

SITUATION ANALYSIS:



MALE ENGAGEMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

Plan International Jordan

2021-2022

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This document is presented to all institutions working in the field of early childhood, for a better comprehensive ECD services that targets both caregivers and children themselves.

2. ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ARC HEPPP – Arab Resources Collective (Health, Education, Protection, Parenting, Program)

ECD – Early Childhood Development

ECDE – Early Childhood Development Education

FSBS- First Steps’ Big Step

HI – Humanity and Inclusion

HRD – Human Resources Development

IRC – International Rescue Committee

LMIC – Low- and middle-income countries

MoH – Ministry of Health

NCFA – National Council of Family Affairs

PIJO – Plan International Jordan

QRTA – Queen Rania Teacher Academy

RHAS – Royal Health Awareness Society

UNICEF – The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The current report aimed to examine the reality of male engagement in Early Childhood Development ECD in Jordan, and examined four main thematic areas: power and privileges, ECD aspects, parenting programs, and policies with respect to the ecological framework.

To achieve the main objective of the report, the complementary approach was followed in both quantitative and qualitative terms; the report included a sample of 1,282 caregivers and early childhood providers in Jordan from Jordan's three regions (North, Central, South). The report methods included four various tools, the first of which was the previous literature review, survey tool targeting male and female caregivers having children from birth to the age of nine, focus groups discussion across six groups of health centers staff, community members, and organizations representatives. In-depth key informants' interviews with 22 stakeholders. after verifying its sincerity and variability, data was collected from September to October 2021.

The report showed several results in its four main thematic areas; (power and privileges, ECD aspects, parenting programs, and policies), whereas one of the most important findings was the low rate of husbands' assistance to their wives in house chores from the wives' point of view. Most of the parents expressed that child's health care lies under the female caregiver responsibilities. As for the ECD aspects, the findings concluded that the male caregiver cannot take responsibility for his children alone by 62% from the point of view of parents alike. Regarding the parenting programs, the results confirmed that parents are not obliged to attend parenting sessions such as family planning, ECD and maternal and child health from the point of view of both parents by about 76%. Finally, in the policy pillar, the report found that those primarily responsible for parents' roles and understanding of their children's development are the family, and then the responsibility comes on the health and education sectors, followed by the government, finally, 50% of respondents reported that there were no policies and laws in Jordan that supported the father to help him raise his children.

The report made a number of recommendations, the most important of which is activating the holding of periodic courses for parents and those who are about to get married, containing training sessions to follow up on the growth and development of the child during the early childhood stage. Involving the husband during pregnancy in maternal and child services through his participation in his wife's medical visits, and directing the attention of local governmental and private institutions to provide facilities to employee fathers to increase their participation in the development and care of their children.

Key words: Early Childhood Development, Parenting programs, male engagement, Early childhood stage, power and privilege, policies, gender-based norms, caregivers.

4. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

4.1. Country background

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is a constitutional monarchy with a bicameral legislature. Jordan is the world's second most water-scarce country, with a pressured economy and infrastructure resources under strain. Given its limited natural and economic resources, the country is highly dependent on human resource development. Jordan is considered a High Development Country, ranking 95 out of 189 countries with an HDI value of 0.735 (UNDP, 2017b). It has a total population of around 10.5 million ¹(Worldmeters, 2022) of which 47.1 percent are female and 52.9 percent are male (DOS). The demographics of the country are comprised of a high percentage of young people, with 34.3 percent of the population being under the age of 15 ²(Jordan Times, 2021). The percentage of boys and girls is almost equal. Furthermore, Jordan is a highly urbanized country with 90.3% of the population residing in urban areas (DOS, 2018).

Jordan is one of the countries most affected by the Syrian crisis, with the second highest share of refugees compared to its population in the world: 89 refugees per 1,000 inhabitants (UNHCR, 2018). The majority of refugees registered by UNHCR are Syrians, followed by Iraqis, Yemenis, Sudanese, Somalis, and others.

Since the beginning of the crisis in 2012, Jordan has received over 1.4 million registered Syrian refugees. 81 percent are currently residing outside of camps, mainly in Amman and urban areas in the north of the country (JRP, 2019; UNHCR, 2018). However, there are still around 29% of Syrian refugees residing in camps (Zaatri, Azraq, and Emirati-Jordanian Camps).

4.1.1. Early Childhood in Jordan

Societies across the globe have attached great importance to early childhood, because of its significant impact on a person's development. On the international level, Jordan has ratified numerous international conventions and protocols pertaining to the rights of children, adolescents and youth, including girls and women (e.g., the UNCRC (1991), ICERD (1974), ICESCR (1975), ICCPR (1975), CEDAW (1992), CAT (1991), as well as other frameworks related to ILO, UNESCO, and the Geneva conventions).

Childhood consists of two sub-stages, the first of which is referred to as early childhood. Its age range varies from one source to another, but according to the Jordanian National Strategy for Early Childhood Development, early childhood spans across the first day after birth until the age of 9. The second sub-stage of childhood depends on the cognitive and developmental results of the previous one and is known as late childhood, which begins after the child reaches the age of nine or ten and lasts until the age of eighteen.

¹ <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/jordan-population/>

² <https://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/percentage-children-aged-under-15-drop-%E2%80%94-hpc#:~:text=The%20percentage%20of%20children%20under%20the%20age%20of%2018%20in,23.8%20per%20cent%20in%202040.>

Since early childhood is the stage that has the greatest impact on a person's life, all societies have attached great importance, including the Jordanian society, which has allowed civil and local community organizations to work in the field of early childhood care and development.

Jordan's National Strategy for Early Childhood Development distinguishes between five subsequent stages of early childhood: pregnancy, from birth to under one year,, from one year to under four years, from four years to under six years, and from six years to under nine years of age. This definition of the scope of early childhood is consistent with Jordan's demographic statistics, most recently provided by the General Population and Housing Census of 2015 Its results showed that the number of children in the 0 to 4-years age group and those in the 5 to9-years age group were 1,070.299 and 1,143,948, respectively. ³ Children under the age of nine constitute 21.9% of the total population of the Kingdom. The rates of children under the age of nine in Jordan vary depending on the country's governorates , which are – ranked from the most populated to the least: Amman, Irbid, Zarqa, Mafraq, Balqa, Karak, Jerash, Madaba, Aqaba, Ajloun, Maan, and Tafileh.⁴

Globally, there is focus on the nurturing care framework components⁵ in order to develop the work on ECD. This framework encompasses the care that children's brains and bodies need to develop and grow, including responsive caregiving, practices to promote good health and attention, provision of opportunities for play and early learning, protection from violence, abuse, neglect, accidents and other sources of toxic stress. Hence, the five inter-related components of the nurturing care framework consist of:



Opportunities for early learning.



Good health.



Adequate nutrition.



Responsive caregiving.



Security and safety.

³ Department of Statistics, 2016, Population projections for individuals residing in the Kingdom for the period (2015-250), p. 17.

⁴ Ratrouf, Fawaz and Khitam Salem Al-Shinikat, 2019, Population Size and its Relationship to Association Registration and its Cumulative Number in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and its Governorates, Human Resources Development Journal for Studies and Research, Arab Democratic Center Germany - Berlin, Issue IV, April, pp. 136-158.

⁵ Extract from the Nurturing Care Framework Handbook

Jordan values early childhood development and works towards the improvement of childhood services through national strategies and action plans. The Human Resources Development Strategy 2016-2025, for example, aims to provide an overview of Education for Prosperity with a focus on all educational ages that early childhood consists of, including nursery school, kindergarten, and primary education. Furthermore, the Population and Family Health Mapping Document aims to provide recent estimates of demographic and basic health indicators in Jordan, notably by:

- Collecting data at the national level to enable the calculation of demographic indicators.
- Exploring the direct and indirect factors that determine childbearing levels and infant mortality.
- Measuring levels of knowledge and family planning practices.
- Obtaining data on child feeding practices, including breastfeeding, and assessing the nutritional status of children under five years of age.

In addition, many more studies were developed by the government and by numerous organizations working on ECD. Having such studies and documents allows for guidance in the advancement of ECD work. They are also beneficial to all donors, organizations, and stakeholders who are aiming to join the collective efforts for the improvement of national ECD services.

4.1.2. Why Male Engagement in ECD in Jordan

In recent years, the topic of male engagement in child rearing has gained a lot of attention because of its direct benefit to the immediate and long-term well-being and mental health of the child, including their social development, cognitive, and higher educational achievement outcomes. This ultimately results in them having better relationships with their peers, and it increases their self-esteem and life satisfaction.⁶

Focusing on male engagement can create systemic change if the work focuses on the ground practices concerning both men and women. Moreover, increasing community level engagement is key to achieving holistic systemic change, because working within the ecosystem and having all the levels of involvement (such as working with the right partners, working on evidence-based information, etc.) can all complement the final impact. On the community level, male engagement can enhance resource flow by establishing new funding streams which target the topic, strengthen relationships and connections, and create networks for collaborations to share the lessons learnt and use those to build the capacities of community leaders and organizations. In addition, looking into the services level of male engagement can increase individual and organizational capacity. It can also strengthen relationships to increase alignment among partners and stakeholders on the policy level.

Plan International and partners are adopting a gender transformative approach that focuses on tackling the root causes of gender inequality and exclusion and on reshaping unequal gender and power relations to realize girls' rights and equality between all children, young people and adults regardless of their gender or other identities. This approach puts the focus on challenging harmful attitudes and beliefs related to gender that limit the participation of men and women in caregiving and understanding their children's rights as well as their own rights.

⁶ Men Care (2015). op. cit.

Plan International Jordan is developing a document for male participation with a general objective of actively support parents and caregivers in being more responsive and empowering to raise children in a safe and enriching environment, where ECD services are integrated across different service providers/ sectors, and where it is made a national priority to involve men in early childhood development and care programs. It is therefore important to achieve the specific objectives:

- Identify the reasons that prevent men from participating, and develop various approaches to help them better engage with their children.
- Ensure the existence of programs that work with both men and women as equal partners, supporting each other in the development and care of their young children – those that follow more than one approach.
- Assess or understand the current level of male engagement in early childhood development
- Establish, in the long term, participatory education based on equality between boys and girls.
- Lobby for laws and policies that ensure fathers' participation in the upbringing of their children.

4.2. Project Background

Plan International's Global Strategy 2017-2022 frames our commitment to work with vulnerable children and especially girls, so they can learn, lead, decide and thrive. The strategy is formed around six 'Areas of Global Distinctiveness' - designed to transform the lives of 100 million girls globally-, one of which is Early Childhood Development (ECD). While the overarching goal of Plan International's ECD work will be to enable girls and boys from excluded groups to survive and thrive during early childhood, Plan International's agency-wide commitment to gender-transformative approaches means that ECD programming and influencing will also place particular emphasis on:

- Promoting equal opportunities for girls and boys to nurturing care, support and services that are essential for their early years' development;
- Ensuring that girls get a good and fair start to life – and encouraging gender-equal socialization processes;
- Influencing for improved conditions and social positions of women who are mothers and caregivers;
- Transforming the unequal gender relationships as well as the gender and social norms that underpin harmful or discriminatory practices. In this respect, a particular priority will be to support parents/primary caregivers in providing their young children gender-responsive, nurturing care.

Ensuring linkages with priorities under other Areas of Global Distinctiveness, ECD programs will focus on adolescent mothers as a sub-group of parents and caregivers.

Plan international is a global membership organization which has been working in Jordan since 2016, collaborating with national and international partners, to support the recovery and resilience of Syrian refugees and the Jordanian host population by providing Early Childhood Care and Development and integrated projects addressing education, child protection, gender-based violence, sexual and reproductive health rights, youth economic empowerment and women empowerment services in both host communities and refugee camps.

The First Steps' Big Step project is one of Plan International Jordan's interventions within the ECD sector. This project is funded by Bernard Van Leer Foundation and is a collaboration between five organizations, namely Plan International Jordan and the Netherlands, the Royal Health Awareness Society (RHAS), the National Council for Family Affairs (NCFA), and Ideas42, as well as key stakeholders including the Ministry of Health and the Arab Resources Collective (ARC).

Early childhood development creates a lasting impact on a child's future outcomes. After all, the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development that occurs during early childhood lays the foundation for a child's wellbeing and resilience, including how they form and maintain relationships.

Plan works to lobby, advocate, and build the capacity of governmental institutions to be recognized as national champions for ECD and lead a National ECD team. Working closely with MoH to set up parenting

programs within health centers will reach more parents and create more awareness on the importance of ECD.

Plan International believes that empowering communities to lead change can be achieved by developing participatory, evidence-based interventions that are specifically designed to target male caregivers, considering applicable interventions in the local context, flexibility of time and delivering modality (online, offline), and looking for subjects that they are interested in.

The First Steps' Big Step project aims to empower caregivers through parenting sessions, so that they can create a more enabling home environment that better responds to children's needs, without discrimination and away from violence. On top of that, early childhood development services are integrated through service providers in different sectors, including the health sector.

The parenting sessions are aimed at caregivers having children under the age of five and giving their children aged 3 to 5 years several appropriate activities that promote the development of children's skills within this age. Specialized parenting sessions are organized for influential individuals in the community.

After having received an appropriate training, the Ministry of Health staff implements the parenting sessions. In total, there are 11 awareness sessions that deal with several educational and awareness topics related to the upbringing and care of children in the first five years. The sessions target both female and male caregivers, and their implementation is face-to-face within the health centers or remotely through WhatsApp groups.

In general, throughout the projects and interactions with families across Jordan, it was witnessed that parenting involves mothers rather than fathers. Mothers take most of the responsibility when it comes to upbringing children, looking after their health, teaching, and even entertaining them, while fathers are considered to be the financial provider in most cases. Moreover, there is only a limited number of institutions working on male engagement interventions.

The "Male Engagement in ECD report" is drafted in collaboration with national and international entities across Jordan, in order to produce a national document that could be utilized across different programs and units. The first steps big step project team is involved, as well as Plan International Jordan's technical team, which consists of several specialists in education, ECD, gender and M&E, thus forming an internal committee.

On the other hand, a technical committee and a sub-committee were formed based on the technicalities needed to develop this document. For example, for the technical committee that includes the Royal Health Awareness Society (RHAS) for working directly with community's perspective, and the National Council for Family Affairs (NCFA) working on a national level perspective, while for the sub-committee, it consists of 5 members of the national ECD team who represent five local and international organizations working on different interventions including a training specialized institution (QRTF) and an academic facility (Hashemite university) to support the process of developing and revising the document. All tools

were modified and agreed upon by all committees (PIJO Internal, technical and sub committees). Once the tools were finalized, they were tested internally and approved. Surveys targeting parents with children under the age of 9 were inserted into KOBO application to ease online data collection.

4.2.1. Early childhood development

The term early childhood refers to the age stage from birth to the age of under nine years⁷, scholars have called it the formative period; At this stage, human intelligence is formed and begins to grow in an integrated, balanced manner that will achieve itself in the future. There is no doubt that the first years of a child's life are among the most interactive, learning, influencing and acquiring years, it is the ideal stage for instilling concepts, values, skills and behaviors, and this is not considered to be a downgrade of the importance of the following stages⁸; Rather, perhaps at that stage in which the child is characterized by a high ability to acquire, based on the next stages, investment in this age stage of human life has its impactful results in building the future of society and ensuring its healthy development. At all levels of economic, cognitive, social, psychological, and recreational; The child is the first building block of society and the most important one in establishing the sustainability of this building and its continuity. It is the primary means of instilling, establishing, developing and perpetuating a system of positive values in society, and shaping a healthy future free from violence, corruption and crimes, and success in building the future of society depends mainly on success in caring and nurturing for the child⁹.

In order to build the personality of the child in all its psychological, social, emotional and cognitive aspects and to meet his/her needs and desires, which qualifies the child to be a healthy person in harmony with himself/ herself and with the society, It is important to take care and pay attention to the early childhood stage, and work to provide all aspects that help to fulfill the role entrusted to it in the development of the child to the fullest. This was emphasized by the Senior Early Childhood Development Adviser / UNICEF, who pointed out that “we must act urgently to make investing in early childhood development a priority in every country in order to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Whereas, investing in ECD is a cost-effective way to stimulate mutual prosperity, promote inclusive economic growth, expand equal opportunities, and eradicate extreme poverty. For every dollar spent on ECD, the return on investment can be as high as Up to \$13”.¹⁰

The child at this stage has various developmental characteristics that develop continuously and rapidly, and these characteristics come under the framework of the general principles of child development, which include that growth is a process of total, continuous, regular and comprehensive change that moves in specific and interrelated directions. Each stage is affected by the stage that precedes it and affects the stage that follows. This process starts from conception and continues with the person for the rest of the

⁷ United Nations, 2005, Implementing Child Rights in Early Childhood, p. 4.

⁸ Mavidou, A., & Kakana, D. (2019). Differentiated instruction in practice: Curriculum adjustments in kindergarten. *Creative Education*, 10(3), 535-554.

⁹ Dulaimi, Abdul Razzaq, *Media and Children*, Amman: Dar Al Masirah, 2012

¹⁰ Early Childhood Development | Universal website (unicef.org)

life stages, each stage has different characteristics and developments from the other. Developmental characteristics can be defined as a series of successive forms of growth that are related to each other so that they form developmental episodes in the consecutive age stages. Each stage is affected positively or negatively by the stage that precedes it in all aspects of the child's physical development, mental and cognitive, psychological, emotional, and linguistic¹¹. In terms of his physical growth: at this stage the physical mass increases until it becomes 7 times more than the mass at born. As a result of the growth of the muscles and bones, the teeth grow at the beginning of the initial stage and fall out at the end, in addition to the development of the nervous system, until the child is able to walk, run, draw and respond to parents' directions. As for the development from the mental and cognitive side; The child begins to think, a one-way thinking, and the abilities of understanding, remembering and imagination emerge, and learns basic skills in reading, calculation, and writing, the child begins to gradually move from sensory thinking to theoretical thinking¹². On the part of social development; The child begins to communicate socially, and the ability to integrate into many social activities increases. As for the psychological and emotional development, the emotions at this stage are characterized by sharpness and imbalance, but the child begins to gradually develop the sense of independence from the parents and begins to rely on himself/ herself in discovering the new world¹³. Finally, with regard to the aspect of linguistic development; The child in this stage develops significantly and faster than it is in the rest of the stages in terms of acquiring new vocabulary and concepts.¹⁴

It is worth shedding light on the development of the child's brain development because of its significant impact on the child's development in early childhood, as the child's brain begins before birth to build neural connections for everything from breathing and sight to the ability to speak, think and logical reasoning. All the organs of the infant are fully developed after birth except for the brain¹⁵, which increases in size during the first three years of the child's life three times faster, until a child's brain size at the age of three reaches about 80% of an adult's brain¹⁶, the brain works hard during the first five years of a child's life to interconnect cells with each other, as a child's brain is 100 billion cells at birth. The most important of these cells are the ones that control the body's electrical neural circuits, which are located in the brain and control body functions, memory, and learning¹⁷. Brain development depends primarily on the interaction between genes and the external environment¹⁸; As 70% of what we are now is the product of the experiences we are exposed to in the environment, and its impact extends to controlling

¹¹ McAdams, D., Shiner, R. and. Tackett. J. (2019). Handbook of Personality Development. Guilford Press: New York.

¹² Mangal, S. (2019). Childhood and Growing Up. PHI Learning: Delhi. McAdams, D., Shiner, R. and. Tackett. J. (2019). Handbook of Personality Development. Guilford Press: New York.

¹³ Specht, J. (2017). Personality Development Across the Lifespan. Elsevier: Amsterdam.

¹⁴ McAdams, D., Shiner, R. and. Tackett. J. (2019). Handbook of Personality Development. Guilford Press: New York.

¹⁵ Perry, Bruce.(2011). Aggression and Violence: The Methodology of Experience. "Accessed August 25.

http://teacher.scholastic.com/professional/bruceperry/aggression_violence.htm

¹⁶ Gellens ,Suzanne. 2013.Building Brains: 600 Activity Ides for young Children. Readleaf Pres Zero to Three.2011."FAQ's on the Brain."www.zerotothree.org/child-development/braindevelopment/faqs-on-the-brain.html

¹⁷ Zero to Three.2011."FAQ's on the Brain."www.zerotothree.org/child-development/braindevelopment/faqs-on-the-brain.html

¹⁸ Goleman, D. (2006). Social Intelligence: The New Science of Human Relationships. New York: Bantam

the size of the brain, the number of neural tangles and their development, negatively or positively, and therefore the growth of the rest of the child's life stages depends on the extent to which the brain is affected by the surrounding experiences at this stage.

This stage plays a major role in the development of human capabilities and talents for the rest of the child's life stages. Human growth is linked to the family and the actual experiences to carry out and develop behaviors, meaning that the experiences of the child at this stage are the raw materials for human activities and experiences in the age stages that follow the childhood one¹⁹. Although the child is affected by the sum of the surrounding environmental experiences in the society, such as the parents, the family, the environment, and the policies that preserve or take away the child's rights. However, parents have a major role in shaping and shaping the child's personality, building knowledge and acquisitions, and forming attitudes and beliefs. They are the role model in acquiring behaviors and skills, and therefore most recent studies are directed to the report to which parents are affected and influenced by the child's development and care, and the direct impact of the child cannot be overlooked by the surrounding ecosystem such as the family and the external environment, and the resulting culture, ideas, customs and traditions, in addition to the set of policies and laws that direct the child and be affected by it, or those that address the surrounding environment and affect the child's growth and development as well.

