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**“Fathers, Sons, and Daughters:  
Differential Paternal Involvement in Rearing Children of Javanese Family”**

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**Abstract**

*The research conducted in Indonesia at Semarang, Surakarta and Yogyakarta. The research aim to knowing the difference of fathers' involvement in rearing their children of Javanese Family between sons and daughters, 107 fathers 30-40 years old were studied. The conception of fathers' involvement is multidimensional considering the knowledge to cultural awareness. The cultural background shaping norm beliefs by fathers' and in nursing context, finally it will influence fathers' behavior. In this research, the fathers' involvement in rearing measured by scale, there are: time quantity obtained by father, and quality on how far fathers' conscious and realize his role as father which is categorized in several children nursing dimensions: engagement, availability, and responsibility. The hypothesis that used is t-test. The result of Levene's test showed that  $F=11.012$  and  $p=0.001(p<0.05)$  which means that variants of fathers' involvement in rearing their sons and daughters are difference. Finally, the hypothesis stated before that there are differences of involvements level between father in rearing daughters and sons are accepted. Fathers' involvements in rearing daughters are higher compared to sons. The data result is in line with the theoretical studies in Javanese family, father educate their daughters and sons in different ways.*

**Keywords:** fathers' involvement, children sex preference.

**Introduction**

The research aim is a preliminary assumption test to show that fathers involvement in rearing their children between male and female are different.

A research, that assessing father involvement in rearing is rare nowadays. The research is prone to how the parents rearing role pattern influence especially mother in child developmental stage. The research about father involvement in rearing all this time are limited on how much time spent with or the difference of father and mother rearing style (Belsky, Giltrap & Rovine; McBride & Mills; Parke; in Woodsworth, Belsky, & Crnic, 1996). The research result showed father spent most of the time in fundamental maintenance (for example feeding and bathing their children).

In last recent years, the father involvement in Indonesian family getting more attention. The willingness of father's involvement in parenting or became mothers' partner influence by cultural background. Cultural background will establish the value of which believed by father and ultimately will affect fathers behavior in parenting contexts. One of culture in Indonesia is Javanese Culture. Koentjaraningrat (Rachim & Nashori, 2007) stated that community or Javanese ethnic are the largest ethnic group in Indonesia and the total up more than a half Indonesian citizens. On the Java community there is Javanese cultural values that serve as behavior guidelines. Hariyono (1993) stated that there is a value in Java community about parenting. Javanese cultures tend to be paternalistic family where the father as figure of power and the responsibility of nurturing becomes mothers'.

The fathers' involvement in rearing cannot separate, no matter how fathers' interpret the children presence in the family. Anthony and Benedeck (1970) stated that father had the child presence satisfaction based on gender.

Similarly, in Javanese family, while the child-gender is men, will carry some satisfaction and pride for fathers'. The condition should bring the willingness to engage positively in rearing his boy. Realities do not indicate so, the condition does not guarantee that the father close to his son. In some cases, fathers are emotionally closer to their daughter. This was possible because of the expectations and demands placed on his son are greater.

### **Father Involvement in Rearing**

While examined from science to the cultural consciousness point of view, father involvement is multidimensional. Cultural concepts of father involvement has been changed time to time, moreover, as we know that most of people knows "parenting" or rearing always close to maternal theory and research (Cabrera, Tamis-LeMonda, Lamb, & Boller, 1999).

Greene, Halle, LeMenestrel, and Moore (2001) explained father involvement in two ways, first, the father presence or absence, and realize his role and do the role as a good father. The researcher such as Lamb, Pleck, Cahrnov and Levine (Cabrera et.al, 1999) proposed a model of father involvement consisting of three dimensions:

1. Engagement, is how far the fathers' direct contact with children and their feedback in parenting contexts, play and have fun (the warmth, join activities, communications, teaching duties in accordance with age, moral guidance, religious guidance, build children social skills, bring up children autonomy, and discipline).
2. Availability, is father presence in child life, both physically and psychologically (the father presence at home for their children and family contact while not at home).
3. Responsibility, is how father serve and manage life resource according to the needs of children as well as organize and plan the child future provisioning, preserving, planning, maternal support, supervision, protection, infectious ritual, the conditioning routine, and connect children with the wider community.

Palkovitz (Cabrera et.al, 1999) stated the framework concept is built upon the Lamb concept of fathers' involvement. The framework concept of fathers' involvement by Palkovitz includes three domains that overlap one another that are cognitive, affective and behavioral. Marsiglio and Cohan (Hodgins, 2007) agree that research on the involvement of fathers in parenting needs to focus on behavioral, affective and cognitive aspects.

