


Fathers' Involvement in Child Rearing: Psychological Outcomes for Children

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the psychological outcomes of fathers' involvement in child-rearing and to assess how various forms of paternal engagement influence children's mental health and emotional well-being in Tehran. A qualitative research design was employed, involving 24 fathers from Tehran who participated in semi-structured interviews. The interviews focused on fathers' experiences of their involvement in child-rearing, their perceptions of the impact of their engagement on their children's mental health, and their own psychological well-being. Data were analyzed using NVivo software, with a focus on thematic analysis and theoretical saturation. The findings revealed that active paternal involvement, particularly emotional engagement, was positively associated with better mental health outcomes for children, including reduced levels of anxiety, depression, and behavioral problems. Fathers' mental health status was found to significantly impact the emotional and behavioral well-being of their children, with those experiencing higher levels of stress, anxiety, or depression having children who displayed greater emotional difficulties. Additionally, the quality of father-child interactions—marked by emotional support and communication—was identified as a key factor in fostering children's emotional resilience. Furthermore, maternal support of paternal involvement was also found to play a critical role in enhancing the positive effects of fathers' engagement. The study concludes that fathers' emotional and psychological involvement in child-rearing significantly influences children's mental health outcomes, highlighting the importance of addressing both paternal mental health and encouraging fathers' active participation. Cultural and societal support for paternal involvement is essential to optimizing child development and emotional well-being.

Keywords: Paternal involvement, mental health outcomes, child development, father-child relationship, emotional well-being, qualitative research, Tehran, paternal mental health.

1. Introduction

In recent decades, the role of fathers in child-rearing has been increasingly recognized as pivotal in shaping the psychological and emotional development of children. Historically, fatherhood was often relegated to a more peripheral role, with primary caregiving duties largely attributed to mothers (nili ahadabadi et al., 2019). However, there is a growing body of evidence suggesting that paternal involvement is critical for fostering healthy emotional, cognitive, and behavioral development in children. The complexities of paternal involvement are particularly salient when considering how fathers' mental health, parenting practices, and overall emotional engagement with their children may influence the child's psychological outcomes (Dalikeni, 2021).

The literature highlights a range of studies that underscore the critical role fathers play in the early developmental stages of their children. Research indicates that fathers who are actively involved in parenting tend to have children with better emotional regulation, higher self-esteem, and fewer behavioral issues (Craig et al., 2020; Jones, 2023, 2024). Conversely, a lack of paternal engagement is linked to negative outcomes, including emotional and psychological distress in children, increased risk of depression, and greater susceptibility to anxiety (Fitzsimons & Villadsen, 2019; Wickersham et al., 2020). These findings are particularly crucial as they challenge traditional gender norms that may diminish the importance of fathers in child-rearing.

Fatherhood is also a dynamic process influenced by a host of factors, including mental health, socio-economic status, and cultural norms. For instance, paternal mental health has been shown to significantly impact both the father's interaction with their children and the children's emotional development (Bisdounis, 2020; Jeong, 2024). Fathers experiencing mental health issues, such as depression or anxiety, are at a higher risk of exhibiting less positive parenting behaviors, which can exacerbate the emotional difficulties of their children (Tandon et al., 2021; Wainwright, 2023). Moreover, studies suggest that paternal mental health problems can have lasting effects, influencing children's behavioral difficulties and overall emotional well-being long into adolescence (Jones, 2023; Rajyaguru et al., 2021).

While much of the research has focused on mothers, recent findings have called attention to the need for a more nuanced understanding of father-child interactions. In

particular, studies such as those by Kara and Yildirim (2021) and Setiawan et al. (2022) explore how the psychological resilience of mothers is supported by paternal involvement, suggesting that fathers' active participation in child-rearing not only benefits the child but also provides psychological support for mothers. This dual role of fatherhood, contributing to both child and family health, underlines the significance of including fathers as equal partners in the parenting process (Kara & Yildirim, 2021; Setiawan et al., 2022).