Over the years, specifically since the signing of the International Child Rights Convention in 1991, Jordan has taken serious steps in developing child-friendly legislation and policies. These legislations are periodically subject to follow-up and amendment in line with developments related to children, such as the Family Protection Law, and the Family Violence Protection Law. The law on compulsory and free education, the free health insurance for children under the age of six law²⁰, and other legislation aimed at preserving and advocating for children's rights. Recently, the National Council for Family Affairs launched an updated draft of the 2019 Child Rights Bill, which was approved shortly before this year 2022²¹, and it came as a reflection of the Child Rights Convention, focusing on issues of interest to early childhood such as education, school dropout, expansion of kindergartens and health care centers, protection from violence and children's well-being and development.

¹⁹ Ben Omar, Samia, The Effect of Television Programs for Children on Family Upbringing, Master's Thesis, 2012.

²⁰ <http://www.mosd.gov.jo/ui/arabic>

²¹ <https://www.childrenofjordan.org>

4.2.2. Strategic thematic areas in male engagement

Despite the promising evidence, men's potential to contribute in positive ways as fathers and caregivers is not being fully realized. Upon reviewing the available literature in the field and to better understand the extent of male engagement and its relevant context in Jordan, this report will look at four key thematic areas: power and privilege, early childhood development aspects, parenting programs, and policies, and build questions around them. A special focus will be on the level of male engagement within each area, the level of confidence individuals has with engagement, and areas in which individuals can be more involved under each theme.

Power and Privilege

Throughout the world, there are still strong social and cultural norms that perpetuate power imbalances between men and women. While men usually have more agency than the women in their lives, men's decisions and behaviors are also profoundly shaped by rigid social and cultural expectations related to masculinity. Restrictive gender norms that are deeply engraved in most societies drive inequalities and define how men and women should behave and the expectations revolving around their roles. Men take on the roles of main breadwinner, decision maker, while women are the caretakers and bearers of the health and wellbeing responsibility. (Promundo, 2020)²²

Social statuses and behaviors are constructing that if are given meaning to, will cause attachments to be made and identities to be formed. The more important identities are to individuals, the more likely they are to influence behaviors. So, if men value their work and financial stability, they will drift towards spending less time with their families. Since gender norms are important structural factors that influence identity, norms that are linked to men and masculinity are expectations that rule their attitudes and practices across many social contexts. The level of adherence to these norms is a measure of the practices and engagement men share with child upbringing. (Petts et al., 2018)²³

The power men hold within families, and the lack of exposure of male caregivers actively engaged in childrearing, influence children from an early age to adopt certain behaviors such as having boys remain emotionally distant and refusing acts of vulnerability, while pushing for them to channel their conceived notion on masculinity. (Plan International & Promundo US, 2020)²⁴. A caregiver's history and childhood play a huge role as they feed into the upraising and wellbeing of children, therefore, researching this aspect will focus on identifying the reasons behind the lack of involvement due to the aforementioned, as well as help broaden the discussion about how gender norms affect both women and men and to better understand the complex ways that rigid gender norms and power relations burden our society, and to more effectively engage men and boys in reflections about inequalities and change.

²² Alemann, C., Garg, A. and Vlahovicova, K. (n.d.). The role of fathers in Parenting for gender equality. [online] Available at: https://promundoglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Parenting-Education_-the-role-of-fathers_-paper-060520-2-col.pdf.

²³ Petts, R.J., Shafer, K.M. and Essig, L. (2018). Does Adherence to Masculine Norms Shape Fathering Behavior? *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 80(3), pp.704–720.

²⁴ A Programming and Influencing Package. (n.d.). [online] Available at: https://plan-international.org/uploads/2021/12/glo-mens_engagement_ecd-io-final-eng-may21.pdf [Accessed 26 Apr. 2022].

This report will delve deep into sub branches of power and privilege, mainly the daily routines of family members, childhood upbringing, relationships between partners and how they impact and influence child upbringing, and lastly, how the surrounding environment impacts engagement. Report participants will be asked on their opinions on gender roles and how they are reflected on parenting roles, on decision making and childrearing involvement and the trust that comes with them, and on their parenting methods.

Early Childhood Development

While all early childhood development schemes and images portrayed by the mainstream media and in societies are targeted towards the female caregiver and parent, research in the field of male engagement in child upbringing has gone to prove how the extent of male engagement does in fact impact children in terms of their health, perception of the world, performance, and a myriad of other aspects; where the lack or limited engagement impacts negatively on children while the opposite is true for positive and involved engagement from males.

There are several proposed direct and indirect channels via which fathers positively influence child development, an example is how in stimulating conversation and caring relationships, and providing healthy meals all help in fostering child development and health, and directly contribute to improved child development outcomes such as cognitive, language, and socio-emotional skills. (Promundo, 2020)²⁵

This report will measure engagement by the extent of involvement in areas relating to health, education, and protection. This will be reflected in the tools, found in the methodology section, targeting the involvement and participation of male caregivers in the upbringing of their children within the ECD sub areas which are: child growth and upbringing, partner engagement, and available resources and services. Participants will be asked on their knowledge and involvement in child nutrition and if they seek the consultation of a nutritionist, their active listening and hearing and the ways they establish communication channels with their children, how knowledgeable they are on their children's academic performance and school experiences, and much more.

Parenting Programs

Parenting programs are a promising approach to improving family well-being. For families to benefit, programs need to be able to engage families actively in the interventions. When working to promote men's engagement, it is important to take a comprehensive approach, implementing strategies that address both individual attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, skills and behaviors of men, in order to establish policies that favor and support their involvement.

Normalizing parenting and gender biases influences how interventions and measures to support parents and caregivers are designed and targeted, thereby adding more divide to an already divided subject. Maternal and child health and childcare interventions are designed, directed and implemented primarily for women, assuming in many cases that the father is poorly equipped, and uninterested in caring for the

²⁵ Alemann, C., Garg, A. and Vlahovicova, K. (n.d.). The role of fathers in Parenting for gender equality. [online] Available at: https://promundoglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Parenting-Education_-the-role-of-fathers_-paper-060520-2-col.pdf

child. Global reviews of parenting programs show that the majority underestimate co-parenting compared to motherhood, and that is a powerful tool in measuring the specific impact of fathers on their involvement in childrearing. (Promundo, 2020)²⁶

Research in this field highlights how having men engage in child upbringing opens up new pathways for men to interact at home, other than traditional ways of proving assertiveness through power and inflicting violence. These positive interactions free men from the constraints of gender norms. Men's involvement in long-term care is also associated with improved marital relationships, where there is reduced stress in the family, reduced risks of domestic violence, and where there is a shared responsibility in decision making.

In addition, men engaging in childrearing is of direct benefit to men themselves, as men who are actively involved in the care and development of their children are more likely to be content with their lives, adopt health-promoting behaviors, and reduce alcohol and drug use. It also reduces stress, illness, and accidents, increases life span, and fosters the feeling of emotional fulfilment. (Plan International & Promundo US, 2020)²⁷

To better understand how male involvement is not only important for early childhood development and maternal health and well-being, but is also key to change, this report will focus on the sub area of parenting programs. This aspect will determine the status of parents when it comes to attending programs, their experience and thoughts on these programs, and how fathers influence other fathers within the community of work/school etc.

Policies

Policies, cultural norms, or even social norms can have a huge impact on male engagement. Despite many fathers' desires to be actively engaged in their children's lives, they often experience challenges in navigating the traditional and new fatherhood role (Petts and Knoester, 2018)²⁸. Enabling services and policies, such as paternity leaves, may help alleviate some of these challenges and allow fathers to engage more with their children, actively engage in care-giving, support their partners during the postpartum phase, and fulfil their desires in being present.

Access to paternity leave is important because there have been changing expectations for fathers. Traditional expectations of fathers serving primarily as breadwinners have expanded to emphasize a new fatherhood ideal that also encourages fathers to be engaged in their children's lives. The lack of a supportive organizational culture and work environment discourages men from assuming greater childcare responsibilities. In addition to personal beliefs about gender roles at home, promoting male participation in parenting and long-term care requires a supportive and nurturing work environment.

²⁶ Alemann, C., Garg, A. and Vlahovicova, K. (n.d.). The role of fathers in Parenting for gender equality. [online] Available at: https://promundoglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Parenting-Education_the-role-of-fathers_-paper-060520-2-col.pdf.

²⁷ A Programming and Influencing Package. (n.d.). [online] Available at: https://plan-international.org/uploads/2021/12/glo-mens_engagement_ecd-io-final-eng-may21.pdf [Accessed 26 Apr. 2022].

²⁸ Petts, R.J. and Knoester, C. (2018). Paternity Leave-Taking and Father Engagement. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 80(5), pp.1144–1162.

However, many do not see or receive support at the work environment or social level for men's deeper involvement in children's lives. Promundo's Helping Dads Care Research performed in some north western countries highlighted that the most people who are likely to restrict father's engagement in childrearing were their direct managers. This leads many fathers to fear workplace stigma, which is especially reflected in the number of paternity leave days that are given across many countries around the world (Promundo, 2020)²⁹. In addition, while leave for mothers is widely given and provided as a benefit, only a few countries offer paid leave for fathers, and even if they do, it is short and insufficient.

Furthermore, the exclusion of men from key national and social services and health systems works against father engagement. Many countries and health systems exclude men from child and family services - including maternal, new born, child health services, early childhood development and social protection services - and often overlooked by professionals and practitioners for a range of reasons (Promundo, 2020)³⁰. Literature highlights that some of these reasons stem from the absent expectations of the role of men in child care, staff and services in these facilities are not welcoming of male presence, and the concern that if men are more involved in sexual and reproductive health (SRH) matters, they will become more likely to interfere with the freedom of choice women have regarding their bodies and access to healthcare. (Plan International & Promundo US, 2020)³¹

Lastly, portraying positive male role models to the public is crucial in impacting men to actively engage in the childrearing process. Research shows how father identity theory is linked to how men form their identities through their lived experiences and social interactions (Petts and Knoester, 2018)³², and so when positive male role models are presented and asked to share their experiences and their contentment in their roles as engaged fathers, other fathers will start to shift their attention and develop identities that foster their active role in engagement.

Studying this thematic area will help define what policies deprive men from bonding with their families, and what policies could be enhanced to ensure effective engagement. Participants will be asked on their knowledge on the available policies such as paternity leaves in Jordan, their opinion on their priorities as new fathers, and ways in which they think national policies can be enhanced to better cater for the role of men in child and family engagement.

4.2.3. Ecological framework of male engagement

To better understand male engagement and all the factors that come into play into accessing the extent and barriers to engagement, it is critical to explore how various bodies of work intersect and impact societies on **individual, community, institutional, and policy levels**, all of which are key areas of importance when dissecting ecological frameworks. This report aims to explore these thematic areas, to understand their levels of intersectionality, and to access the needed interventions and gaps to be filled across all levels.

²⁹ Alemann, C., Garg, A. and Vlahovicova, K. (n.d.). The role of fathers in Parenting for gender equality. [online] Available at: https://promundoglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Parenting-Education_-the-role-of-fathers_-paper-060520-2-col.pdf

³⁰ Alemann, C., Garg, A. and Vlahovicova, K. (n.d.). The role of fathers in Parenting for gender equality. [online] Available at: https://promundoglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Parenting-Education_-the-role-of-fathers_-paper-060520-2-col.pdf

³¹ A Programming and Influencing Package. (n.d.). [online] Available at: https://plan-international.org/uploads/2021/12/glo-mens_engagement_ecd-io-final-eng-may21.pdf [Accessed 26 Apr. 2022].

³² Petts, R.J. and Knoester, C. (2018). Paternity Leave-Taking and Father Engagement. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 80(5), pp.1144–1162.

On an **individual level**, exploring a person's intrapersonal characteristics is key in understanding direct extent of engagement and how it is demonstrated in the way individuals live their lives, how their practices impact other members, and how cycles and societal norms form. These characteristics are as detailed as genotype and phenotype expressions and as general as behavioral interactions. These are all interlinked and include personal belief systems and these can be reflected by gender, religious, ethnic/racial identities, knowledge of individuals and skillset levels, and personal outlooks in relation to values and goals, societal stigma, and resiliency and adversity.

Interactions of several individuals result in **community level** interactions, and exploring them can highlight the level of impact individuals and peers project onto each other. In addition, understanding how communities flow can unpack gender norms and identify role models and advocates and the key messages that are being conveyed and practiced. These interactions can be on a formal level such as in work settings, network groups, between community leaders and the public, between community role models and influencers, and on an informal level such as interactions between family circles and friends.

Institutional level interactions, i.e. interactions amongst social institutions of organizational characteristics with each other and the community, are important to study and look into as they could impact societal hierarchies and gender norms, as well as hold the power to service accessibility and availability. Analyzing these interactions and their impact on male engagement in ECD is crucial as they could emphasize the best practices available, the potential organizational barriers to engagement that are being implied, and the determinants of what works best and areas of improvement.

Lastly, researching how **policy level** interactions serve as drivers of visibility and agency to connecting individuals and the larger society to create harmonious and structured communities, will highlight correlations in available policies and behavioral practices on all previously mentioned ecological levels.

4.3. Report Objective

Engaged fathers provide a significant and positive impact on children's well-being and raising them. However, the father's role in the development of children is inactive, which affects the child's needs and rearing decisions. Hence, a fundamental challenge for service providers is to promote father engagement to optimize the benefits of parenting interventions for child well-being.

This was confirmed by many previous studies, such as the study of Ridge et al. (2021), which concluded that fathers have a significant role in activating the degree of children's satisfaction with themselves and their self-esteem.

The report aimed to find out the **status of male engagement in early childhood and to assess the current level of male engagement in ECD in Jordan**, according to the ecological framework; individual, community, institutional, and policy levels.

5. METHODS AND PROCEDURES

5.1. Report methodology

The Report data were collected using secondary and primary data collection tools, whereas the secondary data were extracted from the previous literature review and the primary data collection used a mixed-methods approach to understand better the complexities, perceptions, commonality, and generalizability that limit paternal involvement in childcare. A quantitative approach was used to facilitate outreach to hundreds of parents, males, and females. A qualitative approach helped the report team probe some underlying issues, challenges, stakeholders' perceptions, and contextual factors relating to male engagement and increase their effective participation. Furthermore, utilizing a mixed-methods approach allowed the report team to review cross-cutting issues, such as policies around the topics related to male engagement.

5.2. Data Collection Tools and Sampling Strategy

The data collected was triangulated from different sources to generate evidence-based findings and conclusions and validate the collected data. Below is a detailed description of the data collection methods that were used during the report:

5.2.1 Secondary Data Collection:

The secondary data and relevant information were collected through desk review, by undertaking a comprehensive desk research and literature review of the available documents, data, and information related to male engagement covering different areas such as; family planning, reproductive health, ECD, maternal new born and child health, gender, raising children and early childhood education. The relevant documents were reviewed in order to gain an understanding of the existing research relevant to male engagement. The lack of national and regional studies in male engagement in ECD was highly noticed, so mainly international documents were reviewed.

Sources of secondary data include:

- Working time arrangements and family time of fathers
- Attributions and Attitudes of Mothers and Fathers in Jordan
- Child Care in Practice
- Father involvement with three-to-four-year olds at home: giving fathers a chance
- The Relationship Between Maternal Gatekeeping, Paternal Competence, Mothers' Attitudes About the Father Role, and Father Involvement
- Fathers' involvement in child care activities: Qualitative findings from the highlands of Madagascar

- Male engagement as a strategy to improve utilization and community-based delivery of maternal, new born and child health services: evidence from an intervention in Odisha, India
- Parenting from a Jordanian Perspective: Findings from a Qualitative Study
- Position Paper: Parental Leave in Jordan and its Impact on the Economic Integration of Women
- The role of fathers in Parenting for gender equality
- Father Involvement, Gender Perception and Children's Gender Stereotypes

By reviewing the previous literature, the report team found that the best framework to use in this report is the ecological framework that focuses on the interactions between the individual and the surroundings that includes community, primary groups, institutions and public policy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

5.2.1.1. *Previous studies*

First: Arab Studies

One of the most recent Arab studies examining fathers' participation in early childhood development was conducted by Heritage Revival and United Nations Women in Morocco (2022). Entitled "Parental participation in childcare and domestic work", this study aimed at promoting women's economic empowerment and independence by sharing the burden of unpaid care with men. The results of the study revealed how men are now willing to be more engaged within the family, and that men who learned how to do unpaid care work when they were young, and who saw both of their parents participate in the domestic work normally assigned to women, were more willing to adopt the same behavior in their own families.

Ridge et al. (2021) conducted a similar study, entitled "Father's Participation and the Education Process in the Gulf Cooperation Council GCC", Measuring the interest of Arab parents in young children and their participation in their activities and interests, which is particularly reflected in enhancing the children's positive image of themselves and in a manner that increases the level of their educational attainment. . Moreover, the study aimed at identifying some of the main challenges regarding the participation of parents in various aspects of their children's lives. To achieve these objectives, various report methods were used, such as a field survey, and collected a biography, the measure of paternity rate, on a sample of nearly 2,000 fathers. One of the most important findings of the study indicated that there are significant differences with regard to the participation of fathers in the process of educating their children based on a set of factors such as the geographical location, the gender of the child, and generation. Furthermore, it was established that parents play a major role in: the satisfaction of the children, the respect given to them and their educational attainment, and that a high level of self-esteem is associated with high educational performance.

Al-Khatib's study (2020) also examined the opinions of Jordanian parents about their participation in the education of their children in kindergarten and the impact of their gender and educational qualifications thereupon. The study was entitled "The level of participation of Jordanian parents for kindergarten children and their relationship with the parents' gender and their educational qualifications", and used a sample of 178 Jordanian caregivers for children attending private kindergartens in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The results of the study showed that the level of participation of Jordanian parents

was high in terms of providing a supportive home learning environment and direct communication in school activities. However, the study also identified some barriers experienced by parents. The results of the study moreover showed a statistically significant correlation between the parents' gender and their level of participation (in favor of mothers), while there was no statistically significant correlation between their educational level and their level of participation.

In 2015, the Queen Rania Foundation conducted a questionnaire entitled "Parental Care in Jordan". The national survey reached 1,800 Jordanian mothers and studied parents' perceptions of formal enrolment in early childhood care and education, their confidence and ability to provide good care for their children, as well as the home learning environment they provide to them. Despite the fact that the majority of mothers believe that formal pre-primary education is very important, the study revealed that only 20% of KG1 mothers and 3% of mothers of pre-school children said that their children were registered in school. Moreover, the first five factors considered by mothers when enrolling their children in formal pre-primary education were – from top to bottom: Safety and hygiene, academic programs and teaching methods, qualifications of teachers and caregivers, proximity to home, and cost. Another finding showed that only 7% of mothers reported participating in parenting programs.

In a study conducted by Bitawi et al. (2014), entitled "Father's engagement and Integration with His Three and Four-Year-Old Children at Home: Giving fathers an Opportunity", the researchers examined parents' perceptions of their domestic activities with their young children and the impact of parents' demographics on these perceptions and practices. The sample was made up of 396 fathers and their perceptions were surveyed through a questionnaire describing their demographic information, perceptions and participation of their children in domestic activities. The results showed that parents had a moderate level of participation in domestic activities with their children, yet a low level of awareness about their actual practices in household activities.. There was a statistically significant correlation between the age of parents and their educational level on the one hand, and their perceptions and practices in domestic activities with children on the other.

In Fathi Ahmadiyya's 2013 study "Giving Fathers a Voice: Towards Father's Participation in the Early Years", the results indicated that fathers had moderate beliefs to participate, but their perceptions of their practices were low. Moreover, the social and demographic characteristics of parents, such as their educational level and income, affected their beliefs. This study targeted 258 fathers by conducting a questionnaire in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and it concluded that increased participation of Jordanian fathers with their children is a priority. There is also a need to facilitate the active participation and work for low-income parents and parents with low educational levels. Based on the results of this study, pilot studies are needed to determine the well-being and characteristics of children with concerned fathers compared to their well-being. Children with non-participating fathers.

The study entitled "Parenthood from the Perspective of Jordanians to exploring parental understanding of parenthood", conducted by Owais et al. (2012), used a qualitative descriptive approach and consisted of a sample of 110 Jordanian parents in four health centers in the province of Irbid in northern Jordan. The study found that there were three themes affecting the understanding of parenthood, namely: parenthood as stated in 1. Islamic religion, 2. cultural values, customs, and traditions, 3. the view of parenthood as a challenge. As it noted a strong association of parental behaviors in Jordanian society along these three axes, the study recommended health care providers to design and provide parental care services within their core programs. It furthermore suggested the use of quantitative and qualitative research in other studies to achieve a broader understanding of parenthood from a Jordanian perspective and the impact of social roles and responsibilities in framing parenting roles.

Second: International studies

In his study entitled "Fathers Participation in Child Care Activities: Qualitative Results from Madagascar", Rakutomanana (2021) explored the perceptions, attitudes and practices of fathers' participation in childcare using qualitative methods. He conducted ten focus group discussions with seven mothers and three fathers of children aged 6-23 months, as well as 8 in-depth semi-structured key informant interviews. The data were then analyzed using objective analysis approaches. The study found that providing financial and material support as well as teaching and playing with the child a valuable key role in the perceived roles of fathers in practice, fathers spend their time alone with their children playing and keeping them when the mother is not available. Busy schedules and separation due to work were major barriers to parental participation. Traditional gender roles in childcare, in which the mother is seen as primarily responsible for the child, were prominent throughout the data. Hence, men involved in childcare activities and their wives are often criticized by society. However, there was self-reported interest of both parents in involving men more in childcare. The study concluded that interventions aimed at increasing fathers' participation in childcare may be more successful when they focus on changing society's perceptions of dividing responsibilities between parents.

