

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter will discuss about the background of the study, problem statement, research questions as well as the research objectives. Other than that, the significance of the study, and the definition of the concept will also be discussed in this chapter. This chapter briefly focuses on explaining the purpose of this research through the provided subtopics.

1.2 Background of Study

According to studies conducted by Allen & Doherty, 1996, Bunting, 2005, and Speake, Cameron, & Gilroy (1997), young fathers frequently see service providers and social institutions as not only unsupportive but also genuine barriers to parental engagement. For young fathers, being involved with their kids can assist foster their psychological growth, boost their self-esteem, and improve the father-child bond (Foster, 2004; Glickman, 2004).

Younger fathers are less likely than older fathers to report early experience to parental separation or divorce and domestic violence which reduces their exposure to positive paternal role models (Tan & Quinlivan, 2006). It is crucial to consider how social and historical conditions have shaped recent history in order to better comprehend how popular and academic perceptions of children, families and parenting have evolved. Both popular and academic conceptualizations of fathers, mothers and families are being forced to alter as a result of social developments. The colonial father, the

distant breadwinner, the modern involved father and the father as coparent have all been stages in the growth of father ideals (Pleck & Pleck, 1997).

Men's involvement with their children has changed more during the last few decades. Many fathers today go beyond merely providing for their families through "breadwinning" (Milkie, Raley, & Bianchi, 2009; Yeung, Sandberg, Davis-Kean, & Hofferth, 2001). Instead, they actively nurture and care for their children. Growth curve slopes which are utilized as indications of development over the first five years of a child's life revealed changes in parenting. The above-mentioned child outcomes were correlated with both early parenting at 14 months and changes in parenting throughout time.

According to Lamb (1981), many babies establish bonds to their fathers around the third quarter of the first year, especially if the father spends a lot of time with them. Lamb also observes that mothers and fathers react to their offspring in various ways. Fathers are more likely than mothers to provide playful physical stimulation and to start unusual or unpredictable games that infants frequently enjoy while mothers are more likely than fathers to hold their babies to soothe them, play traditional games and take care of their needs (Lamb, 1981).

Based to research on young fathers, young men tend to become fathers at a little later age (between 18 and 19 years) than young women do (Burghes et al., 1997). Whether or not they reside with the mothers of their children, teenage fathers have reported experiencing similar parenting challenges such as poor living conditions, unemployment and being dependent on government support (Lalond, 1995). They have also reported receiving little to no help or encouragement as they learn to adapt to their new roles as fathers. A more recent study found that "men were mostly ignored, excluded or made uncomfortable by services despite their desire for information, advice

and inclusion" (Quinton et al., 2002, p. 3), and that there was "a striking lack of support from health services for young men preparing for fatherhood."

1.3 Problem Statement

Because most children continue to live with their mothers after parental separation (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012), these statistics suggest that children will be involved with a variety of different "father figures" in their lives including resident biological fathers, non-resident biological fathers and mothers' new married or cohabiting partners (from here on referred to as resident social fathers). Very little is known about the role of fathers in child injury risk and scholars have identified this area as a major gap in the research (Morrongiello & Schwebel, 2008). Fathers can be involved with children in many different ways.

Three dimensions of father involvement: (a) fathers' residential status vs children, (b) fathers' engagement with children in various activities and (c) the degree to which fathers cooperate in parenting practices with mothers. Below, we describe the mechanisms through which each of these dimensions of involvement could affect child injuries and suggest how effects could differ by fathers' residential status, biological link to the child and the child's stage of development.

In recent years mothers have been finding themselves overwhelmed by the need to balance work and maternal duties. Father involvement in childcare has been related to a decrease in mother's burden in childcare. This association is influenced by multiple aspects, such as the way parents share parenting perspectives and views about child rearing, coparenting. Nevertheless, the mediating role of coparenting on the association between father involvement and maternal stress has been overlooked (Dora d'Orsi, Manuela Verissimo and Eva Dinniz, 2023).

Impact of co-parenting relationships: the quality of the relationship between the young father and the child's mother significantly influences their involvement in parenting. Further exploration of the dynamics of co-parenting and its effects on young fathers' engagement is necessary. Previous studies have stated a lot about a young mother and their involvement compared to a young father, which is actually the role of the father is very important in the child development. Father is an important individual in the formation of a family. However, social studies related to fathers in Malaysia are very less compared to social studies related to other entities in a family. The search results based on the last 5 years of research show that most social studies prioritize parents in general and children as the main subjects of research. Among them, studies about the role of fathers in child and family health (Michael W. Yogman and Amelia M. Eppel, 2022). The role of the father is also important in the development of a family, especially in the development of children.