Father involvement in parenting is influenced by several factors direct or indirectly (Greene, et.al, 2001). The indirect factors that influence fathers' involvements in parenting are: socioeconomic, cultural, and ethnic. Meanwhile the direct factors influence fathers involvements

in parenting are: attitudes and beliefs, psychological well-being, timeliness becomes a father, children characteristic (sex, age and health status), co-parenting quality (relationship quality with his wife's role in father nurturing involvement), outside family support, economic and employment factors, stress or pressure of roles, the status of dual earner families.

### **Father Involvement in Parenting in Javanese Family from the Child Gender Point of View**

Father involvements in parenting depend on how father interpret the children presence. The child point of view who is believed by someone would affect everything related to the child, for instance the willingness or unwillingness to have children, the number of children expected, children treatment, and the parent expectations on the child (Arnold & Fawcett, 1957). Furthermore, Fawcett, Arnold, Bulatao, Buripakdi, Chung, Iritani, Lee, and Wu (1974) emphasizing on giving meaning universally to children, meanwhile the other way that need to emphasize is more specific according to culture, social group or individual.

Anthony and Benedeck (1970) stated that mother and father have satisfaction of having baby that based on child' gender, it will clearly be seen in father reaction. Most fathers showed satisfaction in the first child especially for baby boy compared to baby girl. Moreover, father needed more emotional adjustment if the first baby that born is a girl. The example above showed that gender preference means more to father. In Javanese family there are paradigm exist that father will proud for having a baby boy due to safety in economy point of view in the future. On contrary, parents that want to have a baby girl, expected psychologically and practically to help the housework. The baby that born with unwanted gender, could influence father in parenting and even trigger fathers' way of treating their child. Javanese fathers usually educate their son harder than their daughter. It possible happen due to father has more expectation to son to be a man.

### **Hypothesis**

Based on statement above, researcher formulate hypothesis as follows: there are differentiation of father involvement in parenting the boy and girl.

### **Research Method**

#### **Variable Identification**

Independent variable is father involvement in parenting, defined from quantity in time spent and quality on how good father realize and do their role as father that categorized in some rearing dimension: engagement, availability, and responsibility. Researcher ask father to evaluate about what they were did during the last 12 months. Father asked to give response 1-5, 1 means "never", 2 means "rare", 3 means "sometimes", 4 means "often", 5 means "always". Meanwhile, the dependent variable is gender, boy and girl.

#### **Research Subject**

The research did in Semarang, Surabaya, Surakarta and Yogyakarta. It based on several considerations that there are Javanese people on the area. Research subjects are 107 fathers, the range of age 30-40 years old and having children 4-6 years old. Father are Javanese, active using Javanese language and eat Javanese food.

### Test Scale Result

Based on statistical result the Cronbach Alpha is 0.925 far from 0.6 showed reliability and father involvement in rearing are high. The validity test showed 59 item valid from 69 item, 10 items are failed by 0.28 in differentiate border.

The research using three categories for each research variable, there are low, middle, and high. The categorization based on assumption that score distributed normally (Azwar, 2002).

**Table.1**

**The categorization of father involvement in parenting**

Low	Middle	High
0	43	64

**137.67**

**216.33**

Based on the table above could be said that father involvement in rearing their children on Javanese family is in the high category, on the above range 216.33 are 64 people, 59.81% from the whole subject 107.

### Result

The hypothesis test shows that there are differentiation between the father involvement degree in rearing their boy and girl. The hypothesis test proves by t-test. The Levene's Test showed that  $F=11.012$  and  $p=0,001$  ( $p<0.05$ ) that means that varians population of father involvement variation between boy and girl are different. Furthermore, the result of t-test showed that  $t=-4,918$  and  $p=0.000$  ( $p<0.05$ ) and if compare with t table =  $t > t$  table, could be conclude that the result of the data is significant, means there are differentiation of father involvement in rearing their boy and girl. Could be concluding that there are differentiation of father involvement in rearing between boy and girl are accepted.

### Discussion

The hypothesis test showed that there are differentiation between father involvement in rearing boy and girl. The father involvement average in his daughter rearing is higher 231.72 compared with the average of father involvement in rearing boy 210.98, the father involvement in rearing his son and daughter are different. Father more involve in the rearing his daughter compared with son, but the difference are not too far. The things are suitable with the theoretical investigation that in Javanese family, father rear their son and daughter in different way. On several cases, father is closer to their daughter due to emotionally involve compared with their son.

The individual behavior be based on their values they convinced, Javanese father tend to behave based on Javanese values so. The stern values that convinced could evaluate father behave due to value is the firm believes that hold socially and personally (Rokeach, 1968). The Javanese culture values that put forward the gender as basic in parenting, makes boy and girl differently demand by father.