The Promundo Study (2021) also highlighted evidence showing how positive male participation can contribute to children's physical and mental health, improved cognitive development, and higher educational achievement. It documented emotional association frameworks, a profound impact on children's future relationships as parents and partners, as well as a correction of unequal gender relationships that have led to an imbalance of power in decision-making within the family. Furthermore, the report highlighted the constraints and challenges to men's participation as parents in children's development. It concluded that a set of policies emphasizing the role of fathers in parental care was documented, and gave a range of good practices and examples of interventions that addressed the constraints and challenges faced by men in caring for their children, by focusing on the promotion of gender equality and the transformation of traditional gender norms, which have proven effective in the development and care of young children.

Save the Children International's case study (2018), entitled "Male Participation in Early Education", sought to measure the impact of fathers' participation in early childhood education in Sri Lanka by working with preschool teachers and childhood development center staff. To achieve the study's objectives, the basic development and early education assessment was conducted for 198 out of 377 students in 20 mother and child development centers. Moreover, a survey was conducted with caregivers for the same children who underwent to evaluate play-based IDELA. The report used focused group discussions with parents, parental stimulation sessions on the importance of parents' participation in early childhood development, as well as women's discussion sessions. The study emphasized the importance of organizing sessions aimed at changing parents' attitudes towards parental participation in early childhood development, and the importance of addressing gender barriers in parents' attitudes, because their respective roles and responsibilities at home should be adjusted. The study also recommended providing both father and mother with a good early childhood learning environment at home, which will lead to a positive transformation in children's learning at home.

Researchers Jude and Ata (2018) conducted a study entitled "Father's Participation, Gender Perception and Gender Stereotypes in Children" – the main purpose of which was to examine the relationship between parental participation, gender perceptions and gender stereotypes of children. The relational survey model was used in this report. The research sample consisted of 151 randomly selected children between the ages of 60 and 72 months attending primary schools in Turkey and their fathers. As data collection tools, the demographic information model, the father's participation scale, gender scale perception, and the gender stereotyping assessment tool were used. According to the results of this research, parents' belief in gender equality increases their level of participation. Moreover, it was

established that the sex of the child and the age of their father play an important role in their father's participation. There was a positive and statistically significant correlation between the gender stereotypes of the child and the participation of their father, which was one of the subdivisions of the fathers' participation scale. It was also discovered that parents' income was important in shaping the gender stereotypes of children, while factors such as occupation, age, gender perceptions, and levels of participation were not.

Barnes' study (2016) entitled "The Relationship between Male Participation in Early Childhood Education and Student Academic Achievement" was intended to examine the impact of fathers' participation on the academic achievement of young children in early childhood classes, and to assess the barriers to such participation. The data were collected using the modified parental participation survey, which was developed and used to interview teachers, and given to parents (number = 142) of children attending the Early Childhood Centre with multiple locations in a city in the South of the United States. The results of archived student tests and parental attendance records in the center's activities were also examined. The study showed that fathers were more involved in helping their children with their homework. The test for independent samples also showed that fathers with higher levels of participation in the center's activities, such as football games and field trips, achieved significantly higher year-end achievement scores than students from low-participation fathers, $t(139) = 2.24, p < 0.05$. recommendation for local center managers included encouraging fathers' participation in the activities of the educational center and adjusting actively schedules to increase fathers' participation, as these may improve student performance and contribute to positive social change.

A study conducted by Reimer (2015), entitled "Working time and family time arrangements for fathers: how work institutions shape the opportunities for fathers to engage in childcare", sought to analyze and diagnose the gap between German fathers' attitudes and practices regarding the impact of work on their involvement in the care of their children. The study stressed that institutions have a significant impact on childcare through a working culture that shapes the expectations and choices of working parents.

Festo's research (2015) with the title "Male participation as a strategy to improve access to and delivery of maternal, neonatal and child health services in society: a field study in Odechia, India" Which aimed to describe the impact of the Male Participation Project on the utilization and delivery of maternal, newborn and child health care at the community level in a rural area of India, improve coverage of maternal, newborn and child health services provided by the formal health care system, and improve home management and care seeking for prevention and treatment services. The study built upon qualitative data from in-depth interviews with the Accredited Social Health Activists ASHAs (No. = 11), Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) (No. = 4) and Assistant Nurse Midwives (ANMs) (No. = 2); With women who gave birth at home, a community health center or district hospital in the few months prior to the date of the interview (number = 11); and with the husbands of these women (n = 7). The study concluded that new insights were reached regarding the integration between the roles of males and females working in the health sector, these visions consisted in emphasizing that important roles should be given to men in improving maternal, newborn and child health care, and that male health workers should be included to enhance these roles for men, and the gender-based area has been divided into three key areas: escorting women to health centers for births in facilities; mobilizing women and children to attend health and nutrition days and village immunization days, and raising awareness among men about maternal, newborn and child health and family planning.

Fagan et al. conducted a study (2003) on "The relationship between childcare and protection from external interventions, parental competences and maternal trends towards the role of fathers and their involvement in child-rearing", using a sample of 30 non-resident fathers and 72 resident fathers with their children. The study found that the father's status in terms of being resident or non-resident affected parents' involvement in raising their children. His involvement in raising children is also directly related to the parental competencies that he possesses, and finally, the child's care and protection from external

interference is directly related to the extent to which parents are involved in raising and caring for their young children.

The current report aimed to study the impact of fathers' engagement in early childhood care and development, and with in-depth search it was found that there is a rarity of studies that dealt with the issue of the extent to which fathers' caregivers participate in early childhood care and development in Jordan. As a realistic report derived from the Jordanian society in all its regions (north, center, and south), and directed to fathers in particular as those who take an equal role with mothers in caring for young children. The local, Arab and international studies related to measuring fathers' participation in early childhood development or those that dealt with related topics that serve and support the current study were reviewed, which were divided into two parts: Arab studies and international studies, and accordingly the following results can be as below: which show the similarities and differences between the current report and previous studies:

First: the similarities between the current report and previous studies:

- The current report converges with previous local, Arab and international studies in its research into the extent of a parent's participation in early childhood development and care, and measuring the impact on young children.
- The current report met with some previous studies in the study population of early childhood caregivers in Jordan, such as the study of Owais (2012) and the Fathi Ahmadiyya study (2013), the study of the Queen Rania Al Abdullah Foundation (2015), the study of Al-Khatib (2020).
- The current report met with some previous studies in its orientation to fathers in particular among early childhood caregivers; Such as the study carried out by the Heritage Revival Organization and the United Nations Women in Morocco (2022), Ridge et al. (2021), Betawi et al. (2014), Fathi Ahmadiyya study (2013), Rakutomanana study (2021), and Promundo (2021) study. Judd and Atta study (2018), Reimer study (2015).
- The current report met with previous studies in its investigation of the impact of male engagement in early childhood development in more than one aspect and not a specific educational, health or recreational aspect, such as: Fagin et al. (2003), Promundo (2021), Rakutomanana (2021) study Heritage Revival Organization and UN Women in Morocco (2022), Betawi et al. (2014).
- The current report converges with previous studies in the approach followed. Where most of the studies followed the descriptive analytical approach.
- The current report converges with some previous studies in the procedural steps followed by holding parenting sessions to provide support and assistance to fathers, such as the study of the Heritage Revival Organization and the United Nations Women in Morocco (2022), the study of the Queen Rania Al Abdullah Foundation (2015), and Save the Children study (2018).
- The current report met with some previous studies in its research on the aspect of early childhood policies that affect them; Such as the Promundo (2021) study.

Second: The differences and points of distinction between the current report and previous studies:

- The previous studies that were presented did not include any study that dealt with the participation of fathers among caregivers in early childhood development in Jordan, and the study of this participation from several aspects and its impact on young children.
- The current report differed from previous studies in the study's orientation to fathers in particular and not to male caregivers in general, as it was in: Promundo study (2021), Save the Children International Study (2018), Barnes study (2016), Fausto study (2015) , and the study of Fagin et al. (2003).
- The current report emphasized measure the impact of fathers' engagement on early childhood development in various fields and aspects, while some studies looked at one or more aspects, such as researching the impact of male participation on the aspect of education and academic achievement; Such as the Barnes study (2016), the Save the Children study (2018), the Ridge et al. (2021) study, the Al-Khatib study (2020), or research into the impact of male participation on the health aspect such as the Fausto study (2015), or research into the impact of male participation on the health aspect. caregivers on the side of children's gender perceptions; As the Judd and Atta (2018) study.
- The current report differed with some previous studies in the selected stage of early childhood, which is from the age of one day to the age of 8 years, such as: the study of the Fausto study (2015) that addressed the first early childhood stage (the newborn child), and the study of Bitawi et al. (2014), which went to the second early childhood stage (3-4 years), and the Rakutomanana study (2021), which targeted children from 6-23 months.
- The current report differed from previous studies by using a set of tools that measured the extent of fathers' engagement in early childhood development, such as the use of the questionnaire tool, in-depth interviews, focus groups, parenting sessions, while most studies were limited to the use of the questionnaire tool like most previous studies, or the questionnaire and in-depth interviews to research the topic, such as the Fausto study (2015) and the Rakutomanana study (2021), or the use of a demographic information model such as the Judd and Atta study (2018).

Looking at the similarities and differences that have been mentioned between the current study and previous studies, we find that the study was distinguished and unique in many matters, as follows:

- originality and modernity; The current report is the only and the first study to examine the extent of fathers' participation in early childhood development and care in Jordan.
- The report is directed to fathers in particular as part of the group of people who provide early childhood care, and its impact on young children.
- Using the policy of providing support and support to fathers through parenting care sessions that will raise the level and culture of parents, especially fathers, in how to nurture and develop their young children.
- The report discussed the issue of the existing policies in Jordan and the Arab society in general, which had an impact on the extent to which fathers engaged in the development and care of their children.
- The report was characterized by using the study tools on a large sample that includes all the regions of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, north, middle and south.

- The use of more than one tool in data collection varied between the use of the questionnaire tool, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions, which led to adding the elements of credibility and accuracy to the results of the study.
- The report was characterized by the density of data, information and results that were reached, given the diversity of study tools and the inclusion of the study sample for all regions of Jordan, and given the density of questions prepared in the study tools and their emergence from the reality of Jordanian society.

5.2.2 Survey Questionnaire:

The report team designed a structured survey capturing the ecological framework that focuses on the interactions between the individual and the surroundings, including community, primary groups, institutions, and public policy. The tool was revised, amended, and tested by the report team before the automation through KOBO platform to collect quantitative data from the parents who have children aged 0 to 9 years old.

The team relied on the snowball sampling approach to achieve as much as possible of the targeted sample. And in collaboration with PIJO partners, the survey circulated across Jordan through the outreach team. An overall combined survey sample size of 1213 caregivers covering all governorates

The table below presents the collected sample:

Gender	Centre	North	South	Total
Female	296	126	104	526
Male	220	281	186	687
Total	516	407	290	1213

1: Survey Sample

To ensure the validity of the questionnaire, it was sent to 14 ECD Specialists at several Jordanian early childhood organizations. They were asked to determine whether the terms used in the survey are understandable and correspond to those employed in the literature. Considering their comments, changes in the wording of a few items were made

5.2.2. Focus Group Discussions:

A total of six focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted in three regions (North, Centre, South), to collect a qualitative data to better understand the findings from the questionnaire.

The report team conducted online FGDs with the health centres, community members, and CBOs leaders by coordinating with Plan international's implementation partners. The main objective of the FGDs was to gather required qualitative data and information through an open and dynamic discussion on a set of topics concerning the male engagement topics using a discussion guide/ protocol. For each FGD, a team of two members was utilized, consisting of a moderator and an assistant moderator (female and male) this helped in assuring better and effective participation of all female respondents.

The moderator was responsible for leading the participants through the discussion in an open and spontaneous format. The moderator's primary responsibility was to generate a maximum number of different ideas and opinions from the participants regarding the areas of concern (domains), while making sure that the discussion remains on track and relevant. On the other hand, the assistant moderators were

responsible for managing all the logistical issues pertaining to the FG, in addition to operating the recording/taping equipment and taking notes.

The criteria for the FGDs were:

	Centre		South		North		Total
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	
Service Providers	9	0	7	0	8	0	24
Caregivers	5	3	6	2	6	1	23
Total	14	3	13	2	14	1	47

2: Focus Groups Discussion criteria

5.2.3. Key-informant Interviews:

- A total of 22 Key-informant interviews were conducted to collect qualitative, ideas and points of view through an open and dynamic discussion using the developed discussion guides and checklist on relevant male engagement topics. The KIIs are held with the following stakeholders:
- Key government stakeholders and NGOs.
- Local community-based health committees.
- Community members.
- Head of CBOs

FGDs and interviews were developed based on previous relevant literature and report questions. The report team reviewed the questions before being translated into Arabic. Arabic questions analysed by native speakers. As data was collected, the investigator reflected participants responses and discussions after each FGD. Depending on the local situation, the way the question was changed and was expressed according to the local situation. The same method was used in the interview. FGD was held and recorded in Arabic, the local language by the main facilitator and participants. The Average time for each Interview ran for 15-20 minutes per participant. After the tools were finalized, all tools were tested and approved internally.

6. REPORT DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

This section includes a presentation of the results of the report, which aimed to measure the impact of male engagement in the development and care of young children during early childhood stage in Jordan. The results will be presented in accordance with the four main aspects of the report:

First Aspect: Power and Privilege

Second Aspect: Early Childhood Development

Third Aspect: Parenting

Fourth Aspect: Policies



First Aspect: Power and Privilege

7.1. First Aspect: Power and Privilege

There are many factors related to the power and privilege men enjoy in our society, which may affect their participation as parents in raising young children. After all, men have greater power and privilege than women, especially in Arab societies, but they are greatly influenced by social and cultural factors related to their social roles which determine the nature of the relationship between men and women within the family, sometimes limiting their effective participation in supporting their wives or raising their children. Because of the great significance of the father's role in raising young children, this section will review the most important results related to the aspect of power and privilege through a number of aspects, in the following order:

- **First Pillar: Daily routines**
- **Second Pillar: Raising children**
- **Third Pillar: Relationship with partner and its impact on the upbringing of young children**
- **Fourth Pillar: Environments and their impact**

Through these aspects, we will address the most important findings of the report from the point of view of both men and women. We will then link them to the local content, the ecological framework and previous literature on the same topic, before concluding with some recommendations at the end of the report. Moreover, the aforementioned aspects will be linked to a number of variables, such as educational level, work, number of family members, level of family income, and region.

Note: In the analysis, fathers will be addressed as males and mothers as females.

First Pillar: Daily Routine

This aspect relates to routine household chores, which are the chores that some spouses do continuously towards their families inside or outside the home. It includes the following elements:

- The husband is involved in helping his family with household chores, such as cleaning, buying house items, and helping with child care.
- The husband accompanies his wife and child(ren) to health centres.

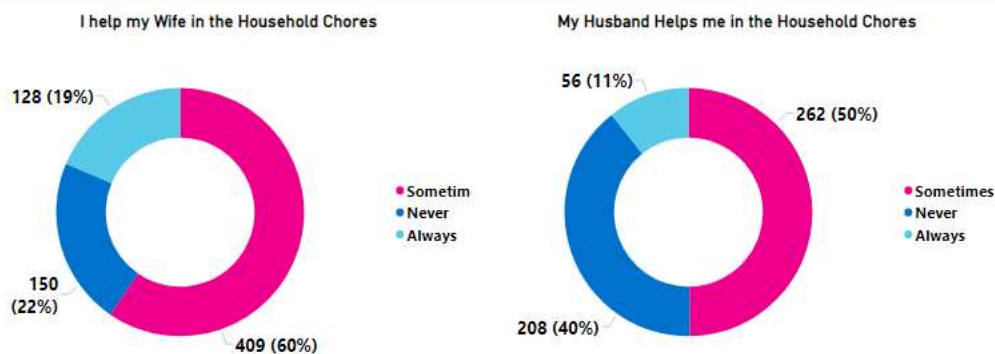


Figure 1: Helping in the household chores

Figure 1 shows husbands' assessments of how much they help their wives in the daily routine, with 60% of males reporting assistance "sometimes" and 19% of male respondents answering "always". On the other hand, figure 1 shows the wives' answers to the same question, asking them to assess their husbands' participation in the daily routine. 50% of the female respondents report that their husbands help them

"sometimes," while 40% claim that they "never" receive help - 18% more than their male counterparts answering the same question.

The difference in female and male answers also appears from the fact that 19% of males claim to always provide assistance, while only 11% of females give the same response. justified by long working hours for males, and that this role is specific to females and they cannot perform these tasks due to understanding the social norms and the local culture. It is remarkable to see that what may be considered as "help" from a male point of view, is not always conceived as such by women.

Despite the fact that both genders invoked the longer working hours of men as one of the main reasons for their lack of participation in daily chores, 26% of non-working men also admitted not to help their wives at all

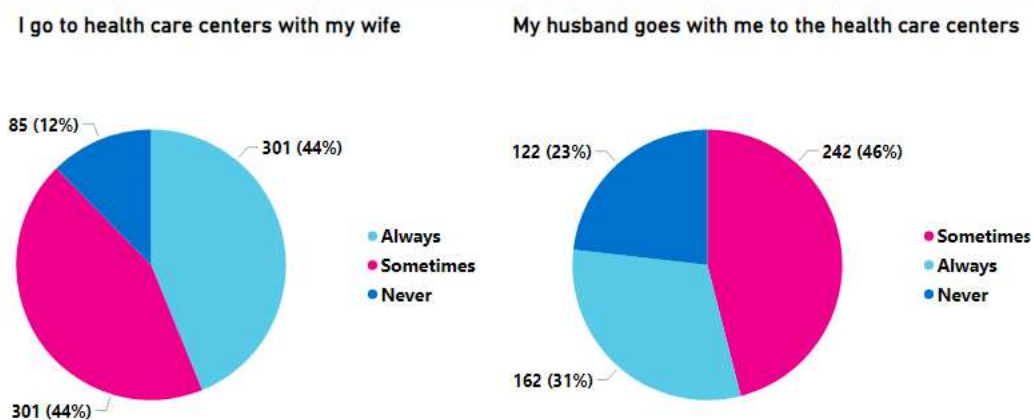


Figure 2: Health care centers visits

As can be seen from figure 2, 44% of males said to accompany their wives and children to health centers, compared to 31% from the female point of view. 66% of all respondents expressed that going to the health center is a female responsibility.

Moving on to the most important values of correlation between the aspect of power and privileges and the daily routine. The correlation values included the region's factors, the number of working hours and the number of family members. The lowest correlation was found in "parents taking their children to health centers " with correlation factor ($r = -0.08$), indicating that there is no relationship between going to health centers and the place of residence in the region. The results showed similar ratios in the degree of help in household chores relative to geographical location (region). However, the degree of assistance is directly proportional to the monthly income of the family, with male participation increasing as the monthly family income increases. To the contrary, the participation of couples in raising their children is reduced when the number of family members increases. With regard to the correlation values related to the number of working hours, the lowest correlation value was in the husband's assistance to his wife in household chores. The value of the correlation ($r = -0.052$) this indicates that the husband's lack of assistance to his wife is not affected by the number of hours the husband works, While the highest value was for the correlation between the number of family members and the aspect of power and privileges in the pillar of daily routine and household chores regarding taking the children to health care centers , so

that the correlation factor ($r = 0.068$) as the husband's taking his wife and children to health centers was affected by the number of family members.

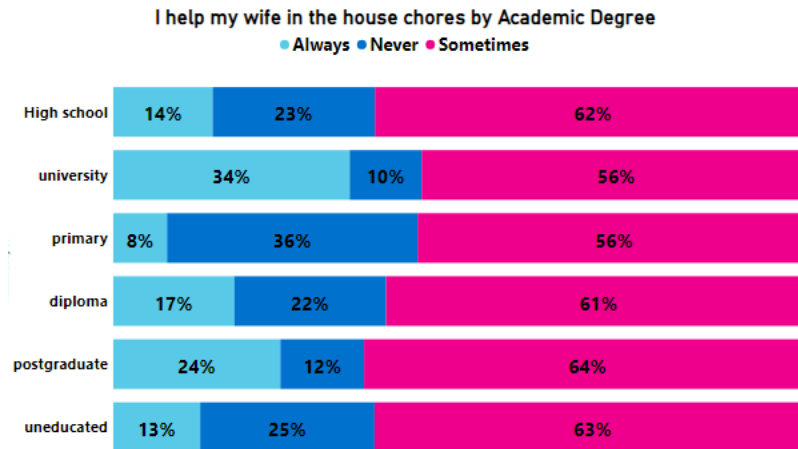


Figure 3: Helping in house chores and the academic degree

It is worth mentioning that the results of the report also show a close relationship between the educational degree of the spouse and the amount of assistance provided in the daily routine. The level of education notably increases as males participate in daily routine and vice versa. As can be seen from the figure above, 90% of males with a university degree provide help in daily chores permanently or sometimes. In contrast, 36% and 25% of those who completed elementary education only and those who are not educated respectively reported never to help their wives in the daily routine.

