

## Parenting attitude of the fathers

The attitude toward parenthood scale was used in this study to assess fathers' parenting attitudes. It featured nine statements, each of which required the fathers to reply on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Positive attitudes about parenthood were associated with higher scores on the scale. There are no right or wrong responses to any of these questions. After reading each sentence, use the following scale to select the number that best represents the answer: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 (strongly disagree to strongly agree). Add the numbers and divide by 9 after assigning a number to each item. The higher the number (7 is the highest), the more positive the attitude and the stronger the commitment to parenting. The lower the number (1 being the lowest), the more dismal the attitude and the weaker the commitment to parenting. The Attitude towards parenthood scale had

an average score of  $6.45\pm0.512$  and a range of 5 to 7.

#### Factors associated with Parenting attitude

The socio-demographic status of fathers, as well as their self-concept in child-rearing, were examined to see if there was a link between parenting attitude and these factors.

# Association between the fathers' parenting attitude and socio-demographic variables

Respondents' parenting attitudes had a negative correlation with their age and it was not significant (p> 0.05; r -0.002). The correlation analysis of fathers' parenting attitudes and working hours revealed a negative and non-significant relation (p> 0.05; r - 0.117). It was revealed that, correlation between fathers' parenting attitudes and their monthly income was not statistically significant.

Table 2. Association between fathers' parenting attitude and socio-demographic variables

Socio-demographic variables	Fathers' parenting attitude		
	r; p-value		
Age of the respondents	-0.002; 0.975		
Working hours of the respondents	-0.117; 0.110		
Monthly income of the respondents	0.046; 0.534		

#### Occupation of wives of the respondents

Independent t-test was done to see connection between

respondents' parenting attitudes and their wives' occupations & was not statistically significant.

Table 3. Parenting attitude in relation to the respondents' wife's occupation

Parenting attitude	Occupation of the respondents' wives	N	M	SD	t	df	P-value
	Housewife	183	6.45	0.505			
	Working mother	5	6.51	0.792	-0.258	186	0.797

# Occupation of the respondents

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was done to see if there was any significant mean difference between the respondents' occupation and their parenting attitude. It shows that the significance value for the respondents' parenting attitude is >0.05, which is not statistically significant.

# Level of education

ANOVA was used to determine whether there was a significant mean difference between the respondents' and their wives' educational attainment and parenting attitudes.

#### Level of education of the respondents

The significance value was found to be more than 0.05.

As a result, there were no statistically significant differences in the mean scores of parental attitudes among respondents with various levels of education. According to the ANOVA results, graduated (6.58±0.435) and post-graduated (6.59±0.524) parents had a more positive parenting attitude than uneducated (6.35±0.524) and less educated parents. As a result, fathers' parenting attitudes were not influenced by their institutional education level.

#### **Education of the wives of the respondents**

The significant value for the respondents' parenting attitude was 0.202 as a result of the ANOVA analysis. As a result, among different levels of education of the respondents' wives, there were no statistically significant disparities in the respondents' mean score of parenting attitude. As a result, the educational standing of mothers had no impact on fathers' attitudes regarding parenthood. According to the mean ratings of various educational categories, respondents with highly educated wives, higher secondary (6.44±0.673) and graduated (6.74±0.231) have a positive attitude.

Table 4. Parenting attitude in relation to the respondents' occupation

Variables		Mean score of parenting attitude of fathers		
	Categories	Mean±SD	Statistics	
	Businessman	6.52±0.487		
Occupation of father	Service holder	6.52±0.551	F=1.155	
Occupation of father	Agriculture	6.37±0.517	P=0.329	
	Others	6.49±0.490		
	No formal education	6.35±0.524		
	Primary	6.55±0.422		
Respondents'	Secondary	6.46±0.614	F=2.214	
education level	Higher Secondary	6.03±0.621	P=0.055	
	Graduate	6.58±0.435		
	Postgraduate	6.59±0.524		
	No formal education	6.25±0.544		
	Primary	6.44±0.416		
Respondents' wives' education level	Secondary	6.53±0.547	F=1.470	
	Higher Secondary	6.44±0.673	P=0.202	
	Graduate	6.74±0.231		
	Postgraduate	6.31±0.829		