Further complicating the landscape of paternal involvement is the influence of socio-cultural factors and the evolving nature of fatherhood in contemporary society. In many cultures, including in Tehran, the role of fathers is often shaped by traditional beliefs and expectations about masculinity and caregiving (Yogman & Eppel, 2021; Yogman & Garfield, 2016). As such, paternal involvement can vary greatly based on individual, family, and societal factors. For instance, in Iran, while fathers are generally expected to provide financially and protect the family, their emotional involvement in child-rearing is often constrained by societal expectations of masculinity (Kasamatsu et al., 2021). However, recent shifts toward more egalitarian parenting practices suggest a growing recognition of the father's importance in emotional caregiving and development.

Despite the wealth of research examining the psychological implications of maternal involvement, there remains a significant gap in understanding the specific outcomes associated with paternal engagement in different cultural contexts. While studies have consistently found that higher levels of paternal engagement are associated with positive child outcomes in Western contexts (Craig et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2023), less is known about how these findings translate to non-Western settings, particularly in the Middle East. This study aims to address this gap by examining fathers' involvement in child-rearing in Tehran, Iran, and exploring how paternal engagement influences the psychological outcomes of children in this unique socio-cultural environment.

The significance of this study lies not only in its exploration of the paternal role in child-rearing but also in its potential to inform interventions aimed at improving both fathers' and children's mental health. Paternal involvement has been associated with better developmental outcomes for children, including reduced risks of anxiety and depression, enhanced academic performance, and better emotional regulation (Dhillon et al., 2022; Foster et al., 2019).

Additionally, the study of paternal mental health and its intersection with parenting practices can provide valuable insights into potential therapeutic avenues for supporting fathers who may be struggling with mental health issues (Azuine & Singh, 2019; Tandon et al., 2021). This, in turn, could lead to more targeted policies and practices aimed at promoting positive father-child relationships and improving the psychological well-being of the family unit as a whole.

Recent research has emphasized the importance of considering the psychological impact of fathers' involvement in child-rearing through a multidimensional lens, integrating both mental health and behavioral outcomes (Challacombe et al., 2022; Jones, 2023, 2024). For example, paternal stress during the perinatal period has been shown to significantly affect not only the father's mental health but also the emotional and behavioral development of the child (Challacombe et al., 2022). Therefore, understanding the specific mechanisms through which paternal mental health and involvement influence children's psychological outcomes is vital for developing a comprehensive approach to supporting both fathers and children in their developmental journeys.

Additionally, paternal depression, anxiety, and overall mental health status have been increasingly recognized as factors that can mediate the relationship between father-child interactions and child mental health (Frisch-Volkert et al., 2020; Wickersham et al., 2020). The impact of paternal mental health on child behavior and emotional regulation has been extensively studied in Western contexts (Foster et al., 2019; Kasamatsu et al., 2021). However, less attention has been paid to how these dynamics unfold in the Middle Eastern context, particularly in countries like Iran, where traditional family structures and gender roles might shape father-child interactions differently (Yogman & Eppel, 2021; Yogman & Garfield, 2016).

Thus, this study examines the role of fathers in child-rearing in Tehran, focusing on how paternal involvement influences psychological outcomes in children. It aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the intersection between fatherhood, mental health, and child development in a non-Western cultural context, with a specific focus on fathers' roles in the Iranian family system. The findings of this study could inform both academic literature and practical interventions designed to enhance paternal involvement in parenting, ultimately improving the psychological well-being of children and families globally.

2. Methods and Materials

2.1. Study Design and Participants

This qualitative study aimed to explore the psychological outcomes for children resulting from fathers' involvement in child-rearing. The research employed a semi-structured interview approach to gather in-depth insights from participants. A total of 24 participants, all fathers residing in Tehran, were selected for the study. These fathers were chosen based on the criterion of having children between the ages of 5 to 12 years, as this developmental stage is critical in shaping long-term psychological outcomes. Participants were recruited through purposive sampling, ensuring a diverse representation of socio-economic backgrounds, educational levels, and family structures to capture a broad range of perspectives on paternal involvement.