Second Pillar: Raising Children

This pillar pertains to a set of methods and procedures that help to properly raise a child by directing them towards positive attitudes, beliefs and behaviors:

- Positive relationship and trust between parents and children
- Methods for positive raising and upbringing
- Dialogue and discussion with the child, and allowing them to express their opinion

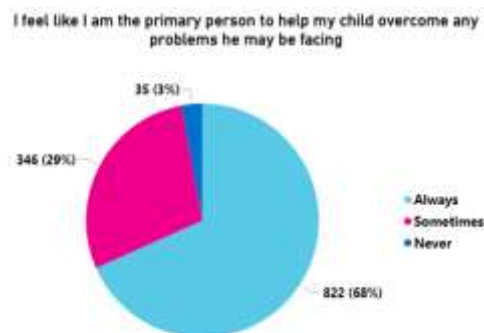


Figure 4: Male caregivers' role in helping the child to overcome any problems

Figure 4 shows parents' answers to the prompt "I feel like the central person to help my child overcome any behavioral or other problems". 68% reported that they "always" feel like the main focal point, while 3% of males "never" feel this way.

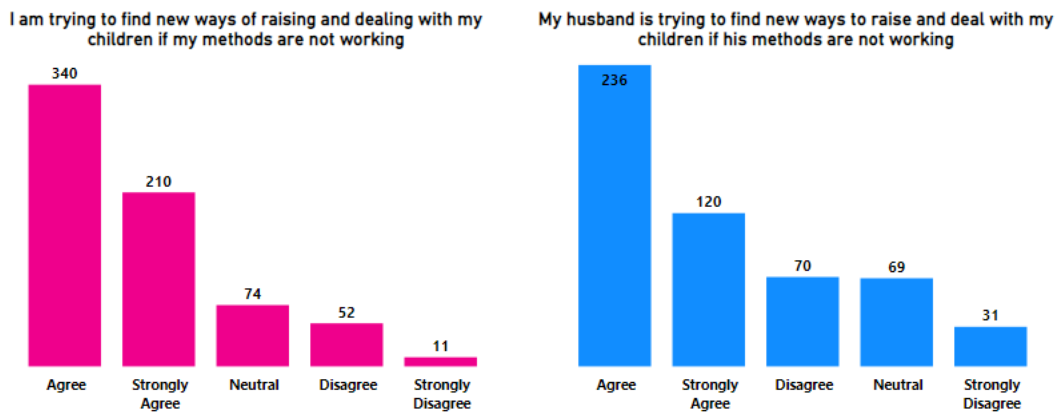


Figure 5: Finding new ways of raising and dealing with children

Figure 5 presents the male answers to the prompt "I try to find new ways to raise and deal with my children if the methods used are not successful". 80% of respondents affirmatively answered the question, and 9% of them disagreed. When asking mothers and female caregivers whether their husbands try to find new ways to raise and deal with their children if the methods used are not successful, 68% tends to agree, while 19% of them disagrees.

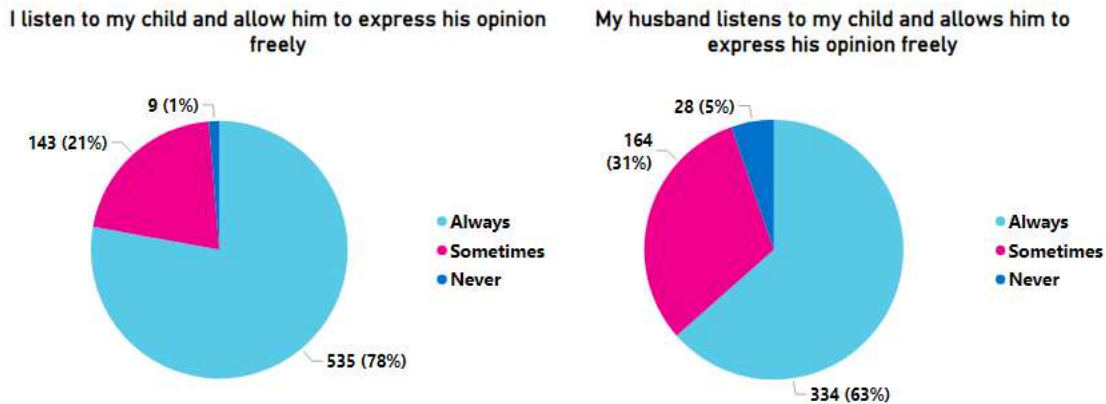


Figure 6: Listening to the child and allowing him/her to express opinions

To the question whether they listen to their child and allow them to express their opinion freely, as shown in figure 7, 78% of males responds with "always", while only 1% answers "never". To the corresponding question with regard to their husbands' behavior, 63% of women answers "always", while 5% answers "never", as indicated in figure (6).

With the coefficient of correlation being ($r = -0.069$), the number of family members does not seem to affect whether or not the father tries to find new ways of raising and dealing with his children if the methods used are not successful.

Third Pillar: Relationship with partner and its impact on the upbringing of young children

The relationship with the partner is one of the most important pillars on which children's merits and behaviors are based. Which may constitute their most prominent beliefs and orientations in a parallel path with the form of the parents' relationship with each other, negatively or positively.. This aspect notably deals with the following:

- Sharing ideas and opinions with their partner about raising children.
- Time allocated to wife and children on a daily basis.
- Comfortably expressing feelings about child-rearing and related topics.

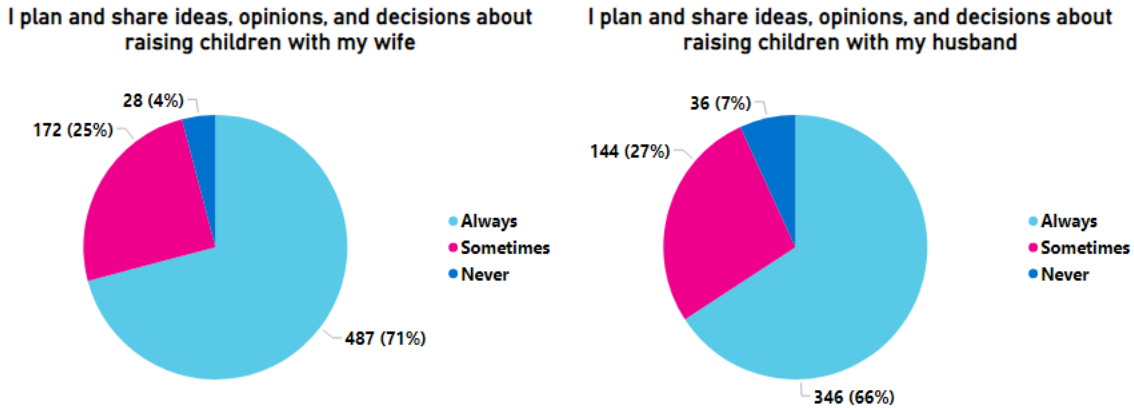


Figure 7: Planning and sharing ideas, opinions and decisions about raising children with the spouse

The previous figures illustrate the results of asking male and female participants whether they share ideas, discussions and opinions about raising children with their partner. 66% of females claim to share their thoughts with their husbands regarding the upbringing of young children, while 71% of males did the same thing with their wives. Hence, males tend to share more thoughts with their partners than females about raising their young children.

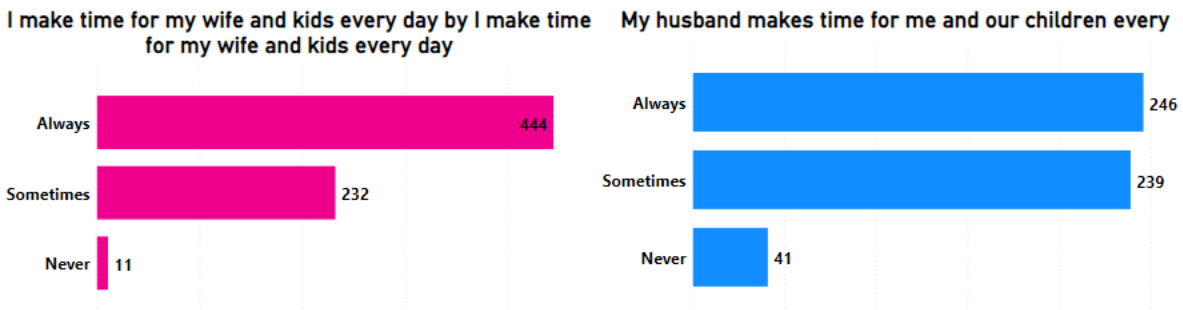


Figure 8: Making regular time for the spouse and the kids

The above graphics show parents' answers to the question of allocating time to wives and children on a daily basis, with 64% of fathers answering "always", and 0.01% answering "never". When wives were asked the corresponding question about their husband, 46% of them answered "always" and 45% answered "sometimes".

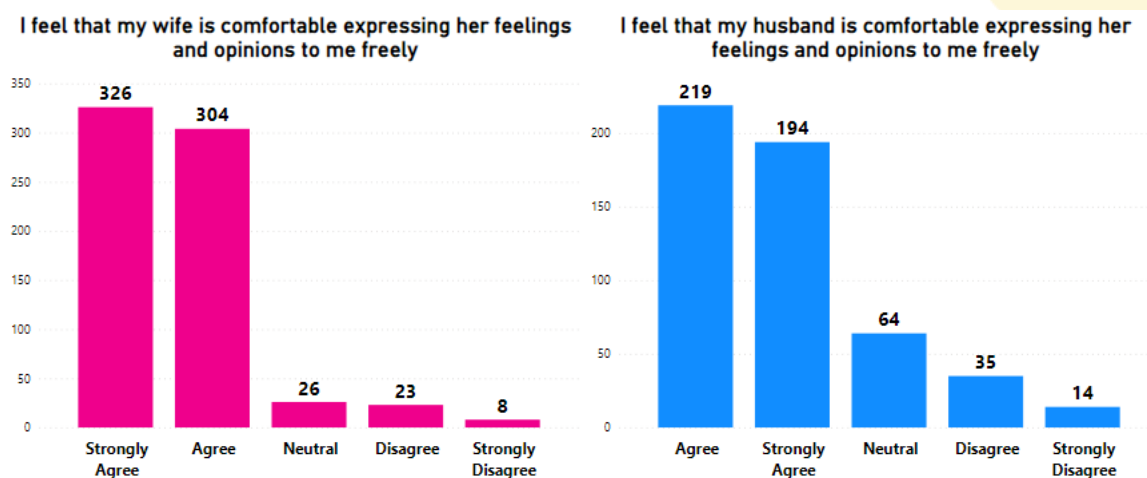


Figure 9: Spouses feel comfortable in expressing their feelings and opinions freely

As for sharing feelings and opinions freely and comfortably with their partner, 92% of male parents agreed with this prompt, while 5% disagreed. The mothers' opinions on the same question showed an approval rate of 79% and a disapproval rate of 9%.

When looking at the correlations related to the results of the report on the aspect of the relationship with the partner and its impact on raising young children, the greater and the lower values for the correlation were between the educational qualification and the power and privileges in this pillar, whereas the educational qualification commensurate with the opportunity for the wife and children to express their opinion freely in a direct relationship ($r = 0.139$) And inversely with allocating time to the wife and children daily with a correlation coefficient ($r = -0.144$). This means that the higher the educational qualification of the husband, the more he gives freedom to his wife and children to express their opinions. On the other hand, when the husband has higher educational qualification, the time he allocates to his wife and children on a daily basis decrease.

Fourth Pillar: Environments and their impact

This pillar pertains to the impact of the surrounding factors on the way parents raise and treat their children, including culture, socio-economic status, gender equality, as well as family influence. We will thus review the results of the answers, addressing the following aspects:

- Culture and socio-economic situation
- Different environments and child-rearing
- Treatment of male and female children
- Family impact on child-rearing
- Qualifications in child-rearing
- Advice on raising children

I think that culture, social and economic status have a profound impact on male participation in raising children and following up on their health

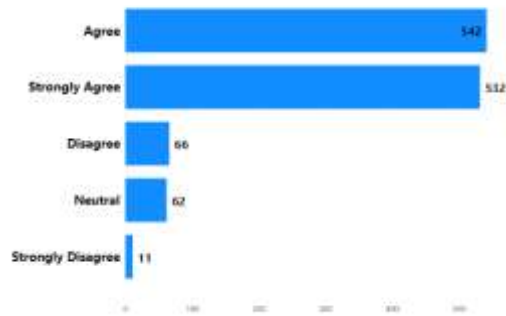
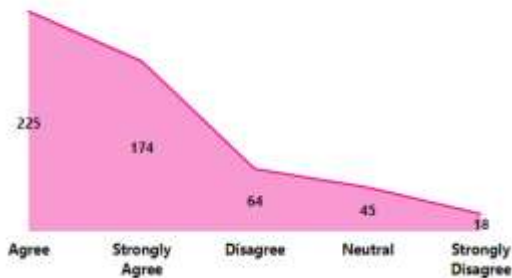


Figure 10: culture, social and economic status and the impact on male engagement in raising children

When asked whether culture and socio-economic status affect the extent to which fathers participate in raising young children and following up on their health, 89% of the fathers and 88% of the mothers reacted affirmatively. 6% of both father and mothers, on the other hand, did not agree. This confirms the consensus between men and women about the impact of culture and socio-economic status on the upbringing and rearing of children and following up on their health.

I think my husband would raise and treat our children differently if we were in different social and cultural environments



I might raise my children differently if I were in different social and cultural environments

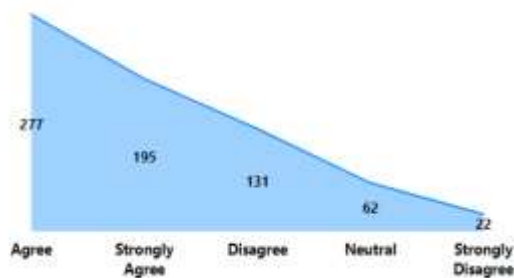
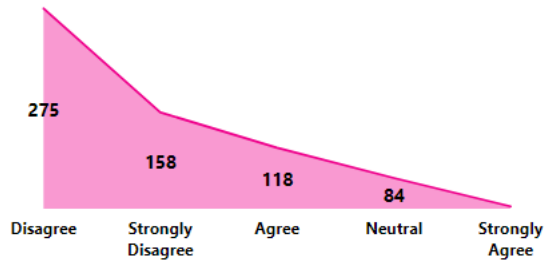


Figure 11: Different social and culture environments' impact raising children

With regard to environments and their impact on the way children are raised, 69% of respondents stated that it would be possible to change the way they raise their children according to the cultural and social environment. Moreover, 76% of the mothers confirmed that their husbands' way of raising children might be affected by their environment. The cultural and social environment thus influences the way young children are raised and brought up.

I differ in the way of raising female children from male children, and I feel that male children need better care in terms of food, education and care



My husband's way of raising female children differs from male children and feels that male children need better care in terms of food, education and care

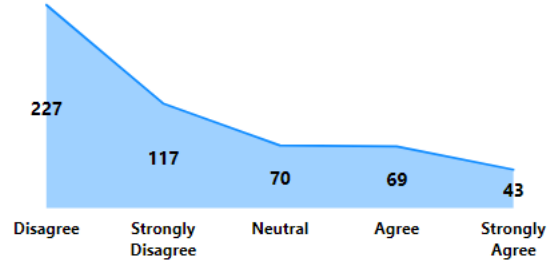
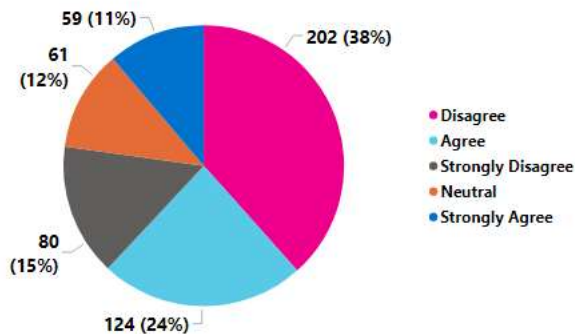


Figure 12: Raising differentiation between male and female children

The previous two figures show the answers of both males and females about the way male caregivers raise and treat male and female children. The respondents were asked whether the method of raising and treating the male child differs from the way the female child is being raised and treated, and whether this treatment differs with regard to nutrition, education and care. 63% and 65% of males and females respectively emphasized that there was no difference in treatment between sons and daughters, while 25% and 21% of them claimed the opposite.

My husband's family has an influence on the way I bring up my children



My family influences the way my children are brought up

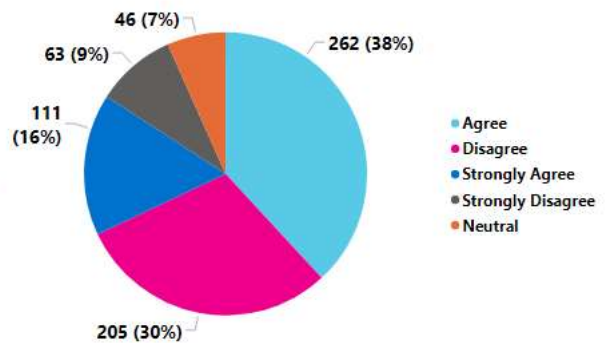


Figure 13: The influence of the male caregivers' family in raising children

54% male parents reported that the surrounding family had an impact on the way their children were raised, while 39% said there is no such effect. In contrast, 35% of female respondents reported that the family of the male caregiver had an impact on child-rearing, while 53% claimed the opposite.

I have the qualifications and that enable me to benefit my community with regard to raising children

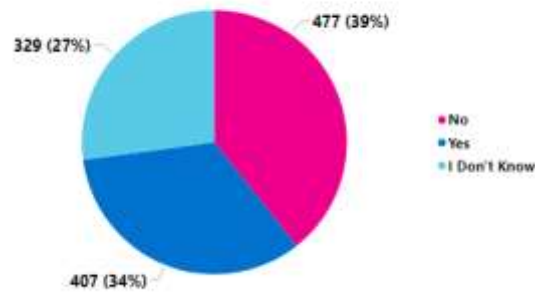


Figure 14: Male caregivers' qualifications to benefit the community in raising children

When asked whether respondents have the competencies and qualifications to benefit their community in terms of raising children, 34% said to possess these skills, compared to 27% who said they did not know whether this was true.

To the question of whom they refer to in case they need any advice related to raising children, most husbands answered that they refer to their wives first, then to their family, service providers, and friends, respectively. Wives, on the other hand, refer to their husbands first, then to the family of the latter, and to his friends, respectively.

With regard to the correlations related to the environments and its impact, the greatest value of the connection between the region and the aspect of power and privilege, with the correlation coefficient ($r = 0.076$). Parents from both the Northern and Southern regions responded with approval of the impact of the environment in the way of raising young children and with the possibility of changing the method of education according to the cultural and social environment by more than 70% while in the central region the percentage was 56%, supporting previous results that emphasized the role of the environment in influencing the upbringing of children, and the largest value of the correlation between the number of working hours and the power and privilege aspect was also on the side of environments and its impact, so that the correlation coefficient ($r = 0.082$) between each of the number of working hours and the possibility of changing the methods of education according to different cultural and social environments.

Power and Privilege results summery

By presenting the results of the statistical analysis and answering the report's questions on the aspect of power and privilege, the most important findings can be summarized using the four main pillars of the axis: daily routine, early childhood development, relationship with partner and its impact on child-rearing, environment and its impact).

With regard to the daily routine pillar, the results of the report concluded that the percentage of husbands helping their wives is relatively low, and that going to the health center is deemed as a responsibility of females only. Therefore, the male presence in the health center increases with the sixth or seventh vaccination of the child as resulted from the FGDs. As for the early childhood development pillar, the results indicated that parents believe that they are the pivotal person who helps the child overcome behavioral problems and that they are the only reference for them. The report also found that parents are looking for new ways of upbringing if the methods used are not successful, and that parents generally allow their children to express their opinions freely.

As for the relationship with the partner and its impact on child-rearing, males and females tend to share ideas and opinions about raising children with their partner. Furthermore, fathers allocate time on a daily basis for the family, and both males and females express their feelings about child-rearing and related topics to a great extent.

The findings on the environments and their impact showed that most respondents consider culture, socio-economic status and the environment to have an impact on the ways of raising young children. According to them, these methods can vary depending on the cultural and social environment. We can also observe a gender equality awareness in education and treatment, where only 20% of the respondents supports the idea of discrimination in education and treatment between sons and daughters. The report also found that the father's family has an impact on the way young children are raised, with more than 50% of male parents emphasizing this impact in their responses.

Second: Results Analysis

The world is going through many economic, intellectual and social transformations and developments, which was caused by policies, technological explosion, globalization, pandemics, climatic changes, and so on, but this development was simple with regard to the social environment. It is imposed by the values of the social environment without being able to get rid of its restrictions³³, and this is what is expressed in customs and traditions, by which we mean an obligatory behavior consisting of religious and customary values that make individuals in the community subservient to certain standards³⁴, and with the passage of time it becomes a force and a tool for societal control that seeks to preserve a specific entity of society

³³ Social change and its role in influencing values, customs and traditions, Hind Al-Barizat, Journal of Social Sciences, Arab Demographic Center, Germany, No. 14, 2020

³⁴ Mosaediya, Zahr (2017), On the Concept of Culture and Some of Its Components, Memory Journal, No. 9.

confined to it, different from one place to another³⁵, this required taking two paths to solve this problem; The first is to follow an educational methodology to confront the spread of negative habits inherent in society, and the second is to create an appropriate social environment for future generations³⁶. This can only be achieved by intensifying efforts between the various institutions to create a new qualified and supportive social environment for the new generation.