Therefore, the present study seeks to explore the feeling of the young fathers about fatherhood experience. This study also attempts to explore how the young fathers acquire the knowledge about their child development and what the changes of young fathers during the first 5 years of fatherhood period.

1.4 Research Questions

There are several research questions that will be discussed and answered by the researcher in this study:

- i. What are the feelings of the young fathers about the fatherhood experience?
- ii. How the young fathers acquire knowledge about their child's development?
- iii. What are the changes of young fathers during the first five years of the fatherhood journey?

1.5 Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

- i. To understand the feelings of young fathers about fatherhood experiences.
- ii. To identify how young fathers acquired knowledge about their child's development.
- iii. To understand the changes of young fathers during the first five years of the fatherhood journey.

1.6 Significance of Study

1.6.1 Students

The result of this study can help the higher institution's students to understand and increase their knowledge about the parental roles and involvement especially father figures. This study helps the students to understand more about the roles of the fathers and how important it is. It will help the male students to prepare themselves as a future young father about the roles of father and how to be a good future father for their children. In addition, they can compare the differences of their fathers of fatherhood period with nowadays fathers of fatherhood period which is more as a coparent with the mothers.

1.6.2 Counsellor

This study also is expected to provide a guide and reference to counsellors. For the counsellor, the result of the study will help them be more aware about the young father roles and involvement with their child compare to young mothers. It is because the young fathers need support from the professional people like a counselor, doctor or others to increase their knowledge about their roles as the young fathers through the

program that the counselors will organize like parenting program that focused on young fathers. The program also helps the young fathers to share their feelings and experience between each other which is more open and acceptable.

1.6.3 Parents and Guardian

The researcher believes that this study will give benefit to the young fathers in Malaysian because as we know mostly vandalisme problem happen among Malay children because of their family environment and half of them because of the absent of the father figure. The researcher wants to give knowledge and awareness to the young fathers out there to change the style of parenting in Malay group which is both father and mother take part in the development of the child. As we know, our tradition mostly just mother involve in development of child which is father give in financial support and leadership but not have good relationship with the children. The father should have awareness if they not involve in children development, so that effected their children adulthood in future. The reason researcher focused on professional group as a participant because if wants to educate others, it needs to start from the educated group to give awareness and have trust to influence others group of fathers.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

This study seeks to understand the feeling of the young fathers about fatherhood experience, to identify how young fathers acquire the knowledge about their child development and to understand the changes of young fathers during the first five years of fatherhood period. This study involved the young fathers as a participant of the research. In completing this research, there were some problems faced by the researcher.

The researcher has listed the limitations of the study based on several factors.

One of the limitations was time management. The available time was a limitation of this study because of the need to focus more on one particular topic. The limitation of this study because of the time to set with the participant that available with the researcher. Another limitation was the participants. The first requirement to be selected as the participant of the present research was that they must have some experience in the first five years of fatherhood as a young father. The participants of this research are young fathers among the professional group.

In terms of finding participants, the researcher has faced some difficulties in approaching participants due to the participant's willingness to be interviewed and the characteristics of the participants that the researcher needs to find which are the participants is the young father among the professional group while in Malaysia bit difficult to find the young fathers among the professional group that had experience on fatherhood period. Though all participants gave full cooperation and the researcher was able to complete the interviews successfully.

Last but not least, the limitation of the present research was the use of interviews where the data had to be analyzed using thematic analysis. This part of the research took a long time to complete due to the researcher's lack of experience with qualitative research. Moreover, the researcher did not have many published materials as reference especially in finding the latest journal articles and other resources regarding the topic that was being studied in Malaysia.

1.8 Conceptual Framework

Based on this study, the researcher wants to understand the experience of young fathers on their first five years of fatherhood period among the professional group. This study also wants to explore the changes happen in the young father's life after the child

had giving birth. The researcher used the family life cycle to understand the transition of the young fathers whereas from single, couple and couple with one child. Every stage has the task that the individual needs to do. The emotional and intellectual stages you pass through from childhood to your retirement years as a member of a family are called the family life cycle. In each stage, you face challenges in your family life that allow you to build or gain new skills.