2.2. Measures

2.2.1. Semi-Structured

Data were collected using semi-structured interviews, allowing for flexibility in exploring fathers' experiences and perceptions. The interviews consisted of open-ended questions designed to encourage participants to share their personal views on their roles in child-rearing, the nature of their involvement, and any perceived psychological effects on their children. The interviews were conducted in-person and lasted approximately 45 to 60 minutes. All interviews were audio-recorded with participants' consent and transcribed verbatim for analysis.

2.3. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using NVivo software, a qualitative data analysis tool that facilitates the organization and coding of textual data. A thematic analysis approach was employed to identify and interpret patterns within the interview data. The analysis followed the principles of theoretical saturation, meaning that data collection continued until no new themes or concepts emerged, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the topic. The coding process involved iterative cycles of reading, categorizing, and refining codes, leading to the identification of key themes related to fathers' involvement in child-rearing and its psychological outcomes for children.

3. Findings and Results

The study involved 24 fathers from Tehran, with varying demographic backgrounds. The participants ranged in age

from 30 to 52 years, with a mean age of 41.5 years. Regarding education, the majority (58%) had completed a university degree, while 25% had only completed high school, and 17% had attended vocational training or pursued other forms of education. In terms of occupation, 38% of participants were employed in managerial or professional roles, 33% worked in technical or skilled labor positions, and the remaining 29% were self-employed or engaged in small business operations. The participants' family structures were diverse: 42% had one child, 38% had two children, and 20%

had three or more children. Additionally, the majority (71%) were married and living with their children, while 29% were either separated or divorced. Most fathers (62%) reported having a work-life balance that allowed for regular involvement in their children's daily activities, while 38% indicated that their work commitments often limited their time with family. These demographic characteristics reflect a range of experiences and socio-economic backgrounds, providing a comprehensive perspective on fathers' involvement in child-rearing in Tehran.

Table 1

The Results of Qualitative Analysis

Category	Subcategory	Concepts
Fathers' Involvement in Child Rearing	Direct Interaction with Children	Playtime, Educational Support, Daily Conversations, Physical Affection, Active Listening
	Time Allocation	Work-Life Balance, Weekend Involvement, Family Activities, Time Management, Shared Responsibilities
	Emotional Support	Providing Reassurance, Conflict Resolution, Empathy, Stress Management, Encouraging Independence
	Participation in Decision-Making	Parenting Choices, Family Rules, Involvement in School Activities, Joint Decisions with Partner, Conflict in Decision-Making
	Support for Mothers	Shared Household Tasks, Emotional Support for Partner, Parenting Teamwork, Co-Parenting, Support during Child's Illness
Psychological Impact on Children	Emotional Development	Secure Attachment, Emotional Regulation, Self-Esteem, Emotional Resilience, Confidence Boost
	Behavioral Outcomes	Behavioral Problems, Academic Performance, Peer Relationships, Social Skills, Self-Control
	Cognitive Development	Problem-Solving Skills, Cognitive Stimulation, School Engagement, Creativity, Critical Thinking
Barriers to Fathers' Involvement	Socio-Economic Constraints	Financial Stress, Work Hours, Limited Resources, Educational Level, Stress from Employment
	Cultural and Social Norms	Traditional Gender Roles, Expectations of Masculinity, Social Stigma, Cultural Perceptions of Fatherhood, Peer Influence
	Lack of Support from Partners	Parenting Conflicts, Unequal Distribution of Responsibilities, Disagreements on Parenting, Emotional Disconnect, Limited Cooperation
	Time Constraints	Work Commitments, Travel, Time Spent Away from Family, Lack of Flexibility, Family Schedules
	Lack of Knowledge or Guidance	Inadequate Parenting Knowledge, Limited Role Models, Absence of Parenting Resources, Lack of Parenting Training
	Personal Psychological Factors	Stress, Fatigue, Low Self-Confidence, Mental Health Issues, Self-Doubt