Looking at the Jordanian society in particular, we find that socio-cultural and economic factors have an impact on the extent of change that occurs in the societal environment as well as the political factors and the Syrian asylum and its consequences, which helped to establish a stereotyped image of the roles of men and women in the family entity. This image emerged from the inherited customs, traditions and societal culture, and this directly affected the effectiveness of the roles of both women and men in the family, and also had an impact on the perception of the role of women and the role of men within the family. This is reflected in the child's upbringing and development.

Looking to the results of the report regarding power and privilege, this aspect is mainly affected by a combination of economic and socio-cultural factors, which can be analyzed as follows.

First Pillar: The Daily Routine

The results of the report showed that carrying out daily chores is conceived as the main role of mothers, and that there is a lack of assistance from their husbands in this regard, due to the customs, traditions and culture prevailing in society and shaping the socialization of young males. The reproductive role is assigned solely to the females, in addition to her daily tasks at home. On the other hand, the man is considered to be the decision-maker³⁷, and many factors contribute to the realization of this idea, such as social norms, beliefs, and even the nature of games played by male children as opposed to female children. The latter ones often play with dolls and kitchen tools, while sons generally play with fighting games and cars. This obviously promotes gender segregation from a young age and creates the perception that females are the most engaged and competent for doing chores at home. The results of the report furthermore indicated that the responsibility for going to the health center primarily lies with the mother, perhaps due to the fact that the majority of the health center workers and visitors are women. The number of midwives in Jordan has reached 1501 according to the report of the Department of Statistics for the year 2020³⁸. Midwives fill key positions in the maternity and child departments, and they are responsible for the care of pregnant women and newborns or children at the age of two years and related to this age stage of vaccination, care and instructions.

Economic factors also have a significant impact on husbands' assistance in daily chores such as cleaning, taking care of the children, or accompanying them to the health center. Most respondents emphasize that the way they raise and treat their children differs based on the economic situation of the family. Hence, we cannot ignore the impact of economic factors on the participation of husbands. These factors increase the pressure on men in their social capacity as the primary financial provider who is responsible for the household needs. The needs of the family force men to work long hours and often to engage in more than

³⁵ Mosaediya, Zahr (2017), On the Concept of Culture and Some of Its Components, Memory Journal, No. 9.

³⁶ Social change and its role in influencing values, customs and traditions, Hind Al-Barizat, Journal of Social Sciences, Arab Demographic Center, Germany, No. 14, 2020

³⁷ Arab Women's Organization (2013), The UPR Report on Women's Rights in Jordan

³⁸ Jordan in Figures, Department of Statistics, Issue 23, 2020.

one job. However, being the primary reference for the labor market, the Labor and Workers Act No. 8 of 1996 guarantees the rights of both workers and employers, stipulating that the maximum number of working hours should not exceed eight hours per day or forty-eight hours per week. In 2021, the Ministry of Labor furthermore decided to raise the minimum wage from 220 JOD to 260 JOD per month, but the minimum wage remains lower than the absolute poverty line, which can be defined as the level of income or spending needed per capita to secure basic food and non-food needs related to housing, education, health and transportation³⁹, equivalent to 480 JOD per family, considering that the standard family size is equal to 4.8 individuals⁴⁰. The latest version of the numbeo index (2017) revealed that the average monthly salary in Jordan is 455 JOD⁴¹, thus putting the family, and in particular the father as the primary financial provider, under the burden of taking on additional jobs to cover the basic needs of the family in terms of food, health, education and others.

Women's participation in work also has a role to play in reaching the previous results. Despite the government's efforts to promote women's economic participation, the participation rate remains low compared to that of men. According to the Department of Public Statistics, the economic participation rate of women in 2020 did not exceed 14%, and the wage gap in Jordan is equivalent to 13.6% in the public sector and 14.2% in the private sector⁴². This gap is most evident in predominantly female sectors, such as education and health care, due to several factors that may be social, cultural or economic, as a result of the lack of job opportunities available for women, the acceptance of females in the labor market in certain jobs, the consideration of the burdens of resulting from their right to maternity leave, observance during pregnancy, and taking care of children and sick leave from the employer's point of view, as well as a social perception of the role of women.

With regard to the ecological framework surrounding the nuclear family, the focus group discussion confirmed that 66% of males and females considered going to the health center as a responsibility of mothers, because they are more aware of the conditions of the child, especially at a young age. Moreover, men admitted that they do not like being in health centers because the visits take too long and there is no added value in their presence. One participant stated that "we prefer to stay at home to care of the other children instead".

Second pillar: Early Childhood Development

The report showed that fathers believe to be the central person on which their children depend in solving their behavioral problems. The reasons for this include the societal perception of the role of men in the family, which is to use his strength and knowledge to solve the problems to which his child is exposed, as well as the inherited upbringing that a man is the main reference to solve his family's problems, whether related to community relations, securing material needs, or even at the family level itself, and to modify unwanted behaviors. This belief stems from a limited view regarding women's abilities, the latter ones being confined to household chores and pregnancy, childbirth and care for the child. Although women have proven their worth in all the roles assigned to them, this perception is inherent to Jordanian society, and needs double the efforts to be modified.

³⁹ <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/publications/>

⁴⁰ Al-Ghad newspaper Jordan, Samah Baybars 2021

⁴¹ https://www.numbeo.com/cost-of-living/country_result.jsp?country=Jordan

⁴² <https://www.women.jo/ar/node/6291>

Among the most important results of the report is the belief of parents in their positive role in raising their children. The report namely confirmed that parents search for new methods of education when the methods used are not successful, that they allow their children to express their opinions freely, and that they feel comfortable expressing their feelings about child-rearing and related topics. The high percentage of parental awareness caused by media campaigns and intensive efforts locally and internationally within Jordan to emphasize the role of fathers in developing their children cognitively, physically and emotionally, as well as the high percentage of educated people with higher educational qualifications as the illiteracy rate in Jordan has decreased significantly over the past years and reached 5.1% at the end of 2020, according to the statistics of the Department of Statistics., It is attributed to the invasion of technology and the resulting knowledge in all fields, including the positive education of children, and the proper parenting role, and we may add here the involvement of women with men in the fields of private and public work and the exchange of experiences and roles produced. The COVID-19 pandemic along with its economic consequences have had a great impact on the roles played by men and women in society. According to the World Bank's 2021 report, Jordan's economy has shrunk by 1.6% in the aftermath of the pandemic. Reports of the Department of Public Statistics show that this contraction was accompanied by a rise in unemployment of more than 23% during the fourth quarter of 2021⁴³, as well as a deficit in the general budget, amounting to 1.74 billion Jordanian dinars⁴⁴. Hence, the Jordanian public debt now equals 85.6% of the Kingdom's gross domestic product⁴⁵, which affects the Jordanian citizens in terms of monthly income and available job opportunities, high unemployment rates, and a change of the labor system from physical to remote work. These facts have caused many parents to play roles that they were not yet accustomed to, such as spending more time with the family at home – which can be seen from the report results -, learning the art of cooking, helping children with their homework, or going out with them to the playground and other places. On the other hand, one cannot overlook the impact of the parents' psychological state due to their economic conditions on the quality of the time spent with their children. After all, it is not important how many hours the father and the child spend together, but rather how they spend this time.

Looking at the ecosystem surrounding the nuclear family, participants in the focus group discussions were asked about the methods the caregiver uses in raising his child. In terms of communication, discipline, playing and teaching, the answers indicated the use of a variety of methods, such as encouragement and motivation, punishment based on age, playing and singing, education by example, , guidance and counseling. The most important methods used in education included allowing children to express their opinions, giving them enough space to participate in dialogue, providing them with safety and respect, and allowing them to choose their friends, games and other educational activities. This was confirmed by the results of the report from the parents' point of view. Furthermore, workers in health sector indicated that there is a clear link between the child's age and the participation of their parents in their upbringing and the way to deal with the child, the older the child becomes, the easier for the father to deal with (especially after the 6 months of the child's age).

Third Pillar: Relationship with partner and its impact on the upbringing of young children

⁴³ http://dosweb.dos.gov.jo/ar/unemployment_q42021/

⁴⁴ Citizen's Guide, General Budget Department 2021

⁴⁵ <https://www.reuters.com/article/jordan-economy-debt-ye3-idARAKCN2DC0Z4>

Regarding the relationship with the partner and its impact on upbringing of the children, the report found that fathers tend to share ideas about raising children with their wives and vice versa. Furthermore, parents devote daily time to the family, and both parents feel comfortable expressing their feelings about the upbringing of their children and other related topics. This may be related to modern community culture, which increased the participation of men and women in many family matters, including positive upbringing of the children. In addition to the change in the conditions of families from the extended family to the nuclear family, so that the percentage of extended families in Jordan does not exceed 1.5 percent, according to the Progress Report for Women 2019-2020. Which gave fathers enough time to sit with their wife and children daily instead of the family meetings that were obligatory almost daily with members of the extended family, gave fathers enough time to sit down with their wives and children every day instead of family meetings that were required almost daily with further family members.

It is important to mention the economic impacts that led to the necessity of women working alongside with their husbands in order to help sustaining the family, a need for women to work alongside their husbands in order to help sustaining the family. which helped to emphasize women's' being in front of men, where men began to take her opinion and share with her the details of family life, thus increasing the participatory opinion about children and their upbringing, this is supported by the results of correlations that found a direct relationship between males and females between the extent of sharing opinions and ideas about education methods, the level of family and the educational level of respondents as the participation increases with the increase in both the income and the educational level of the participants, 83% of males and 70% of females with a university degree report that they share ideas, discussions, and opinions about raising children with their spouses.

It should be noted that women who are working are less involved in the methods of child-rearing than those who are not working. Father who are working, to the contrary, are increasingly sharing ideas and opinions about raising their children with their wives. This may be due to the fact that the working wife also takes on the biggest share of the responsibilities within the household, such as cooking and cleaning, and uses the remaining hours of the day to teach the children, visit family, and so on. Working men, on the other hand, have enough free time in the evening to discuss ideas and opinions on ways to raise their children with their wives.

Fourth pillar: Environments and their impact

When it comes to the results of the last pillar, most parents emphasized that culture, socio-economic status, the environment, as well as the father's family have an impact on the upbringing of their young children, and that the methods of child-rearing can vary according to the cultural and social environment. We attribute this to a number of reasons, the most important of which is that Jordanian society is characterized by a system of values and relationships stemming from the family and the trib. The inherent notions that have emerged from this system has had a significant impact on the methods of raising children, it has imposed certain ways of child-rearing on parents, and it has emphasized the masculine role. Rigid gender norms have had a negative impact on women's perception of themselves as well as on men's perceptions of their role in child-rearing. Despite the economic transformations that Jordan has witnessed recently, which have greatly affected the cultural and social environments, Jordanian society continues to suffer from its historical legacy. After all, change does not occur instantly, but rather it

happens gradually and requires sufficient time, as well as the existence of real, equal, and equitable roles for both men and women in society. As Jordanian society has been built upon customs and traditions since ancient times, the separation of roles between fathers and mothers is being sustained, giving the husband's family (and perhaps the wife's family) the right to intervene with the upbringing of young. They interfere in a wide variety of manners, ranging from the type of food provided to the child, to the colors of their clothes, the type of games provided, or even unhealthy and undesirable habits which the parents cannot prevent. Moreover, the spouses' families often have a negative impact on the psychological wellbeing of the child by comparing them to their peers, whether it be in terms of growth, educational attainment, or even the way of speaking. It is known that the first 5 years of the child's life are the ones that define their personality and shape their beliefs and orientations. It is also the most age stage in which the brain grows, as the weight of a newborn's brain is about 25 percent of the child's weight, while at the age of 3 years the brain has grown very significantly by producing billions of cells and hundreds of trillions of neural connections between these neurons. Hence, proper education of the child is crucial at this stage, and the parents or their environments should only interfere when it is valid and in the interest of the child. Over the last two decades, Jordanian society has changed in this regard, as the roles played by the extended family as well as the nuclear family have altered and the participation of women has increased significantly compared with the previous decades. This has contributed in one way or another to changing the nature of societal environments, and to the decline of the role of the extended family in favor of the nuclear family. Consequently, the parents have become more influential in raising young children, but this influence is still relatively low, and it will take some time before Jordanian society fully embraces this new paradigm.

The report also showed an awareness regarding the issue of gender equality in education and treatment, where only 20% of all respondents supported the idea of discriminating between sons and daughters. At first sight, this may seem contrary to the idea of gender perception that attributes specific roles to women, which was one of the most prominent results within the first pillar. However, many parents may discriminate unconsciously, as they believe that they treat their children fairly and equitably. It can also be noted the societal contradiction in the treatment of males and females in the different stages of childhood, In the early stages of childhood, fathers and mothers offer equality between males and females in education and treatment. Then we see the great contradiction that may occur in the later stages, specifically when females reach puberty, the treatment begins to take another turn of clear discrimination, and in some cases, the male authority encourages brotherhood over females, which negatively affects the female personality and her view of herself, and the lack of acceptance of the physical change that has occurred to her as a result of puberty, and are exacerbated by the female to hate her role and her position and this extends to the distant future and takes a negative path in influencing the way she raises her children, the way she will treat the future partner and her expectations for his role as well as her role. Recently, there has been a tendency towards more awareness and campaigns regarding gender equality. Jordan's global ranking has increased by 6 points compared to the Women, Business Activities and Law Report for the year 2020 to become 46.9 out of 100. However, these changes require time and great efforts, as the gender norms are rooted in customs and traditions from ancient times. and as part of the roles that society and employers imposes on males and females, this is not excluded, and appears clearly and is supported by the findings of the report in the previous result, which

was reviewed and talked about in some detail, represented by the impact of culture, social and economic status, environment and the father's family on raising young children.

It is also worth mentioning the Syrian refugee crisis and its impact on Jordanian society and in particular the economy, which has been pressured through the decline of employment opportunities. This crisis has also created more suitable employment opportunities for women than for men, leading to a change of the job roles of both males and females, unemployment increased at a rate of 30-40% for women, and from 10-17% for men, which had many consequences for the Jordanian family and its source of strength, so that women's work became one of the basic matters in the family if the man was exposed to the problem of unemployment.⁴⁶

Looking at the ecosystem surrounding the nuclear family, a question was asked during the focus group discussions regarding gender equality within the family. The participants answered that equality could be achieved by clarifying the rights and duties of both partners and by promoting respect and self-reliance, enabling the wife to express her opinion and to be aware of her rights and duties. In this context, one of the fathers said: "Equality is important in terms of rights and duties and from education and others, even at the level of games and treatment, because discrimination between both male and female children from a young age creates discrimination when they grow up" Another opinion was: "The distinction between men and women exists, but we try as much as possible not to show it. The man is entrusted with tasks outside the house, and the women should stay inside the house. There is no equality, no matter how much they try to instill this idea." This confirms that the societal intellectual transformation exists, but it needs time to be developed and rooted in society.

When asked about the impact of the social, cultural and economic level on the upbringing of children , the participants of the focus group discussions emphasized that cultural factors affect the methods of dialogue, understanding and exchange of views. When each member of the family knows their responsibilities and roles, this has a positive impact on the psychological wellbeing of the child. The economic situation of the family also has a significant impact on the upbringing in terms of securing basic needs, improving the quality of food, improving school standards, using modern technologies, and creating cultural openness through traveling. All of this leads to a healthy psychological and physical upbringing of children While emphasizing that the opposite is not true, children may grow up in a poor economic, cultural and social environment, but the foundations of upbringing are present and the child is brought up properly, and the focus groups also emphasized that children are becoming more affected by social media, and the knowledge it contains about children and ways of dealing with them by parents, and thus they became familiar with some modern positive parenting methods that some sites encourage. Social media has learned children to alert their parents, thus influencing the ways of child-rearing. When asked about whom they refer to if the father cannot deal with a certain situation, focus group participants indicated seeking resorting to specialists, teachers, counsellors, people who have a certain influence on the child such as their uncles and aunts, grandparents, and close friends, or perhaps a doctor if the

⁴⁶ Unemployment rate | General Authority for Statistics (stats.gov.sa)

problem pertains to the child's health. This confirms that the community in one way or another always influences the upbringing of children.

Third: The linkage with the Previous Studies

When linking between this report and the previous literature in the power and privilege aspect. The current report examined more than one aspect of parental care during early childhood, its results were consistent with some previous studies, but they differed from others. where the current report agreed with the study (AlKhatib, 2020) in the presence of a difference between father and mother in the care of children and in the results related to the existence of a statistically significant relationship related to their educational level and the level of parental participation, it also agreed with the study of Bitawi et al. (2014), in the presence of a low interaction in male participation in domestic activities. The report also agreed with the study of Owais et al. (2012) on the impact of cultural values, customs and traditions in Jordanian society on the father's participation in understanding parenting and taking care of his children. It also agreed with the study of Al-Hassan and Taqash (2011) in showing parents positive attitudes towards finding new ways to raise their children. as the current report and the study of Ridge et al. (2021) met that scientific qualification has a role in the participation of parents in the development of their children as parents become increasingly interested in the development of their children. Increase the degree of scientific qualification.

The study conducted by Save the Children (2018) was in conformity with the current report regarding the importance of giving sessions to change parents' attitudes towards parental participation in early childhood development and the importance of addressing gender barriers and modifying roles at home between parents. Our report also agreed with the study conducted by Festo et al. (2015), in that fathers are not accompanying their wives to the health center, even though it is very important. It furthermore agreed with Rakutomanana study (2021) on the role of community culture, customs and traditions in influencing fathers' engagement in the care of their children.

The current study did not follow the example of Al-Khatib (2020) or Hassan and Takash (2011), as it focused solely on the father and not on both parents. Our report also distinguished itself from a study carried out by the Queen Rania Abdullah Foundation (2015), which examined parental care in Jordan with regard to education in particular, and from the study of Hassan and Takash (2011) in the role of societal culture, customs and traditions in influencing the extent to which parents participate in the care of their children.. It differed from Fathi Ahmadyyeh's research (2013) and that of Sivikan Pagan and Seda Ata (2018), both indicating that the income has an impact on parents' beliefs and perceptions of raising their children. Lastly, the report also differed with Barnes (2016) study in the research focus on parents helping their children with areas of play and homework.





Second Aspect: Early Childhood Development

7.2. Second Aspect: Early Childhood Development (Knowledge, Practices, Attitudes)

The early childhood stage is characterized by several aspects, including knowledge which means the set of information directed to achieve a certain understanding within a specific topic, subject to processing, proof, and generalization⁴⁷, as it is also the sum of all information that a child acquires through experience or observation, and practices of early childhood it is also the set of behaviors of with specific meaning in the child's culture or the community around them. And attitude which is an organized, coordinated method of thinking, feeling and reactions towards people, groups or social issues⁴⁸, it is also the beliefs that are constantly inculcated in children. Given male caregivers' role in the growth and development of their young children, we will review the most important findings with regard to ECD aspects (knowledge, practices, and attitudes) through two main pillars:

- **The first pillar: Growth and development of children**
- **The second pillar: The partner's role**

Within these pillars, we will review the most important findings of the report from the point of view of both fathers and mothers, and link the results to the local context, ecological framework, and previous literature related to the same aspect. By way of conclusion, some recommendations will be proposed, and the aspect will be linked to a number of variables, such as educational level, work, number of family members, level of family income, and region.

The First pillar: Growth and development of children

The child's physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and linguistic growth and development relate to the surrounding family and community, as well as the activities, knowledge, and education provided to them, supported by the physical aspect of entertainment, including social activities, well-being and learning, which will be presented later.

The following figure shows male caregivers' views on the extent to which social activities promote the well-being and learning of their children. Whereas 74% of responding parents agree that social activities enhance the well-being and learning of their children, only 0.05% disagree.

⁴⁷ [Jetguru team, "Types of Knowledge: Explicit, Implicit, and Tacit". Edited.](#)

⁴⁸ Abdul Latif, Waheed Ahmed, Social Psychology, Dar Al-Masir, 1st Edition, Amman, 2001, p. 40.

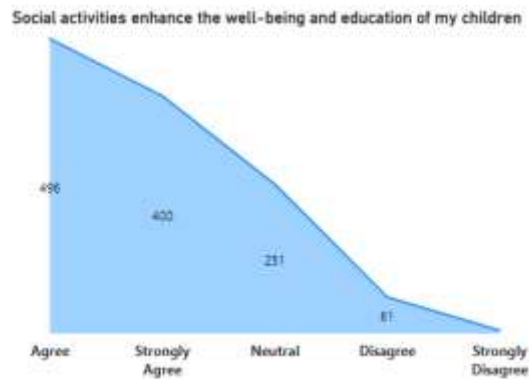


Figure 15: Social activities and the well-being and education of the child

Regarding the correlations to the growth and the development of children, the minimal correlation was with the region in paragraph "Social activities enhance the well-being and learning of my children; The correlation coefficient is ($r = -0.052$) the lowest in the southern region, meaning that there is no relationship between the different regions and the attitudes of parents regarding the impact of social activities on the well-being and learning of their children.