The family life cycle refers to the series of stages that a typical family goes through as it evolves and changes over time. Each stage is characterized by distinct challenges, tasks and developmental milestones that the family and its individual members encounter. It is essential to note that the family life cycle can across cultures and individuals, and not all families follow a linear progression through these stages. Family life cycle was also used as an independent variable by Cox (1975) with length of marriage in explaining the process of adjustment in family purchase decision-making.

The family life cycle consists of leaving home: single young adults, joining of families through partnership, families with young children, families with adolescents, launching children & moving on and families in later life. All of us will go through all the six stages and every stage build different identity of the individuals.

Table 1.1: Stages of Family Life Cycle

Family Life Cycle Stages	Major Task	Second-order Changes in Family Status Required to Proceed Developmentally
Leaving home: single young adults	Disconnect & reconnect with one's family while being own person	Differentiation of self in relation to family of origin Development of intimate peer relationships.
Joining of families through partnership	Adjustment & adaptation	Formation of partner system. Realignment with family & friends to include partner.
Families with young children	Accepting new members into the system	Adjusting system to make space for children. Joining in child rearing & realignment with family.
Families with adolescents	Flexing boundaries for children's independence & grandparent's frailties	Shifting of relationships for adolescent to move on. Refocus on midlife career issues. Shift towards caring for elders.
Launching children & moving on	Accepting exits from & entries to family system	Renegotiation of partnership as dyad. Realignment of relationship. Dealing with disability & death.
Families in later life	Accepting shifting generational roles	Maintaining functioning while facing senescence. Support for more central role of middle generation. Dealing with loss.

1.9 Definiton of Terms

1.9.1 Fatherhood

Fatherhood represents a significant developmental turning point for men. The theory behind the intricacy of fatherhood as a phenomenon is not fully developed. The process of being a father involves being exposed to it early, "switching on" to it when their children are born, and activating both their "hearts" and "heads" as they go. As fatherhood became more "in" new attempts were made to highlight the unique parental contributions offered by men (Biddulph, 1997).

Parenthood is a major life transition that can result in significant and extensive change (Jordan, 2007, Palkovitz, Copes & Woolfolk, 2001). Men and women do not adjust to motherhood in the same way despite doing so at the same time (Watson, Wetzel, Bader & Yves, 1995). Jordan (2007) says that in order to enhance father-friendly practice, anyone working with reproductive families has to have a deep awareness of men's unique experiences. many experiences and roles that men might perform connected to parenthood. Roles and functions are discussed in order to develop a theoretical foundation for the idea and practice of fatherhood.

1.9.2 Professional Group

The number of ethics instruments at the disposal of professionals, among them ethics committees, ethics rounds (interdisciplinary meetings in which ethical aspects of practice/cases are discussed) and ethical codes. In addition, ethical decision making and in the actual use of these instruments (Oddi & Cassidy 1990, Prevos & van der Arend 1994, Redman 1996, Dierckx de Casterle´ et al. 2002).

Out of these ethic instruments, ethical codes, in particular are part of a long tradition. role ethical codes played in the so-called 'professional phase' and how this function changed under the pressures of increased professionalization. The use of ethical codes can be seen as emblematic of a specific phase in history. During the 'professional' phase, classic professions such as medicine and law were marked by their particular use of ethics codes. Codes acted as a means of self-assertion for the professions, and served as both an expression of identity and a means of self-regulation.

1.9.3 Young Father

A significant component in the study of father engagement, particularly in the setting of perilous conditions, is the father's young age at the time of the birth of the first child (Furstenberg & Weiss, 2000). Young fathers, according to Erikson (1963), face many difficulties, including the simultaneous development of closeness, identity, and generativity. They become fathers at a critical juncture in their lives when they are both developing their identities and frequently just starting a romantic engagement. They are forced into a scenario where they must deal with all three changes at once by the birth of a child (Quéniart, 2002; Rhoden & Robinson, 1997). According to Belsky, the young age of a parent can negatively affect the level of sensitivity to the needs of the child and can therefore have a negative impact on the child's emotional security, autonomy, social competence, and intellectual achievement.

1.10 Conclusion

In conclusion, the chapter has discussed about the background of the study and then problem statement. Then, the research questions and research objectives also have been stated clearly before. The researcher also has mentioned about the significance of the study and definition of concepts in which the key words for the title of this study were highlighted again. Hopefully, the explanations in this chapter helps others to understand this study.