# **Self-concept of the fathers**

The respondents' self-concept was assessed using Campbell's self-concept clarity scale. The scale comprised 12 statements, some of which (1,2,3,4,5,7,8,9,10,12) were reverse-coded. The results were tallied on a five-point Likert scale, which runs from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). A higher score meant a better self-concept and vice versa. The range of scores is 21 to 57, with a mean score of 46.13±6.169.

# Relationship of fathers' parenting attitude with their self-concept

Correlation analysis was applied in this study to determine the association between fathers' parenting attitude and their self-concept. The correlation between these two variables was statistically significant as p<0.05. That means fathers' parenting attitude has association with their self-concept.

Table 5. Association between fathers' parenting attitude and their self-concept

Fathers' self-concept	Fathers' parenting attitude		
	r; p-value		
	0.158; 0.031		

#### DISCUSSION

The present study extended the research on enlightening the aspects of fathers' parenting concerning their self-concept in the community setting. Only fathers of adolescent children were included in the study because they wanted to learn more about their perspectives. The fathers in this study ranged in age from 30 to 67 years old, with a mean age of 44.55±8.515 years. whether the mean age in another study was 42.97 years with standard deviation of 4.78.8

A large number of respondents have no formal education (33%). Maximum fathers completed their primary education (38.8%). Whether Hawkins<sup>9</sup> discovered that 20% of the sample consisted of graduates and post-graduates. Belonging to the rural area, their educational qualifications are relatively low. This may reflect lower awareness and the presence of several stressors which may affect reporting. The upper social classes may have comparatively had higher awareness.

The main occupation of a large number of 78 (41.5%) of them was agriculture. Among other occupations were, 42 (22.3%) businessmen, 31 (19.7%) service holders, and 37 (16.5%) were in other occupations. According to Hawkins<sup>9</sup>, only about 2% of the sample were unemployed, where this study found no unemployment. As the fathers in the study are villagers, agriculture is their primary occupation. In the case of their wives, a large number (97.3%) were housewives, and (14.4%) had no formal education. Others educated at least up to primary education. It reflects the village's general condition.

The average working hour of the father was  $8.56\pm1.868$  hours per day, and Hawkins<sup>9</sup> stated that the mean work hours of his study fathers were almost 7hours/day. Fathers had an average monthly income of 13542.55 taka and a monthly family expenditure of 11467.02 taka, according to the survey. It's a sign of their regular struggle and low socioeconomic status.

As a measure of parental attitude, the Attitude toward Parenthood scale was used in this study. On average, the fathers' received a score of 6.45 (SD  $\pm 0.512$ ), indicating a favorable attitude, and ranges from 5 to 7. The average score on the Attitudes toward Parenthood Scale in Mark Whatley's study was 6.36 (SD  $\pm$  0.65) and ranged from 3.89 to 7.00. $^{10}$ 

On Campbell's<sup>11</sup> self-concept clarity scale, the fathers had a mean score of 46.13±6.169, indicating a high self-concept. The average SCC score, according to Campbell, was 29.88.

The research on self-concept clarity among fathers with at least one adolescent was expanded in this study. Although there is a well-established link between selfconcept clarity and psychological adjustment, the mechanism underlying this relationship is yet unknown. 12 This study is to look into the effect of selfconcept clarity in the relationship between fathers' parenting attitudes. As expected, fathers with a clearer self-concept had less internalizing and externalizing problems in this group, implying the importance of identity clarity and stability in successfully adjusting to parenting obstacles. The study demonstrated an indirect effect of self-concept clarity on parenting attitude, which was in line with predictions. These findings highlight the importance of self-concept clarity in parenting practices, which is a difficult and timeconsuming endeavor for a father. The more selfconcept clarity individuals had, the better they were able to regulate negative emotional states in stressful situations. Furthermore, they had a greater ability to respond appropriately to happy occurrences. 12 In conclusion, our findings show that during this vital shift, a clearer self-concept is critical in steering dads toward favorable parenting outcomes.