The second pillar: The partner's role

The role of partner refers to what male caregiver do in raising, caring for children, developing their talents, and sharing different areas of their daily lives. This role is as important as the activity itself, given that the presence of a person mentoring and involving with the child has a significant impact on the cognitive, emotional and psychological development of the child. In this pillar we will review the results of the report under the following sub-headings:

- The ability to take responsibility for children
- Children's participation in certain areas (personal matters, health, entertainment activities)

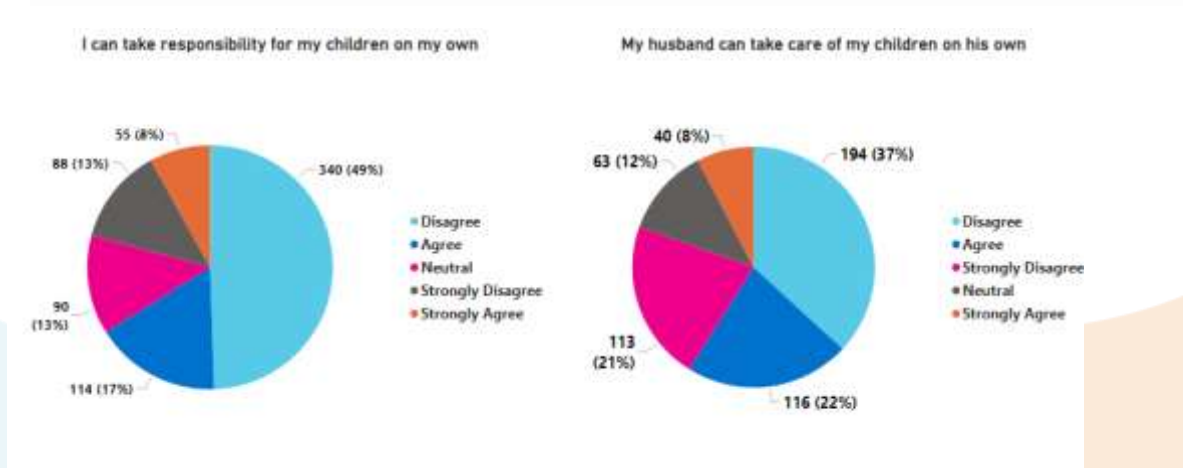


Figure 16: Male caregivers' ability to take children responsibilities

The previous two figures present the responses of parents to the question about the husband's ability to take responsibility for his children alone. 25% and 62% of male caregivers respectively reported that they are able and unable to take responsibility for their children alone. Similar percentages arise when looking at the mothers' answers, with 30% and 58% respectively agreeing and disagreeing with the prompt.

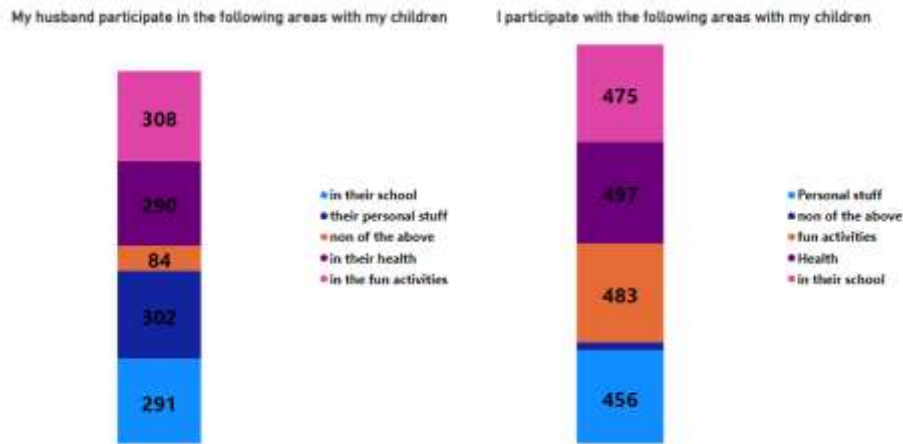


Figure 17: Male caregivers' participation in raising children

Male caregivers were asked about the extent of their engagement in the areas of education, personal matters, health, and activities. The answers showed that male caregivers are engaged in the different areas of their children's lives, with 25% of men's reporting engagement in health, 24% in activities, and 24% in education, .002% of all respondents answered "none of the above". When looking at the mothers' responses, on the other hand, 24% and 23% respectively indicated that their husbands are engaged in activities and personal matters, while in the areas of education and health the participation rate was estimated to be 22%. 0.06% of mothers stated that their husbands do not engage with their children in any of the areas mentioned.

The highest correlation values in this pillar were found for the prompt "the father is able to take responsibility for his children by his own", with the correlation coefficient for the **region** being ($r = 0.026$). The highest correlation values were found for the central and northern regions, where fathers tend to have more responsibility for their children on their own than in the southern region. Whereas, the highest correlation between the number of working hours with the same paragraph was ($r = 0.053$). Hence, the **number of working hours** has a significant impact on the tendency of parents to take responsibility for their children on their own: the more working hours, the more father is able to take responsibility for his children. While the lowest correlation factor ($r = -0.064$) was found between the **number of working hours** and the prompt "the father engages with his children in areas related to their daily lives", meaning that the number of working hours does not affect the male caregivers' participation in their children's daily lives. Furthermore, the highest correlation ($r = -0.005$) was found between the latter prompt and the **number of children in the family**. The number of children in the family thus significantly affects male caregivers' ability to take responsibility for the children on their own. On the other hand, the lowest correlation ($r = -0.126$) was found between the number of children in the family and the prompts "the father engages with his children in areas related to their daily life": the more children in the family, the less the father is able to engage in children's daily activities and to take on the responsibility for the

children alone. Finally, the correlation coefficient between the prompt above and the **academic qualification** was ($r=0.145$). However, the correlation between the prompt "the father is able to take responsibility for his children by his own" and the academic qualification was ($r=-0.030$), meaning that more educated parents are more involved in the development and care of their children. Although the academic qualification is highly linked to male caregivers' participation in their children's daily life, there is no correlation between academic qualification and male caregivers' beliefs in their ability to take responsibility for their children alone.

Summary of the result of ECD Aspects

By presenting the results of the statistical analysis and answering the report's questions related to ECD aspects (knowledge, practices, attitudes), the most important findings of the report may be summarized as follows.

The results of the report in the first pillar (**growth and development of children**) emphasize the importance of social activities in promoting the well-being and learning of children. In the second pillar (**partner's role**), on the other hand, it was found that the husband cannot take responsibility for his children alone. Finally, father engage with their children in different areas of their lives, such as entertainment (on top of the list), personal matters, health, and education.

Second: Result Analysis

It has become known that child-rearing is a purposeful social activity or process, which continues from birth to death. One of its most important functions is to prepare the human being for life, and work to achieve the interaction and adaptation required with the society in which he lives, that affects him and is affected by it as well,⁴⁹ and highlights the role of parents or caregivers in raising and giving their children the knowledge, skills and attitudes that may accompany them for life, the role of parents is to find long-term family care in a way that includes deep feelings for the upbringing and socialization of the child⁵⁰. The aspects of child development include a set of interactions, behaviors, beliefs, and knowledge associated with a child's health and that lead to its protection. Hence, attention to caregivers and directing various programs to support them and develop their skills at various levels, so that parenting programs support caregivers to continue building good practices, and enable them to adopt other approaches that will develop and nurture children.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Educational institutions and their impact on raising the individual and society www.saaid.net

⁵⁰ WHO (2009). Violence Prevention the Evidence: Preventing violence the development of safe, stable and nurturing relationships between children and their parents and caregivers, World Health Organization, Geneva, <http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2009/9789241597821_eng_pdf>,

⁵¹ <https://www.unicef.org/ar/>

considering the results of the report within the ECD aspect (knowledge, practices, attitudes), we find that this aspect is mainly affected by a set of economic, social, cultural, and parental instinct factors, which may be analyzed as follows:

First Pillar: Growth and Development of children

The results of the report indicated that parents emphasized the importance of social activities in promoting the well-being and learning of children, which may be due to a number of reasons, including parental instinct and community experience. Media and awareness also play a major role in this. Parental instinct refers to the innate feeling that God has given to parents, which enables them to feel their children's psychological, cognitive, and emotional needs, and the extent to which they need social interaction with peers or the surrounding environment, thus promoting a child's positive behaviors and increasing their well-being. With regard to fathers' community experience, there are many similar cases of socially integrated children and isolated others in the surrounding community of fathers, as a child who is often not engaged in social activities has less chance of learning and integration, according to a scientific study conducted at Icahn college in New York about brain cells in the anterior cortex area severely affected by social isolation at young age, which is responsible for regulating the social behaviors necessary to ensure normal social interaction at puberty.⁵² The participation of parents in their children's daily activities contributes significantly to the social development of the child, and notifying children of the importance of these activities, which greatly affects the child's psychological, cognitive and behavioral development. Also, focusing on the role of media and awareness in clarifying facts and knowledge about the importance of social activities and their role in the development of children's growth, well-being and functioning. Through awareness campaigns; As the media has a set of functions that it performs, for example, it contributes to socialization, entertainment and entertainment, monitoring public concerns, education and learning. Among the most important areas in which the media plays an active role, we find awareness and education, given its ability to reach the different segments of society⁵³. Especially with the spread of technology to all segments of society and the great expansion of its use.

Given the ecological framework surrounding the nuclear family, the results of the focus group discussions showed the answers of the parents about their role in supporting their child's social development, such as building relationships, learning social norms, and understanding perspectives. Their answers focused on giving children the freedom and space to choose their close friends, emphasizing the role of parents in guiding and supervising. When asked whether they believe that financial resources affect their children's learning/health, the answers confirmed a significant and fundamental impact; as they provide the child with basic and secondary needs, which also reduce the father's sense of omission towards his or her children and increase the child's self-confidence when he or she is equal or superior to his peers by securing his or her needs, and affect the quality of health and educational care provided to the child. During the focus group discussions, one of the parents mentioned that financial resources had a significant impact on increasing the number of hours a father spends with his children by not requiring additional working hours to meet his family's needs.

⁵² Study: Social isolation during childhood causes damage to brain cells (ammonnews.net)

⁵³ Habhouh, Halima, The Role of Television Media Campaigns in Health Awareness, published Master's thesis, 2015

Second Pillar: The Partner's Role

Within this pillar, the report concluded that the husband cannot take responsibility for his children alone, which was confirmed by both fathers and mothers. This may be explained by the lack of knowledge of most male caregivers about the stages of development and growth of their young children in terms of the right food and feeding times, the appropriate clothing for certain weather conditions, the right medicine in case of illness, and other matters of daily life. In turn, this is mainly due to the specific social upbringing of both men and women in the family, as well as their stereotypical roles in society, which may cause the mother not to trust the father to be given the responsibility of dealing with his children alone but rather to be afraid that he will do harm to her child. The time parents spend outside the home also has an impact on their knowledge about their children's development, especially if the workplace is far from home or the parent needs to sleep outside the home. The number of official working hours in Jordan is around 8 hours per day, but the commute to work may range from 3 to 4 hours a day back and forth, causing the father to be absent for a long time. Moreover, the personal needs of male caregivers may keep them away from their children even when they are at home. All these hours of absence affect their knowledge about their child's development and needs. It must also be noted that in the early development stage (and especially during infancy), the child is more attached to the mother, Specifically, the mother may notice attachment at the age of 10-18 months, and it may start at the age of six months, and extend until the child reaches the age of 4 years. This attachment to the mother may increase in some situations or cases that the child is going through, for example when the child begins his first steps and learns to walk, or when the child joins nursery school, kindergarten or school; This transitional stage represents a partial separation from his mother⁵⁴. Reflecting the preconceived belief of both parents that fathers are unable to take on the role of the mother and that the primary responsibility for children lies with the mother, without any significant role for the father. This belief sticks with the parents throughout advanced stages of the child's life, although it gradually decreases. Despite an equal share of the economic burden at home, women's role in raising their children is constant. May add in this area the father's workplace and flexibility in guaranteeing the development of fathers' engagement in raising their young children.

Considering the ecological framework surrounding the nuclear family, the results of focus groups discussions with parents were confirmed when asking the fathers what they would do if they had to switch roles with their wives in raising their children. Their answers focused mainly on helping to teach the children, from which we may conclude that men consider teaching as the most appropriate activity for their male role. However, it is the most difficult task to take on for male caregivers, as it requires much time in addition to the great intellectual, psychological, and physical efforts. Some fathers mentioned their desire to spend a long time with their children to have various discussions and dialogues. By asking key stakeholders about their views on policies that should be implemented to encourage parents to engage in child-rearing, the answers indicated a need for awareness through publications, parenting awareness sessions, premarital awareness, or awareness through targeted television media with meaningful, attractive, and applicable content for parents. Moreover, awareness should be raised about the importance of the father's role in the development and care of his children, so that facilities are provided

⁵⁴ Clingy babies and separation anxiety: how to cope, nct,2019

when they need leave or even to ease the workload of fathers, which would give them more time with their children.

The results of the report also found what mothers think about the engagement of their husbands with their children in different fields of their lives, such as entertainment, personal matters, health, and education, with fathers being most engaged in the former area according to their wives. For the perspective of the father, this may be explained by the fact that he wants to compensate for the hours spent away from his children, by sharing interests with them and making them happy. Where the focus is on raising the level of well-being of young children. This is called emotional compensation; that describes making the small amount of time available to children enough to convey feelings of love and attention and to continue communication between the child and his parents, such as sharing the things children loves or areas of their interest.⁵⁵ The participation of fathers for their children in their various fields of life may be a door to forming a relationship dominated by the nature of friendship, intimacy and love, which creates a positive participatory atmosphere and various dialogues and enriching discussions concerning their childhood and areas of their lives in the present and the future.

Both fathers and mothers agreed that the former engage in different areas of their children's lives, such as entertainment, personal matters, health and education. As Health, education, and personal hygiene are among the most important elements for children's growth and development. Which is one of the most important rights of the child that humanitarian institutions and the laws and legislations emanating from it have sought to achieve.⁵⁶ They are also major and essential areas in the family routine, especially in the early childhood stage, which is monitored by both the mother and the father in order for their children to have their chance of healthy growth and correct cognitive, behavioral and emotional development.

Regarding the ecological framework surrounding the nuclear family, one father mentioned during the focus group discussions that "education is not a written method and thoughtful steps, but daily life situations that become easier to deal with by doubling experience in early childhood areas". Hence, increasing the number of hours fathers spend with their children has been important in shaping life experiences during early childhood.

Third: Linkage with the previous Studies

The current report can be compared to previous studies because of its orientation towards male caregivers and the extent of their engagement in the development and care during early childhood. However, the details of the report and its sub-findings of course differed. In the ECD aspect (knowledge, attitudes, practices), the current report agreed with Bitawi et al. (2014) in that parents have a moderate level of engagement in daily routine activities with their children, such as entertainment activities and personal matters. It also agreed with Fathi Ahmadiyya's study conducted in 2013, saying that increasing the engagement of Jordanian parents with their children is a priority. In accordance with Barnes' study (2016), this report concluded that fathers were more involved in helping their children perform homework (education), and that fathers had high levels of engagement in entertainment activities such as football games and excursions. The report also agreed with the study conducted by Rakutomanana (2021)

⁵⁵ Ashley Miller's article "Emotional Development for Children with Working Parents" posted on [livestrong.com](https://www.livestrong.com)

⁵⁶ <https://www.unicef.org/ar/>

regarding fathers' beliefs about their stereotypical role in child-rearing, which includes teaching and playing as an entertainment aspect.

On the other hand, the report disagreed with the study of Bitawi et al. (2014) in that the academic qualification of the father had statistically significant correlation with his perceptions and practices in daily routine activities with children. It also contradicted Rakutomanana research (2021) by concluding on fathers' inability to take responsibility for young children alone, whereas Rakutomanana (2021) confirmed that They can stay alone with their children as long as they are playing games.

Fourth: Challenges on the ECD Aspects (Knowledge, Practices, Attitudes)

The challenges in this aspect arise from society's customs and traditions, such as upbringing, gender segregation, women's self-perception and men's views on the role of males in the family, Jordanian identity, as well as the impact of policies on ECD aspects, such as long working hours, overtime after work, minimum wage, and other economic factors.



Third Aspect: Parenting

7.1. Third Aspect: Parenting

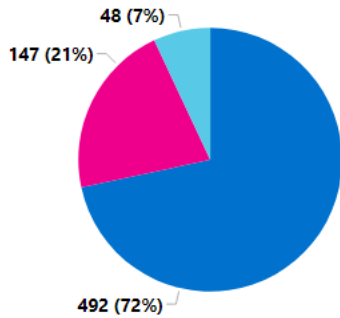
In recent decades, Jordan's efforts have focused on supporting Jordanian households with parenting programs, specifically aimed at both parents or one of them. These programs consist of early childhood training, education, and awareness materials, supporting parental care in accordance with a specific timeline and the outcomes they seek to achieve. By raising awareness among Jordanian families about the importance of parental care in the various stages of child-rearing, parenting programs reiterate the significance of parents' participation in maintaining the cohesion of the family and society, emphasize changing traditionally inherited roles, and build new roles for both parents based on scientific, health, and cultural foundations. The sessions are directed at the mother, the father, or both. They include various topics and focus on the characteristics of children, their rights, as well as how to protect them from abuse. Safe and healthy relationships between parents and their young children are also being addressed.

Despite the importance of parenting programs for both mothers and fathers, this report focused on monitoring the role of parenting programs in the participation of fathers in the lives of their young children. This aspect will address the most important results in this regard, under the following key pillars:

- **The first pillar: Parenting sessions**
- **The second pillar: Session topics and content**
- **The third pillar: Referral**
- **The fourth pillar: Workplace flexibility**

The following figure shows fathers' responses with regard to attending parenting sessions on family planning, early childhood development, maternal and child health, and so on. 72% of respondents stated that they never attend these sessions, 21% indicated to attend the sessions sometimes, and 7% of fathers reported that they always attend the parenting sessions. Mothers' answers supported the responses of fathers. 80% of mothers said that fathers do not attend parenting sessions. 15% and 4% responded with the options 'sometimes' and 'always' respectively.

I Attend parent sessions such as family planning, early childhood development and mother and child health



My husband attends parenting sessions such as family planning, early childhood development and mother and child health

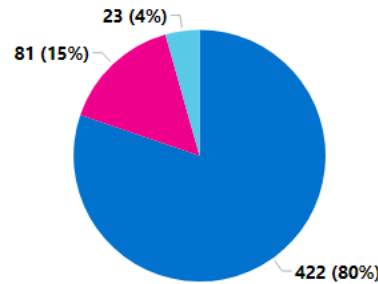


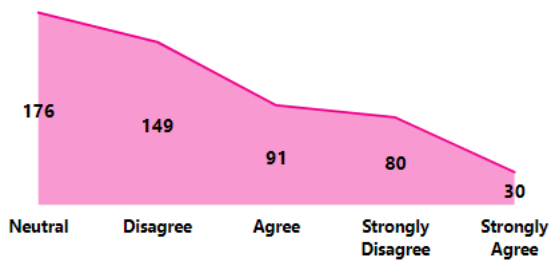
Figure 18: Male caregivers' attending parenting sessions

Regarding the correlates of parenting sessions, the lowest value was found with the **academic qualification** and the **number of working hours** was in the paragraph "I attend sessions for the parents, such as family planning, early childhood development and mother and child health." The correlation value is ($r = -0.017$) for educational qualification and ($r = -0.004$) for the number of working hours. Hence, there is no relationship between the fathers' educational level or their number of working hours and their attendance at the parenting sessions. With a coefficient of ($r = 0.109$), the highest value of correlation for the same prompt was found with the **number of children** in the family: the greater the number of children in the family, the greater the interest of fathers to attend parenting sessions.

In order to gain deeper insights into the commitment of fathers to attend parenting sessions, parents were given the following statement (cf. the two figures below): "My participation / my husband's participation in attending specialized sessions for parents depends on the topic of the sessions". In the first figure, 39% of fathers reported that they "do not agree", while 30% of fathers reported to agree. The second figure shows the results of the mothers' responses. 43% among them indicated not to agree that their husband's participation depends on the topic of the parenting sessions, while 17% agreed with the prompt.

The region demonstrated the lowest value of correlation for the prompt "My husband's / my participation in attending specialized sessions for parents depends on the topic of the sessions", with a correlation coefficient of ($r = -0.069$). In other words, parents' answers in this regard were not influenced by their difference in region.

My husband's participation in specialized sessions for parents depends on the topic of the sessions



My participation in attending specialized sessions for parents depends on the topic of the sessions

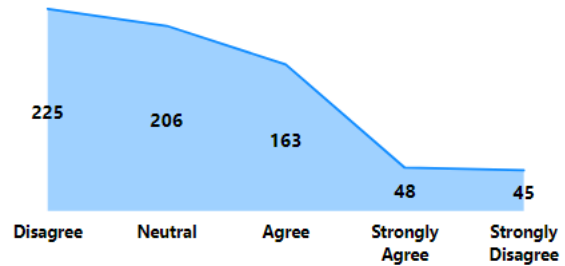
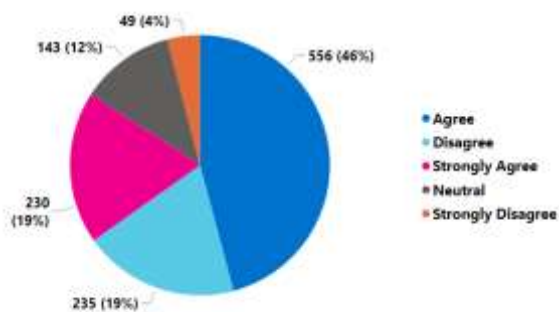


Figure 19: Male caregivers' participation in specialized sessions

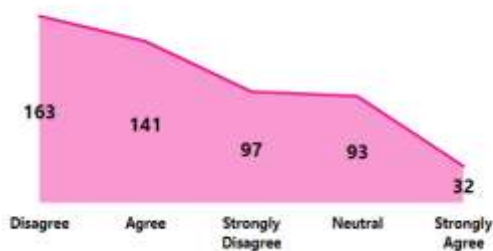
I accept to be referred to a particular service provider to advise and guide me in dealing with my children in accordance with the advice of the caregiver



The figure on the left shows the parents' responses to the question whether they accept being referred to a particular service provider to advise and guide them in raising their children in accordance with the advice of the health care provider. While 65% of responded to agree, the disapproval rate reached 24%.