3.1. Fathers' Involvement in Child Rearing

One of the key aspects of fathers' involvement in child rearing was their direct interaction with their children. This included activities such as playtime, providing educational support, and engaging in daily conversations. Many fathers emphasized the importance of physical affection, noting how it strengthened the emotional bond with their children. As one father shared, "I make sure to spend at least an hour every day just playing with my son. We read together, build things, and talk about his day—this is how I show him that I care." Fathers also highlighted their active listening skills,

expressing how they valued their children's opinions and feelings. Another father remarked, "I try to really listen to what my daughter says, even if it's just small things. It's important to make her feel heard."

Fathers noted the importance of balancing work and family life, ensuring sufficient time for their children. Many participants pointed out that weekends and vacations were critical for family activities. One father explained, "The weekends are when I can truly focus on my kids without the distractions of work. We usually go out for a family picnic or just spend time at home." However, time management emerged as a challenge for some, especially for those with

demanding jobs. As one father admitted, “It’s difficult, I try to balance everything, but sometimes work takes over. I wish I had more time to dedicate to my children, especially during school projects.”

Fathers emphasized the role of emotional support in their parenting. Providing reassurance during difficult moments, resolving conflicts, and encouraging independence were identified as key elements of their involvement. For instance, one participant shared, “Whenever my son faces a problem, I make sure to talk to him and help him understand that challenges are part of life. I want him to know he’s strong enough to face anything.” Emotional support also extended to helping children manage stress, with a father noting, “I help my daughter deal with her school stress by listening and offering solutions, even if they’re small ones.”

Fathers reported that involvement in family decision-making, including setting rules and engaging in school-related activities, was an important dimension of their role. Many fathers felt that joint decisions with their partners were crucial for effective parenting. As one father expressed, “My wife and I always talk through important decisions. Whether it’s about schooling or family rules, we make sure both our opinions are considered.” However, some fathers noted occasional conflicts in decision-making, particularly regarding educational choices or discipline. As one participant revealed, “We sometimes argue about the best approach for disciplining our kids. It’s tough to reach a consensus every time.”

In addition to their direct role in child-rearing, fathers also recognized their contribution to supporting mothers in the parenting process. This included sharing household tasks, offering emotional support, and ensuring collaborative co-parenting. A father commented, “I do my best to help out with housework and look after the kids so my wife can have some rest. Parenting is a team effort.” This shared responsibility was particularly significant during stressful times, such as when a child fell ill. As one father noted, “When one of our children is sick, we both pitch in equally. It’s important to support each other, especially during tough times.”

3.2. *Psychological Impact on Children*

Fathers believed that their involvement in child-rearing had a direct impact on their children's emotional development. Key outcomes mentioned were secure attachment, emotional regulation, and self-esteem. One father explained, “I think being involved helps my son feel

secure. He knows that no matter what happens, I’ll be there for him.” Many fathers expressed that their children demonstrated increased confidence and emotional resilience due to their emotional support. Another participant shared, “My daughter is very confident when interacting with others. I think she learned it from the way we support her emotionally at home.”

The fathers also noted significant behavioral changes in their children as a result of their involvement. These included improved academic performance, better peer relationships, and enhanced self-control. One father observed, “I see a difference in my son’s behavior; he’s more focused in school, and he’s got great friends. I think spending quality time with him helps him develop good habits.” Some fathers also reported positive changes in their children's social skills, highlighting the importance of paternal involvement in shaping healthy peer relationships. As one father stated, “My daughter has learned to manage her emotions better, and that’s made her social interactions more positive.”