The parenting attitudes of fathers were also assessed based on their socio-demographic characteristics. The findings revealed that the fathers' age had no bearing on their parenting attitudes. It also found no differences in parenting attitudes among men of various religions. A larger sample with a wide range of cultural backgrounds, on the other hand, might yield some significant findings on religious or cultural disparities. It opens the door for more research into parental attitudes in many cultures and religions.

When the fathers' parenting attitudes were evaluated using analysis of variance (ANOVA), it founds that their degree of education was not an important variable among respondents with various level of education, but highly educated parents had a more positive attitude towards parenting than the uneducated or, less educated fathers. As parenting is a natural phenomenon, from attitude to involvement, education is not crucial in all facets of parenting. It could be a key feature in future

interventional studies if more fathers are involved in the fatherhood role. Their wives' educational level had less impact and produced statistically non-significant results. Also, the findings revealed that individuals with a highly educated wife had a positive parenting attitude as mothers are the primary teacher of a child.

Analyses demonstrated that fathers' working hours were not associated with paternal attitude, since the correlation was statistically non-significant. This analysis shows that fathers' time involvement had a greater effect on the intellectual development of parenting attitudes. A lot of research has indicated that there are no direct links between lengthy work hours and negative effects on family functioning. Many others, on the other hand, have found characteristics that operate as mediators between long hours and family life. These factors include job happiness, spouse perceptions of hours spent, role overburden, and the kind of the work being done, both in terms of when it is done and the quality of the work itself. I

There were no significant mean differences in parenting attitudes between different categories of fathers' occupations in this study. Again, fathers' monthly income had no bearing on their parenting attitude. It demonstrated an unusual element of fatherhood regardless of socioeconomic level, fathers' parenting attitudes remained consistent.

There are certain limitations to this study that could be addressed in future research. The first is related to the study's cross-sectional nature. The use of longitudinal design in future research will aid in disentangling causal relationships between self-concept clarity and fathers' behaviors, as well as further investigating the direction of effects. Second, while this study found strong and relevant correlations between self-concept clarity and parenting attitude in fathers, it cannot rule out the possibility that other factors are at play. Future research should look at the involvement of other potential variables, such as structural and personality traits, that could influence the effects on parenting attitude, in addition to self-concept clarity. Finally, this study solely used self-report measures; future research may use a variety of informant sources. Despite these limitations, it is believed that this study contributes to the understanding of the relationship between selfconcept clarity and parenting attitude, implying an essential, though understudied, link between fathers' identity-related and parenting concerns.

Parenting attitude was taken into account in this study to see if there was a link between self-concept. It was discovered that fathers with a positive parenting attitude and high self-concept were also more involved in their children's upbringing.

The outcomes of this study point to important avenues for interventions aimed at fathers. Fathers should participate in parenting education programs focused at improving their self-awareness and parenting abilities, both of which are essential for adjustment. The findings of this study have consequences for the design, development, implementation, and assessment of fathers' engagement in the home environment. To raise all involved parties' awareness and comprehension of the notion of self-concept, the influence of parenting practices, and the hazards of low self-concept, health education strategies should be used. Training, public awareness, and resource connecting could all be effective health education initiatives. Parents, adolescents, teachers, education managers, state and local government educational boards, employees, community leaders, and religious leaders should all be targeted for health education.

#### CONCLUSION

According to this study, fathers with high self-concept are more worried about their parenting attitude and act as involved fathers. Educated fathers and those with highly educated wives had a more positive attitude toward parenting. As a result, education was a good starting point for energizing fathers' parental concerns. Different educational interventions should be introduced into nationwide programs and projects, especially targeting less-educated communities, to sensitize fathers to increasing their involvement and acquiring a positive attitude as responsible fathers.

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