Figure 20: Male caregiver referral to service providers acceptance

My husband's workplace is flexible in terms of supporting and allowing both parents to participate in raising young children



My workplace flexible in terms of supporting and allowing both parents to participate in raising young children

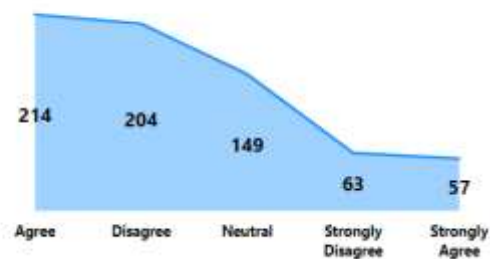


Figure 21: Workplace flexibility in supporting and allowing parents to participate in raising children

The two figures above show the responses of parents to the statement "My workplace / my husbands' workplace is flexible in terms of supporting both parents to participate in raising young children and allowing time for this". While 39% of fathers agreed, a close 38% did not agree. Furthermore, 49% of mothers disagreed with the prompt. 32% of them, on the other hand, agreed on the flexibility of their husband's workplace.

Overall, the highest correlation coefficient ($r = 0.023$) with regard to the prompt "A flexible workplace with regard to supporting both parents to participate in raising young children and to allow the time needed for that" was found for the region. In the center, the south, and the north, ranked from high to low, parents indicated a high percentage that the workplace is flexible in terms of supporting parents to participate in raising young children and allowing the time needed for that. The highest value of correlation with the **educational qualification** and the parenting sessions pillar, with the previous paragraph, with a correlation coefficient ($r = 0.065$). The higher parents' qualifications, the more they agree with the prompt. The highest correlations in terms of **working hours** came with this paragraph and with a correlation coefficient ($r = 0.109$). The higher the number of working hours, the more each of the parents believed that the husband's workplace is not flexible with regard to raising young children and providing the necessary time for that. There was a lower correlation coefficient ($r = -0.014$) with the number of children in the family, meaning that there is no relationship between the number of children in the family and the opinion of the parents regarding the flexibility of the husband's workplace.

Parenting programs results summary

Looking at the statistical analysis of the results, and their clarification within the four main pillars of this aspect (parenting sessions, session topics and content, referral, workplace flexibility), we can summarize the most important results as follows:

First, the report concluded that both parents think in similar proportions that fathers are not obligated to attend parenting sessions on topics such as family planning, early childhood development and maternal and child health. As for the sessions' topics and content pillar, the results of the report confirmed that the participation of fathers in attending parenting sessions does not depend on the topics of those sessions. While the results of the report came in the referral pillar to the consent of parents and their desire if they were referred to a particular service provider to provide advice and guidance to them, and on the last pillar of this aspect, which is the workplace flexibility. The results of the report showed disapproval with the prompt "my husband's workplace is flexible and supports both parents in participating in the upbringing of young children and allowing time for it" from the point of view of mothers, and equal approval and disapproval rates for fathers.

Second: Results Analysis

Parents are the first educational institution in the lives of their children, as they are the foundation in the development and care of their young children through their various developmental aspects - hence the interest in developing programs for parents and caregivers with a view to increase their knowledge in different ways and with various methods, to build their children's capacities from birth to 8 years, and to create a safe family environment which enables healthy development. These programs contain pre-planned and prepared sessions with meaningful content that raises parents' abilities, guides for developing parenting awareness, qualified facilitators, and the results are monitored periodically, so that

parents become the role model for their children. Parenting programs focus on the needs and dimensions of parenting care by focusing on health, nutrition, stimulation and protection, those programs can particularly support vulnerable families who benefit most from these interventions.⁵⁷

In what follows, a summary will be provided of the most important results.

The results of the report indicated that both parents think in similar proportions that fathers are not obligated to attend parenting sessions on topics such as family planning, early childhood development, or maternal and child health. This may be attributed to a combination of different factors, among which the modest role of the media to announce, encourage and promote these sessions. Which is considered the most influential force in our lives due to rapid technological development and integrated with all the details of life.⁵⁸ Through which several important main points are clarified, such as the venues of the sessions, the target group, the main topics, the expected results, and their positive impact on the family and society, as well as the reasons for the existence of this service on the ground, and the extent to which institutions' interest in providing sessions to the target group and the interest in advertising and encouraging parents to attend, and to the extent to which they cover the target group of parents, in addition to the fact that sociocultural factors may play a role on fathers attendance of parenting sessions, which is represented by the culture of shame. This greatly affects the opinions and beliefs of Jordanian society, especially on topics related to the family and spouses. The fact that the husband is attending these sessions shows that he accepts taking on a role similar to his wife's role in raising and caring for the children. After all, the latter task traditionally falls under the responsibility of the mother in Jordanian society. This has led to the emergence of wrong beliefs and perceptions of fathers about the topics discussed during parenting sessions, which are - in their opinion - directed towards the mother and her role in caring for young children and have nothing to do with the man. On the other hand, economic factors such as the husband's long working hours and their correspondence with the time of the sessions that are usually held in health centers may affect the participation of fathers. This may be attributed to the father's inability to distribute his time in a balanced manner between his work and his family. Moreover, it cannot be denied that the majority of the staff, particularly in health centers, who provide the courses are female, which may impede attendance to the sessions in one way or another. The lack of commitment to attend these sessions may also be due to the distance between the place where parental care sessions are held and the family's area of residence or workplace. Looking at the ecosystem surrounding the nuclear family confirmed the results of the focus group discussions when parents were asked the following question: "If you would like to enroll in an early childhood care and development program to attend parenting sessions, where would you prefer to attend?" The respondents were emphasizing two things: the place and the time. Fathers preferred the sessions to be organized in a nearby place or in an area accessible by transportation. They also suggested providing special transportation for the parents to participate in the parenting sessions, and coordinating with the parents to find an appropriate time for the sessions. When asking fathers whether it would be more convenient to attend alone or with the mother, most of them responded that they would be more comfortable with their wife

⁵⁷ UNICEF (2016). Standards for parenting Programs: in Low- and Middle-income countries.

⁵⁸ Al-Rifai, Muhammad Khalil, The Role of the Media in the Digital Age in Forming Arab Family Values (An Analytical Study), Damascus University Journal, Volume 27, Number One + Two, 2011

being present. Moreover, when asking them about which topics they would like to learn in these sessions, they answered the following topics: new education techniques, how to deal with the child, intellectual and psychological development, strengthening the child's personality, and time management.

With regard to the topic and content of the sessions, the results of the report indicated that the participation of fathers does not depend on the topics addressed during the sessions. This may be seen as a consequence of the previous result. Fathers have beliefs and perceptions regarding the topics of the sessions, for example about how they are directly oriented towards mothers and how they care for their young children. Moreover, it has already been mentioned that the staff of the health centers is mainly female, which does not fit with the societal culture according to which they are seen. We may also mention the distance between the family's place of residence and the location of the health centers. In this regard, fathers do not believe that there are obstacles that prevent them from attending these sessions.

Regarding the ecosystem surrounding the nuclear family, workers in health sector were asked during the focus group discussions which topics are most important to parents, and which topics encourage fathers to attend parenting sessions, based on their daily interactions with parents. The answers varied between vaccinations, social development of the child with a focus on the emotional side of the father, proper upbringing of the child, good communication skills, psychological, social and mental development of the child, blood strength, and the child's basic vital signs, such as height and weight. Another question was asked to the staff regarding the level of awareness among parents about the importance of participation during early childhood. With regard to the interest of fathers to attend meetings and events related to their children, the results confirmed that the awareness and parental culture are still in their infancy among fathers, and that customs and traditions play an important role in this. Fathers do not attend because they believe that these sessions are for women only. One of the respondents confirmed this by emphasizing that "the fathers' failure to attend these sessions stems from the culture of shame, despite the tendency and love of many fathers to learn new methods of dealing with their children". Another one stated that "awareness varies according to the environment; remote areas need greater support regarding this issue". The results of the sessions also confirmed that it is a conviction, whether a conviction of the fathers that they are aware of the interests of their children so that raising awareness is deemed useless, or a conviction of the mothers that they are the main responsible for raising the children. The process of transferring these convictions to new generations is simple and creates intellectual legacies that are difficult to change.

Within the referral pillar, the results of the report concluded that, if they were to be referred, parents would be willing to go to a specific service provider who would advise and guide them. This may be explained by the desire of parents to gain knowledge about their young children, even if they are unable to attend parenting sessions in health centers due to the reasons mentioned before. Most fathers want to take a greater role in raising their children at home, but work environments have not changed to match their aspirations, says Anne McCain, an anthropologist and author of "The Father's Life."⁵⁹ may also be due to the father's desire to be appreciated by society and to have an active role in raising his children,

⁵⁹ [Home - BBC Future](#)

because of the increasing societal awareness over the past decades. We cannot deny the role of women at work and to help the husband economically in his assigned role, and it may be by agreeing to go to the service provider in an attempt to help her in its assigned role.

During the focus group discussions with health sector workers, the latter ones were asked about their role in encouraging fathers' participation in raising young children through their daily work. The answers emphasized the important role of the staff in promoting participation of fathers and motivating them, by asking questions, entering examination rooms, dealing with their child, carrying the child when they are being examined, giving them information about their child's health condition, and indirectly educating them about everything related to their child.

Finally, the results in the workplace flexibility pillar confirmed that mothers disagree with the prompt "the husband's workplace is inflexible and does not support both fathers and mothers to participate in raising young children by providing the necessary time for that". This is due to the work-related laws and policies, which limit the opportunity for fathers, in particular, to care for their young children, for example through the limited number of leaves and vacations, not attaching nurseries to the husbands' workplaces, not considering the distance or proximity of the husband's workplace to his place of residence, and the shortening of paternity leave. The manager's beliefs may also contribute to this, namely when they do not support the idea of fathers participating in the development of their children, and thus not provide material or tangible support. It is also important to mention the discrepancy in the nature of the work of spouses. Freelance professions are the most flexible, while regular jobs that require working a certain number of hours at certain times are way less flexible in terms of correspondence, justification, approvals, and so on. The results of the report indicated equal approval and disapproval rates of workplace flexibility from the point of view of the fathers. This may be due to the different nature of professions and their different levels of flexibility in facilitating the participation of fathers in raising their children, as mentioned previously, and to the function of fathers in their jobs and the extent to which they have certain powers that allow them to participate in raising young children. When it comes to parents' understanding of the term flexibility, they may describe the workplace as inflexible based on some instructions that do not directly affect parents' involvement in the upbringing of their young children.

Third: The linkage with the Previous Studies

The current report is in accordance with the 2015 study of the Queen Rania Foundation, concluding that there is a low rate of parental participation and attendance in parenting programs. It also agreed with a study conducted by Save the Children in 2018 on the importance of the sessions given in changing fathers' attitudes towards parental participation in early childhood development, and the importance of modifying parents' roles and responsibilities at home. Furthermore, the results were in accordance with Reimers' 2015 study which found that working time arrangements affect parents' availability to care for their children and that work flexibility as well as work culture shape fathers' expectations and the choices available to them.



Fourth Aspect: Policies

7.1. Fourth Aspect: Policies

Policies are a set of theoretical foundations on which decisions are based to support the interests of individuals in society, which stem from their needs and aspirations, as for child protection policies in particular, they are “the obligation to protect children from harm, clarify what child protection requires, and contribute to securing a safe and positive environment for children.”⁶⁰ and with regard to Jordan's early childhood policies. Jordan was one of the first countries to sign the Child Rights Convention⁶¹, which promotes child protection and emphasizes child rights, and to pass a law ratifying it. Many serious steps have been taken to develop policies supporting early childhood, the most recent one being the adoption of the Children's rights bill, which invests in the childhood development process and emphasizes the rights of children to education, health and social welfare. Despite these efforts, however, there is an urgent need for policies that are more supportive of early childhood and all that surrounds it.

This has been a strong driver for recent studies and research to measure the impact of parental involvement in caring for their children, with a particular focus on the participation of fathers, and to study the local and national factors, challenges, and policies that impede or strengthen this participation.

Within the policy aspect, we will present the results reached through questions and prompts raised in the report tools, divided into two main pillars:

- Policies and laws supporting male participation in early childhood care and development
- Policies and laws in Jordan (public policies, free education, health insurance)

We will address the most important results related to the above-mentioned aspects by presenting the charts and clarifying the results presented in them.

Policies and laws supporting male participation in early childhood care and development

These policies support and promote parents' participation in the development of their children and enhance their understanding of early childhood care and development:

- Policies and laws supporting male participation within the family;
- Promoting parental roles and understanding towards early childhood care and development.

The results of these policies were as follows:

1. Policies and laws supporting male participation within the family:

The following figures indicate fathers' and mothers' responses to the prompt: "There is a need to advocate for more supportive policies and legislation for male participation within the family to ensure that role and responsibilities of fathers are fully understood". 49% of fathers agreed that there is a need to advocate

⁶⁰ Arab Council for Childhood and Development - Child Protection in Organizations - Work Guide: Policies and Procedures (arabccd.org)

⁶¹ The Child Rights Convention was approved by the Council of Ministers on the eighteenth of April, 2022 AD, in response to the constitutional amendments that emphasize child protection and enhance child care.

for these policies, 36% of them were neutral, and 14% responded with “I do not agree”. Looking at the mothers' responses to the same prompt, 57% agreed upon the need to call for more supportive policies for male participation within the family, while 33% were neutral, 11% disagreed.

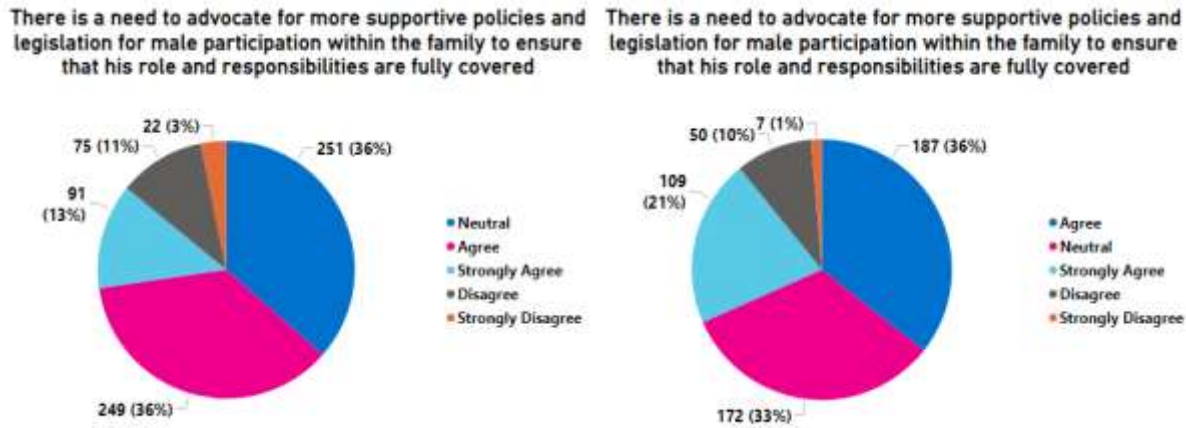


Figure 22: The need for more supportive policies for male participation in raising children

2. Promoting parental roles and understanding towards early childhood care and development

With regard to the question who is responsible for promoting parental roles and their understanding of early childhood care and development, respondents indicated that the family is the main responsible, followed by the option of health, education, and cultural organizations with 20%. 10% of the respondents answered that the country is responsible to promote parental roles and responsibilities to enhance understanding towards early childhood care and development.

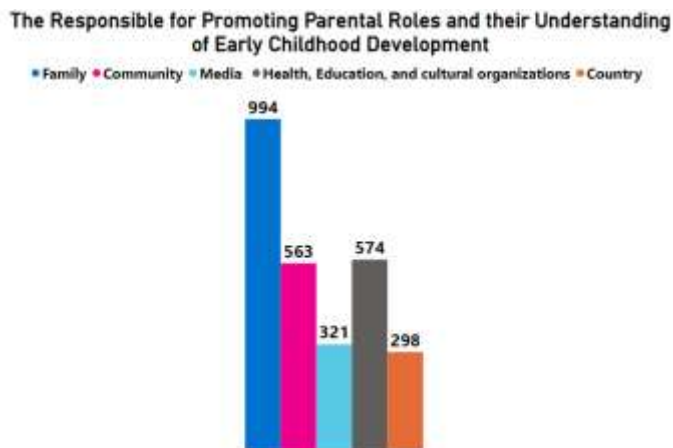


Figure 23: Promoting parental roles in ECD

With regard to policy and laws supporting fathers' participation in the development and care of their children, the highest correlation value ($r = 0.132$) was found with the **educational qualifications** for the prompt "There is a need to advocate for more supportive policies and legislation for male participation

within the family to ensure that their role and responsibilities are fully understood". Hence, the higher the educational qualification of fathers, the greater their belief in the need for supportive policies. The lowest correlation value, on the other hand, was found with the number of working hours and the number of children within the family, having a correlation coefficient of ($r = -0.017$) and ($r = -0.070$) respectively. This means that there is no relationship between the number of working hours and the number of children within the family and the belief of parents in the need for policies that support fathers' participation.

Policies and laws in Jordan (public policies, free education, health insurance):

These are the policies and laws adopted by Jordan with regard to free health insurance for children under the age of six, and free education at the primary and secondary levels:

- Policies and laws in Jordan
- Free health insurance for children under 6 years of age
- Free primary and secondary education

The following figure illustrates respondents' answers to the general prompt "I think that the policies and laws in Jordan support the father to help him raise his children", with 50% of fathers disagreeing and 13% agreeing with the statement.

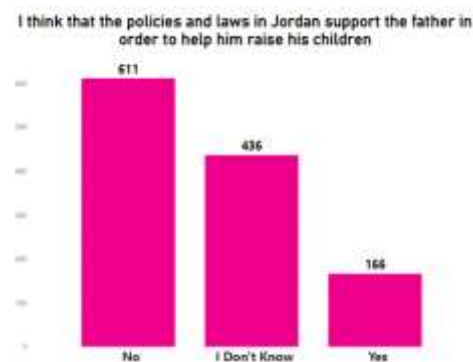


Figure 24: Supportive policies and laws in Jordan in ECD

In Jordan, there is a free health insurance policy for children under 6 years old

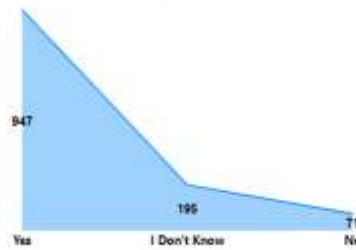


Figure 25: Health insurance policies

With regard to the statement "In Jordan, there is a free health insurance policy for children under the age of 6", 78% of fathers agreed, while 0.05% disagreed and 16% were neutral.

Jordan adopts a free education policy at the basic and primary levels

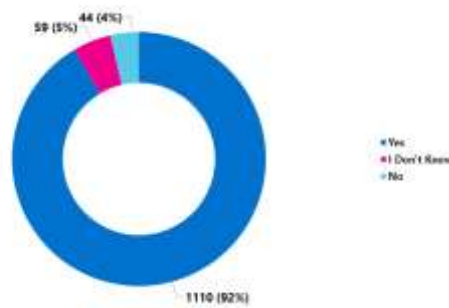


Figure 26: Education policies in Jordan

Given the free education in Jordan, the following statement was shared with respondents: "Jordan adopts a free education policy at the primary and secondary levels". 91.5% of the respondents indicated to agree, while 3.5% believed that there is no such policy in Jordan.

The highest correlation value with the **region** was found in the prompt "there are policies and laws in Jordan that support the father to help him raise his children", showing a correlation value of ($r = 0.051$). The belief in the existence of supportive policies and laws for fathers in raising their children was highest in the central region, followed by the south and then the north. The lowest correlation value was related to the paragraph "there is a free health insurance policy in Jordan for children under 6 years of age" for both the region and the **educational qualification** with a correlation coefficient of ($r = 0.145$) and ($r = -0.030$) respectively. Hence, there is no relationship between the difference in region and the educational qualification on the one hand, and the awareness of parents about free health insurance for children under the age of 6 on the other hand. The highest correlation value in this paragraph was found for the **number of children** in the family, with a correlation coefficient of ($r = 0.047$). As such, the number of children in the family has an effect on the extent to which parents know about the health insurance policy.

Policies results summery

After reviewing the results of the statistical analysis, answering the report's questions on the policies aspect, and clarifying the views of the targeted sample, we can come up with a set of findings in the following pillars: policies and laws supporting male participation within the family, strengthening parental roles and understanding towards the care and development of early childhood (further subdivided into policies and laws in Jordan, free health insurance for children under 6 years of age, and free education at the primary and secondary level).

Concerning the policies and laws supporting male participation within the family, the report found that there is a need to advocate for more supportive policies. Furthermore, in the pillar of strengthening parents' roles and understanding towards early childhood care and development, the report concluded that the family is primarily responsible for promoting fathers' roles and understanding towards early childhood care and development, followed by the health and education sectors as well as the country, in this particular order.