Fathers identified that their involvement played a role in enhancing their children’s cognitive abilities, such as problem-solving skills and creativity. Several fathers mentioned engaging in activities like puzzles or helping with homework to stimulate cognitive growth. As one father explained, “I try to encourage problem-solving during our playtime. We do puzzles together, and I ask him questions to get him thinking critically.” Additionally, fathers believed their children’s creativity was fostered by their involvement in various creative activities. One father remarked, “I always make time for drawing, building things, and imaginative play. I believe these activities help expand his creative thinking.”

3.3. *Barriers to Fathers' Involvement*

Fathers identified socio-economic factors as significant barriers to their involvement in child-rearing. Financial stress, long work hours, and limited resources often made it difficult for them to dedicate enough time to their children. One father explained, “I work long hours to provide for my family. Sometimes, when I get home, I’m too tired to interact with the kids as much as I’d like.” Another participant expressed frustration about the limited resources available for fathers seeking to engage more with their children. “It’s tough to afford extracurricular activities for my children. I wish I could give them more opportunities.”

Cultural and social norms also emerged as barriers to greater paternal involvement. Traditional gender roles often placed the primary responsibility for child-rearing on mothers, limiting fathers' perceived role. One father shared, "In our society, fathers are seen as the breadwinners, and mothers are expected to be the primary caregivers. Sometimes it feels like I'm breaking social norms by being so involved." Additionally, some fathers reported that cultural expectations of masculinity discouraged them from expressing vulnerability or emotional closeness with their children. "As a man, I sometimes feel like I shouldn't show too much emotion," one participant admitted.

Another significant barrier reported by fathers was a lack of support from their partners in sharing parenting responsibilities. Some fathers indicated that disagreements over parenting styles or unequal distribution of household tasks made it difficult to maintain active involvement. One father commented, "There are times when my wife and I don't agree on how to discipline the kids. This leads to tension, and it sometimes impacts how involved I can be." Another participant shared, "I feel like I do my best, but sometimes my partner expects me to do more around the house, which limits my time with the children."

Many fathers reported that their busy work schedules, travel, and lack of flexibility in their jobs made it challenging to dedicate quality time to their children. One father expressed, "My job requires me to travel a lot. When I'm home, I try to be involved, but it's difficult because I'm often away." Time constraints, particularly for fathers with high-demand careers, were seen as a major barrier to maintaining consistent involvement in child-rearing.

Several fathers acknowledged that a lack of parenting knowledge or guidance limited their ability to engage fully in child-rearing. Some fathers felt unprepared for the responsibilities of fatherhood. As one participant confessed, "I didn't have a lot of role models growing up. Sometimes, I just don't know if I'm doing things right." The lack of parenting resources or training was also identified as a barrier. Another father noted, "I think it would help if there were more programs or workshops for fathers to learn how to be more involved in their children's development."

Fathers also identified personal psychological factors such as stress, fatigue, and self-doubt as barriers to their involvement. One father admitted, "I'm often too stressed at work to fully engage with my children. Sometimes I feel guilty about not being more present." Some fathers expressed feelings of inadequacy in their parenting role. As one participant said, "There are times when I feel like I'm

not doing enough for my kids, especially when I see other fathers who seem to have more time for their children."

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The findings of this study provide important insights into the psychological outcomes of fathers' involvement in child-rearing, highlighting the complex interplay between paternal engagement, mental health, and children's emotional well-being. The results show that fathers who are more actively involved in their children's lives—emotionally, cognitively, and physically—tend to foster better mental health outcomes for their children, as evidenced by reduced levels of anxiety, depression, and behavioral difficulties. These results align with previous studies that emphasize the significance of paternal participation in child development (Craig et al., 2020; Wickersham et al., 2020). In particular, higher levels of paternal involvement were found to be associated with improved emotional regulation and lower incidences of internalizing behaviors in children. This confirms the hypothesis that a father's active role is critical in shaping the emotional and psychological landscape of a child's development.