A boy, for whole time in their early age has been prepared psychologically, to be able to understand the values even he could not know the meaning and concept yet. In the early age, parents spoiled them until the early childhood. On the first year after he born, the relation between father and his boy are close. Slowly but sure, in line with his grown up, father stated to strive his boy become well mannered, quietly, and become an obedient person.

The crucial part of this period is the fathers' role shifting, from warmth friend become an honorable person. As a boy, father strive them to enter the awkward restrain and respect system in the relationship between them that has been lasted since 5 years old. In Javanese family, the father rearing more showed to their son. A conclusion could be drawing that how father involve in rearing his child are different between boy and girl especially while their children are on the offspring stage.

Snow, Jacklyn, and Maccoby (1983) research showed that father interaction with their pre-school children influenced by gender and how father interact with are started while their children 1 years old.

Based on the analysis result, the father involvement on rearing included in high rank. It possibly happened recently due to father has been realized their role as father, not only as a person who looking for family necessity only. The paternal values not only absolutely convinced by father nowadays. Father, on the present day, showed more involvement and their role in parenting. Beside, father that involved as the research subject are 30-40 years old, the age range is a reproductive and generative, means that it periods of produce a new generation and develop the generation potency or nurturing their children (Santrock, 2002). At the age range, in addition to his work involved with, father also involved in more intimate parenting than before (Papalia et.al, 2003).

As a parents, especially father, on the age range 30-40 years old had different circumstances and fathers want to rise their child in different way from they used to. Father started to learn their mistakes that father are having distance to their children. Alwin stated that it did due to prepared their child in social life nowadays (Grusec & Kuczynsky, 1997). It strengthen with the result of Breterton, Biringen, and Ridgeway research (Grusec & Kuczynsky, 1997) that parents try to rise their child using different methods and values they used to.

The highly father involvement is possibly happened due to the father educational background. The additional test showed that there is significant differentiation of father involvement in rearing based on father educational background. The result of Levene's test showed  $F = 2.598$  and  $p=0,110$  ( $p>0.05$ ) means that the father involvement variant on rearing their child with high school background are identically with the variant of scholar background. Next, t-test using equal variant assumption, the result showed  $t=-7.454$  and  $p=0.000$  ( $p<0.05$ ). It means that the father involvement with high school and scholar background are different. Father with scholar background are more actively involved in rearing if it seen from the average 238,32 highly than father with high school background with average 209.67. It happened due to the Nettle research (2008) that father involvements are influence by their educational background. It support by Falcetto (2008) that showed father educational background and family earning are influencing father involvement. Education is related to someone knowledge, especially father. Through education background they have, father develops their knowledge and will think rationally in determine their behavior and act the things related to rearing their children.

Next, the highly father involvement allegedly influence by dual earner phenomena which mother not stay at home anymore and fully take care of the house working. In this era, mom is also worked. It demands the task division and cooperation in parenting. Researcher trying to prove that the mother that work will raise father involvement in parenting. The additional test shows that there is significant difference of father involvement in parenting based on mother status, career woman or housewife. The result of Levene's test show  $F=1.822$  and  $p=0.180$  ( $p>0.05$ ) means that father involvement variant in parenting as same as mother status, as a career woman or housewife. Next, t-test using equal variant assumption, the result showed  $t=5.115$  and

$p=0.000$  ( $p<0.05$ ). It means father involvement while mother as a career woman in parenting and while his wife is a housewife is different. The father involvement in rearing while his wife as career woman higher than the average 231.47 if it compare with father involvement while his wife as a housewife is 219.02. It shows that while mother as a career woman, then father are involved more in rearing his child. Ishii-Kuntz research (on DeGenova & Rice, 2005) showed that father proportionally more active involved while mother are working but the involvement not significantly different.

### **Research Limitation**

The research has limitation only rely on the father self report and not fully use mother perspective or other family member about how far father involvement in rearing. It needed because one of ways to get data accuracy about father involvement in rearing is others data especially mother and other family members. Besides, there are further intense observation on father and child in their daily life and child on school.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the statements before, researcher concludes there are difference of father involvement in rearing boy and girl. The father involvement level of nurturing their girl is higher than boy. Additional analysis showed that the father involvement in Javanese family in the research tend to categorized in higher level. It allegedly influenced by the fathers' age, educational background, and mothers' employment status.

### **Suggestion**

Researcher hopefully considers other factor that influences father involvement in Javanese families setting. The factor are, indirect factor such as socioeconomic factor and context of father rearing. The direct factor, such as, behave and believe, psychological wellbeing, child characteristic (age and child health), co-parenting quality, outside family support, economical factor and occupational factor, also stress or role pressure.

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