



The Drivers of Father's Involvement in Caregiving of Children with Disability: a Qualitative Study in India

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Abstract

The involvement of fathers in the caregiving of children with disabilities has been demonstrated to be important for their well-being and development. However, there is a lack of research on the experiences of fathers raising children with disabilities, especially in India, where mothers are typically the primary caregivers. In India, fatherhood is also influenced by various factors, such as social norms and cultural determinants. This study aims to explore the drivers of fathers' involvement in taking care of children with a disability in India based on their lived experiences. In this qualitative study, semistructured interviews were conducted by project workers in the community from seven non-governmental organisations in India with supervision from a Melbourne-based research team. The participants are 47 fathers and 11 mothers who come from eight sites spanning four Indian states. With the use of the constructivist paradigm, the data was analysed using inductive interpretative analysis with the aid of NVivo 14 software. The finding shows that the roles of fathers and the urge to be involved depend on their mindset and emotions. This is influenced by the spatial dimension (time and opportunity), the relationship dimension (trust and connection), and the capability dimension (skill and knowledge). Understanding the roles and driving forces that influence paternal involvement is critical for identifying areas that require improvement in caregiving practices, programmes, and policies.

Key words: Caregiver, Children, Disability, Father, Parenting

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