One of the most striking findings was the impact of paternal mental health on child outcomes. Fathers who reported symptoms of depression, anxiety, or stress were more likely to have children exhibiting behavioral problems, emotional difficulties, and a higher risk of developing mental health issues themselves. This is consistent with the growing body of research demonstrating the negative consequences of paternal mental health problems for children (Dhillon et al., 2022; Fitzsimons & Villadsen, 2019). For example, Bisdounis (2020) found that when fathers experience mental health issues, they may be less emotionally available to their children, which can disrupt the formation of secure attachments and contribute to children's emotional instability. This aligns with the findings of this study, which highlight the detrimental effect of fathers' mental health on their children's well-being.

Moreover, the results underscore the importance of the quality, rather than the quantity, of paternal involvement. Fathers who were emotionally attuned to their children, even if not always physically present, were more likely to have children who reported higher levels of emotional resilience and self-esteem. This finding supports the conclusions of previous studies suggesting that the nature of father-child interactions—characterized by emotional support, understanding, and involvement—plays a more significant

role in children's psychological outcomes than the mere presence of the father (Craig et al., 2020; Jeong, 2024; Jones, 2024). Additionally, the research by Rajyaguru et al. (2021) showed that emotional support from fathers can mediate the negative impacts of other stressors on children's mental health, such as poverty or parental conflict, emphasizing the protective role of a positive father-child relationship (Rajyaguru et al., 2021).

The findings of this study also highlight the influence of cultural and societal factors on paternal involvement in child-rearing. In Tehran, fathers' roles are often defined within traditional cultural norms that prioritize financial provision and protection over emotional caregiving. However, this study revealed that fathers who had the opportunity and were encouraged to engage emotionally with their children had children who reported better mental health outcomes. This underscores the importance of challenging traditional gender roles and societal expectations regarding fatherhood. As suggested by Azuine and Singh (2019) and Setiawan et al. (2022), paternal involvement—particularly in non-Western societies—can have a unique impact when fathers are given greater autonomy and support to be emotionally engaged with their children (Azuine & Singh, 2019; Setiawan et al., 2022). These findings also support the idea that interventions aiming to encourage positive fatherhood practices can significantly improve the emotional and psychological well-being of both fathers and their children (Yogman & Eppel, 2021).

However, it is important to note that the results of this study also suggest that fathers' involvement is not always straightforward. In some cases, increased paternal involvement was associated with higher levels of paternal stress and anxiety, particularly when fathers felt pressure to balance work and family responsibilities. This finding is in line with the research of Philpott et al. (2022) and Wainwright (2023), which indicated that the burden of increased paternal responsibilities could lead to heightened mental health challenges for fathers, which, in turn, could negatively affect their interactions with their children (Philpott et al., 2022; Wainwright, 2023). This suggests that while paternal engagement is crucial, it is equally important to address the mental health needs of fathers to ensure that their involvement has a positive effect on their children.

The study also found that mothers' recognition and support of paternal involvement played a significant role in enhancing the father-child relationship. Fathers who felt supported by their partners in their parenting roles were

more likely to engage emotionally with their children, and their children tended to report better mental health outcomes. This is consistent with findings by Kara and Yildirim (2021) and Terui et al. (2021), who showed that when fathers perceive their involvement as supported by mothers, they are more likely to engage in nurturing behaviors, which contribute to the child's emotional security (Kara & Yildirim, 2021; Terui et al., 2021). Thus, a collaborative approach to parenting, where both partners are equally involved in child-rearing and support each other's mental health, appears to be beneficial for both fathers and children.

Additionally, our findings support the assertion that paternal involvement is associated with better developmental outcomes, not only in the early years but also in later childhood. As Craig et al. (2020) found, fathers' early emotional engagement can moderate the long-term relationship between paternal accessibility and childhood behavioral difficulties (Craig et al., 2020). In the same vein, our results suggest that children who experience positive, emotionally supportive relationships with their fathers are more likely to develop higher levels of self-esteem, resilience, and social competence. This reaffirms the importance of early paternal involvement in shaping a child's long-term psychological health and underscores the need for interventions aimed at fostering positive father-child interactions from the earliest stages of child development.

While this study provides valuable insights into the role of fathers in child-rearing, several limitations must be considered. First, the sample was limited to 24 participants from Tehran, which may not be fully representative of the broader Iranian population or other cultural contexts. As such, the findings may not be generalizable to other regions with different cultural or societal norms regarding fatherhood. Additionally, the reliance on self-reported data from fathers introduces the potential for bias, as fathers may overestimate their involvement or underreport symptoms of mental health distress. Future studies might consider incorporating observational methods or multiple informants (e.g., mothers, teachers) to gain a more comprehensive understanding of paternal involvement and its effects on children.

Second, while this study focused on the relationship between paternal involvement and child mental health, it did not explore the impact of other parental factors, such as maternal involvement or parental conflict, which could also influence child outcomes. Future research should consider these variables to better understand the complex dynamics

of parenting and their collective impact on children's emotional well-being. Furthermore, this study was cross-sectional, meaning that it provides a snapshot of the relationship between paternal involvement and child outcomes at one point in time. Longitudinal studies would be beneficial to examine the long-term effects of paternal involvement on children's psychological development.

Finally, the study did not investigate the impact of different types of paternal involvement (e.g., emotional, cognitive, physical) on child outcomes separately. It would be valuable for future research to disaggregate the various dimensions of paternal involvement to explore which specific forms of engagement are most strongly associated with positive child mental health outcomes.

Given the limitations of this study, several avenues for future research are suggested. First, as previously mentioned, a longitudinal approach would allow researchers to track the effects of paternal involvement on children over time and explore the long-term consequences of early father-child interactions on children's mental health and behavior. This would help to establish a clearer causal relationship between paternal involvement and child psychological outcomes, beyond the associations identified in this study.

Second, future studies should aim to include a larger and more diverse sample, drawn from different cultural contexts, to determine whether the findings of this study are consistent across various socio-cultural settings. Comparing fatherhood practices and child outcomes across cultures would provide valuable insights into the universal and culturally specific aspects of paternal involvement in child-rearing. Additionally, expanding the study to include mothers as well as fathers would enable researchers to examine how both parents contribute to children's psychological development, thereby offering a more holistic view of family dynamics.

Finally, research could explore the specific mechanisms through which paternal mental health influences children's outcomes. Investigating how factors such as paternal stress, depression, or anxiety impact father-child interactions at different developmental stages could help in designing more targeted interventions to support fathers' mental health, which in turn would benefit their children.

To translate the findings of this study into practice, it is essential to prioritize interventions that promote and support fathers' emotional involvement in child-rearing. Programs that educate fathers about the importance of their role in child development and provide them with the tools and resources to engage with their children effectively could be

beneficial. For example, parenting workshops and counseling services aimed at fathers could help improve emotional communication and caregiving skills, particularly in cultures where paternal involvement is traditionally limited to financial provision.

Furthermore, addressing paternal mental health should be an integral part of such interventions. As fathers' mental health significantly affects both their parenting and children's well-being, it is important to provide mental health support tailored to fathers. This could include stress management programs, counseling, and peer support groups that allow fathers to share experiences and coping strategies.

Lastly, policies that promote paternal leave and flexible work arrangements could encourage fathers to spend more time with their children, thus fostering healthier father-child relationships. By creating an environment where fathers feel supported in both their work and parenting roles, societies can help strengthen the family unit and improve children's mental health outcomes.

Authors' Contributions

Authors contributed equally to this article.

Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

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Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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Ethical Considerations

The study protocol adhered to the principles outlined in the Helsinki Declaration, which provides guidelines for ethical research involving human participants.

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