With regard to the policies aspect in Jordan, respondents reported that there were no policies and laws in Jordan that support the father to help him raise his children. The results of the report on educational policy in Jordan indicated that Jordan adopted a policy of free primary and secondary education, and finally with regard to the health insurance policy, the report found that respondents agreed that there is a free health insurance policy in Jordan for children under the age of 6 years.

Second: Results Analysis

Children in Jordan make up about 40% of the population according to estimates for the year 2019, with 39% of them being boys and 41.5% being girls⁶². This is a relatively high percentage of the total population of the Kingdom. Given the participation rate of fathers in raising and caring for their children in Jordan, increased attention of the country is required as well as intensified efforts to enhance participation, as fathers play a major role in the development of children and their absence hinders the growth of their children into adults. Moreover, psychological damage caused by the absence of parents may linger for a lifetime⁶³.

What mainly affects the policy aspect is a set of political and economic factors that have produced a range of laws and legislation, which are included in the analysis as follows.

In terms of policies and laws that support the participation of fathers within the family, the report concluded that there is a need to call for more supportive policies. This is due to the fact that the number of laws and policies that support male participation in Jordan are relatively few or non-existent at the family level. Jordan strives to support early childhood by legislating a number of societal and governmental laws and policies in this field, such as for the preparation of a national curriculum for

⁶² <http://dosweb.dos.gov.io/ar/>

⁶³ MCLANAHAN, S., TACH, L., & SCHNEIDER, D. (2013). THE CAUSAL EFFECTS OF FATHER ABSENCE. ANNUAL REVIEW OF SOCIOLOGY, 39(1).

kindergartens, parental awareness programs, the preparation of developmental standards for early childhood, the protection of the family from violence, the protection of marginalized children⁶⁴, and so on. However, we find that the policies supporting fathers in caring for their children are few or even non-existent, whereas some only support the role of the mother. To this day, there are no nurseries for children in the father's workplace, paternity leave is still too short (Three days), and men are not inclined to take on jobs in care and education of children in government and private nurseries and kindergartens. Besides, there are numerous other policies limiting the father's participation in early childhood development. Hence, there is a need to call for a review of policies that support the role of fathers in the care and development of young children, which will be more powerful when adopted by the government and implemented by all sectors and institutions in Jordan.

Given the ecosystem surrounding family, the results of the focus group discussions were confirmed when key stakeholders were asked about their opinion on "the role that the business owner/decision maker can play in enhancing the participation of fathers and building a firm concept of the importance of early childhood". Among the most prominent proposals for increasing the participation of parents in raising their children, the following should be mentioned:

- Encouraging attendance of parenting courses and raising awareness about the topic of male participation.
- Involving the father in the third trimester of pregnancy by accompanying his wife to all or some of the medical visits ("at least one"), and giving him the necessary guidance about the health of the mother and the fetus, as well as guiding both parents with an appropriate method of family planning after birth, which cannot happen without the presence and signature of the father.
- Guiding the father on how to take care of his wife during childbirth (postpartum).
- Facilitating leaves and vacations when attending parenting meetings or during medical appointments.
- Taking care of the health of the employees, hence giving them energy and increasing their wellbeing.
- Holding success stories sessions for parents' experiences and expertise.
- Allocating benefits to children and wives (medical / recreational / moral).
- Following up on the employees' children academically, educating them, and taking care of them.

The report also found that the family is primarily responsible for enhancing parents' roles and their understanding of early childhood care and development. Then comes the responsibility of the health and education sectors, followed by the responsibility of the state. This may be explained by a number of reasons. The family is the first nucleus and the most important link in the process of social and political upbringing, and it is the first institution in raising and educating young people before school. Through the family, the child acquires their beliefs, behaviors and thoughts. The family's support for children is defined as a service that aims to achieve the well-being of children within the framework of social work, and to enhance the growth of children by providing a set of material and moral support resources⁶⁵. Hence, governmental and private institutions as well as humanitarian organizations began to intensify their efforts to change the convictions, beliefs, and legacies that have been present in Jordanian families for

⁶⁴ Policies and Strategies in Early Childhood Care | The Arab Network for Early Childhood Development (anecd.net), Su

⁶⁵ Parenting Programs in the Arab World, Doha International Family Institute, 2018

centuries. The family's position as the primary responsible for enhancing the roles of parents and their understanding of the development and care of young children, complements the results of the power and privilege aspect, confirming the impact of the Jordanian family on societal culture.

The health and education sectors are perceived to be the second in rank. This is due to the importance of these sectors in the lives of every Jordanian family, as the health sector begins its journey with the family from the first month of pregnancy. One could, for example, think of pregnancy visits, childbirth, vaccines, daily check-ups, seasonal diseases, etc. Statistics of the 2017/2018 about the vaccination which done by the Population and Family Health Committee show that 98% of children aged 12-32 months had already received a vaccination card, and that 86% had received all basic vaccines⁶⁶. These examples and many others confirm the intensity of the health sector's efforts to reach every household in Jordan. For the education sector as well, myriad examples show the efforts to reach every family. For the 2017/2018 scholastic year, the ministry of education published a document showing a progress in the enrolment rate at the basic education level from 84.5% in 1999-2000 to 93.3% in 2017/2018⁶⁷. These high rates illustrate the involvement of most children in Jordan with the education sector. Hence, we can conclude that the health and education sectors reach all Jordanian households from before childbirth until the end of childhood. These sectors therefore have a significant impact on the attitudes and beliefs of parents with regard to topics related to their young children. The parents' responses confirmed that the Kingdom has little responsibility in terms of strengthening the roles of fathers within the family and their understanding of their children. This may be due to the fact that the Kingdom, given its economic situation and limited resources, strives to care for early childhood through international conventions, domestic policies, legislation concerning children and mothers, clear efforts to raise awareness through the media, and so on. Regarding the ecological framework surrounding the family, the results of the focus groups discussions were confirmed when key stakeholders were asked about their opinion on "how social norms, customs and traditions affect male caregivers' participation in the lives of young children". The answers confirmed the role of customs and traditions in reducing the role of the father in early childhood, and limiting this role to the mother. In the eyes of the stakeholders, the father deals with the child at this stage through an intermediary, the mother, which negatively affects the relationship of the child with his father. It is worth mentioning that during the focus groups discussions, a situation emerged in which one of the participants refused to be in the same meeting as the employees working below him, "so that they would not know about his family and the way he thinks and raises him". The responses also confirmed the role of the extended family in making decisions concerning children. As for the answers to the question "What are you doing as an employer to change some conceptions or wrong behaviors in society?", the respondents indicated to select influential people, such as those working at the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs "Friday Sermon", or famous personalities, to talk and raise awareness about this, and make this one of the awareness speeches in all means of communication and connection.

As for the policy aspect in Jordan, respondents reported that there were no policies and laws in Jordan that support the father to help him raise his children, thus explaining the first result: there is a need to advocate for policies that are more supportive of male engagement within the family to ensure that

⁶⁶ International Children's Day issued by the Department of Statistics - Department of Statistics (dos.gov.jo)

⁶⁷ International Children's Day issued by the Department of Statistics - Department of Statistics (dos.gov.jo)

fathers take on their full role and responsibilities". In turn, this result is due to wide set of reasons, as explained above.

As the results of the focus groups discussions were confirmed when key stakeholders were asked the following question: "Which policies, legislation, and laws hinder parental participation in child-rearing?" The answers included, for example, that "paternity leave is very little", "the law determining that a nursery worker should be female is unfair - why can a man not be involved in nursery?", "to involve the fathers in the nursery, not the mothers", "male teachers should be included in the early stages, especially in private schools, because later there are only female teachers", "as they must be intergraded in dealing with this stage", "there is no law allowing the transfer of the father if his place of residence is far from the workplace", and "the child custody law is to be amended, and it is not determined by time or place, but it is the father's choice to choose the right time for him."

The results of the report also showed how participants agreed that Jordan adopts a policy of free primary and secondary education. This is due to the interest of Jordanian policies in education before the establishment of the Emirate of Transjordan, where a school was established in Salt in 1884, and Jordanian policies encouraged education by various ways and methods. Article 20 of the Jordanian Constitution, which states that "basic education is compulsory for Jordanians and is free in government schools"⁶⁸, is a good illustration of policy support for education in Jordan. It emphasizes that education is compulsory and free, so that it becomes accessible to everyone and obliged for all segments of society. One of the greatest achievements of Jordanian policies in the field of education is overcoming the old society's legacies with regard to female education. With the compulsory education law, the number of girls and women enrolled in education began to gradually double until it reached 94.1%, compared to 92.4% for boys and men, according to the statistics of the Ministry of Education in the academic year 2017-2018⁶⁹. It is worth noting that Jordanian policies have begun to make good strides in teaching kindergarten, as Queen Rania Al Abdullah launched a project to develop kindergartens in government schools in 2003. The number of students enrolled in this stage for the academic year 2020/2021 reached about 60,000⁷⁰. Furthermore, Jordanian policies have made kindergarten education compulsory in the Kingdom as of the beginning of September 2020, causing the enrolment rate in kindergarten to reach about 36%⁷¹. The Ministry of Education also started implementing programs of parental participation in kindergarten and the first three grades in 2006/2007, with a view to make parents (male and female) partners in educating their children through the daily activities of the kindergarten class, and to promote school affiliation among children and their parents⁷². All these efforts came to ensure the support and promotion of Jordanian policies for education of all age groups, hence supporting and confirming the results of the report.

Finally, with regard to the health policy, the report found that respondents are aware of the free health insurance policy in Jordan for children under the age of 6. This is due to the intensification of efforts to

⁶⁸ Jordanian Constitution/Article No. 20

⁶⁹ International Children's Day issued by the Department of Statistics - Department of Statistics (dos.gov.jo)

⁷⁰ International Children's Day issued by the Department of Statistics - Department of Statistics (dos.gov.jo)

⁷¹ Kindergarten Education Compulsory in 2020 (almamlakatv.com)

⁷² Parental Participation Program in Kindergarten and First Three Grades | Ministry of Education (moe.gov.jo)

provide the best healthy environment for children in Jordan. Jordan is one of the countries most interested in the health sector, as it spends 9.3% of the gross national product on health. Regarding the medical progress in the field of health care for children, the mortality rate for children under 5 has decreased from 27 to 19 per 1000 live births. The vaccination rate reached more than 98%, compared to a number of 90% in the year 2000⁷³. Children under the age of 6 and pregnant women were also included in health insurance free of charge. Accordingly, Jordan has witnessed a comprehensive health renaissance through which it recorded great achievements in various medical fields and took some important steps forward in supporting and caring for early childhood. Given the difficult economic and health situation in Jordan, the policies that advocated legislating free health insurance for children under 6 years old was the most important step in providing all children in the various segments of Jordanian society with health services in an equitable manner. The law regulating the health insurance policy for every child under the age of 6 is a clear governmental acknowledgment of the rights of the Jordanian child, and a recognition that the government is responsible to uphold these rights. The strategy notably sought to improve services and provide them to all children without discrimination, which required bearing all the expenses of examination and treatment for all diseases (even rare ones). This document is conditional upon issuance of the health insurance card by the caregiver, who is the main and direct supervisor of benefiting from the health services for his children. Therefore, what was stated in the previous result of the respondents' report on the existence of a free health insurance policy provided for children under the age of 6 years, comes from the reality of each parent who obtained this document for his children⁷⁴.

Given the ecosystem surrounding the nuclear family, the results of the focus group discussions were confirmed when asking about "suggestions for the ministries to activate the role of their centers in supporting the participation of fathers in raising young children". The answers ranged from making brochures and organizing awareness sessions to encourage the participation of fathers, over inviting fathers to attend lectures in the centers with a personal invitation card, to bringing the child with the mother and father to the meeting. Other suggestions included activating the role of the media and advocacy campaigns, as well as increasing the number of medical personnel, because the shortage of staff reduces their ability to raise awareness properly. When asking key stakeholders "what level of services and support is required at the national level to consolidate the concept of fathers' participation?", one participant explained that "the system of annual leave and paternity leave should be amended, and the father should be given sufficient time to participate in his children's lives". Furthermore, it was said that "the authorities concerned with children, such as the school and nursery, should communicate with the father about his child and not only with the mother", that "the school meeting should be called 'the parents' meeting' and not the 'mothers' meeting'", and "to hold sessions during working hours in coordination with the concerned authorities, where there is more awareness and change from the atmosphere of routine work, and that they are binding in a legal form". As for what the midwife answered, it is "the use of advertisements on television and social media that urge the promotion of father's participation", and "there is a need for governmental and civil society institutions to support the issue due to the lack of support by other institutions". When the main stakeholders were asked to identify the burdens that the responsible authorities may bear to activate the role of parents and encourage them to actively participate in early childhood in terms of services and programs provided to parents, the answers were that the need to provide "job opportunities", "an alternative should be provided to the employee",

⁷³ <http://dosweb.dos.gov.jo/ar/>

⁷⁴ Home - Health Insurance Administration (hia.gov.jo)

"providing financial allocations for certain activities and the introduction of programs and policies to integrate the husband, for example, increasing the number of seats in the waiting rooms in case the father participates to be sufficient in terms of the number of people in the center", and "that the program is implemented in more than one cycle in order to attract different people and thus parents will share what they have learned to other parents." One of the other answers was related to "totally changing cultures", and that "this issue needs great cooperation from different sides to support parental participation and relieve financial burdens."

Third: The linkage with the Previous Studies

The current report was in accordance with Promundo's study (2021), because they both documented sets of policies that emphasize the role of fathers in parental care.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Male engagement in the development and care of children in early childhood is one of the most prominent pillars that help achieve early childhood and help shape its being and personality features and affect it for the rest of the age period of the child, in an effort to create a balanced and equal personality for the child, which is the first and most important building block in building a better future for the family, and is the focus of work for the sustainable development of contemporary societies.

Through this report, the situation analysis of Male engagement was highlighted because of the interest in this stage and the active role of males in achieving the psychological, health, social, economic, cognitive and economic balance of the child in Jordan, and explained its effects on the family and society in general, where the situation analysis was studied through in-depth and varied field work in research tools to suit the various targeted community segments, and then a set of results were reached that revealed the situation analysis of the engagement of males in the care of their children and the extent to which this affects young children, to reach a range of recommended proposals to ensure the proper development of early childhood.

Given the challenges facing Male engagement in the development and early childhood care in Jordan, we find that they arise from the major challenges faced by the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan at all levels, including economic, political, social, cultural and technological, and a number of these challenges affect the active engagement of males in the development and care of young children in all different levels: Individuals, communities, services and policies.

The most important challenges and recommendations of the report can be presented holistically to the four thematic areas (Power and Privilege, ECD, Parenting and, Policies) as follows:

First: Challenges

1- Social Challenges

- Male upbringing in Jordanian society and its impact on the role of males in family care and early childhood development.
- Gender segregation and the strong penetration of this term in Jordanian families, which contributed to the inability to change and develop at the family and community level in the tasks of both spouses towards children and towards the other
- Community customs and traditions, which have had the greatest impact on the spread of a culture of scheme in integrating the roles of men and women into the family, and the inability of males to develop their roles with the rapid changes taking place in society.
- Different community customs between the regions of Jordan in the north, central and south, which contributed to hindering families in some regions from accepting new roles for spouses within the family and not accepting it in another regions, which compounded the disparity in customs and traditions at the level of Jordan.

2- Cultural Challenges

- Beliefs and legacies about a woman's self-perception and her codified role in the family related to housework, childcare and handicrafts only.
- Perception of the role of males in the family and their financial source, source of expenditure and family needs.
- The perception of the issue of equality between men and women, the extent to which it is activated within Jordanian society, and the impact on male and female roles within the family
- Jordan's inherit identity in societies, which is to give and adhere to special roles for both males and females within society, and the impact on the roles balance of spouses and what they provide to ensure the safety of the child's mental, physical, cognitive and social health

3- Economic Challenges

- The working hours provided by the Labor and Workers Act are somewhat long, resulting in short hours that are not enough for males to take care of their children and take care of them.
- The need for overtime after official working hours, due to the high cost of living and often insufficient salary for the middle of the month, and to keep pace with the scientific and technological acceleration that has dyed the lives of families more technologically and more modernly
- Women work outside the home and share the costs of family life with their husbands, which creates a significant gap in the care of their children and in the roles of both spouses in childcare, as well as the low quality of such care.

- Jordan's minimum wage is lower than in some surrounding countries and its impact on inadequate single work, the need for overtime takes parental time, hinders them from caring for their children, and the urgent need for women to work to meet the needs of the family at the expense of children and the time needed to care for them.
- Taxation is disproportionate to average wages, which has increased the opportunity to seek overtime or seek employment with which women can pay part of their family expenses
- The Syrian asylum crisis, the consequences of this crisis on the economy, jobs and the level of wages, and the spread of many new habits developed on Jordanian society.
- The high cost of goods related to wars and conflicts, which has a significant impact on household income.

Challenges related to official laws in force in Jordan, such as:

- Work, workers, working hours, minimum wages and the direct impact on children, the family and society.
- The Maternity and Child Leave Act, which still needs the support and support of those concerned to include a period of 6 months after birth.

4- Challenges related to policies from parents' direct stakeholders, which includes:

- Leave restrictions might hinders the activation of male engagement in the development of their children, their participation in visits to health centers, or their educational appointments
- Policies that support nurseries in the workplace of mothers, and do not support them in men's workplaces, thereby increasing the separation of the roles of both father and mother within the family.
- Working time in most government and private institutions coincided with medical visits, or parental care sessions, posing a difficult challenge for males to attend or adhere to these appointments.
- Paternity leave is only 3 days, which is not enough for the male caregiver to engage and support the mother and the child during the first days after a child's birth.

5- Cognitive educational Challenges, represented by:

- The educational level of males and females, which has a significant impact on the acceptance of a culture of change in the roles of both men and women within the family
- Rapid technological development, which has had the greatest impact on the system of family and society values negatively and positively, and contributed to the spread of many terms or customs among society significantly and concretely
- The role of the media in establishing a culture of change in Jordanian societies, which is still in its inception.

Second: Recommendations

- Change the name of the Mother and Child Centers to Child Care Centers or Family Department
- Develop a strategy dedicated to early childhood program providers, which can contribute to a clear vision of Jordan's early childhood development goals.
- Oversee the international standards applied and specialized in early childhood in Jordan by administrators, educators and officials in the early childhood sector and its activation in Jordan considering the specificity of the Jordanian identity.
- Develop early childhood care sessions for all detailed stages of early childhood, from fetal care and follow-up sessions to 9-year-old childcare sessions, considering the developmental characteristics of children at each stage, and defined by special criteria such as attending sessions for parents together, and emphasizing the appropriate content and accessibility of sessions for both male and female caregivers.
- Intensified efforts between community and civil institutions to provide publications containing the necessary guidance to caregivers on how to deal with their children in various fields through supervisors specialized in this field.
- Studies are carried out to assess the situation of male engagement in early childhood development in Jordan and other countries, especially developing countries, to see the degree to which the required standards and the establishment of children's institutions, programs and plans are achieved, and to provide educational conferences that will present these studies at local and international levels.
- Addressing the Ministries of Education and Higher Education to review the current curriculum and add educational content in the school plans of school and university students, including family affairs, childcare, the health roles of both parents within the family and their importance in building and caring for early childhood.
- Activating the role of targeted media and intensifying media propaganda about parental care sessions, their objectives, content, results and impact on children, the family and the community, and the selection of religiously and socially influential personalities so that media campaigns achieve their desired role.
- Enact policies to enhance male engagement, such as laws on male leaves and vacations that facilitate males' interaction with parental sessions, accompanying their children to health and education appointments.
- Establish and maintain effective coordination between relevant actors.

Annexes

Annex 1: Main procedural definitions

Parental Care Programs: Training programs aimed at developing the knowledge, practices, and attitudes of parents/caregivers in relation to the education of young children aged 9 and under, contributing to the implementation of actions and strategies that are active in early childhood development. The number of sessions and the areas of focus differ from one program to another. For example, the first steps big steps parental care program, which gave rise to the current report, focuses on a variety of subjects related to early childhood health, education, and protection, targeted towards children aged 5 and under. This program consists of 11 training sessions currently being offered in 8 health centers. In addition, tailored sessions are also given to children of ages 3-5 years, and parent sessions are facilitated by the Ministry of Health staff who have been trained on the program by Plan International.

Male Involvement/Engagement in the Upbringing of Young Children: The extent of which male parents and caregivers are involved in the upbringing and early childhood development of children aged 9 years and under as one of the main roles to be played. The report aimed towards studying male participation in various aspects including: the level of knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed for active participation, level of participating in and attending parenting sessions, the impact of male privileges on participation in the society, and the amount of policy support for male participation in the upbringing of young children.

Early Childhood Stage: The first stage of a child's life that extends across the age of 9 years and under, where the child's mental, physical, intellectual, and emotional development are rapidly accelerating, and in which the child is completely (early years) and partially (towards the end of the age span) dependent on a care provider to help them develop and navigate life safely.

Power and Privilege: All privileges enjoyed by males in the Jordanian society and generated by the same community, where preferences are given to males rather than females in the areas of decision-making, prioritizing work, etc. - all of which impact male participation in the upbringing of young children in the early childhood stage.

Policies: The body of legislation and laws adopted at the national level in Jordan which in turn can positively or negatively impact male participation in the upbringing of young children in the early childhood stage aged 9 years and under.

Early Childhood Development: A collection of processes and interventions that aim to positively impact the physical, intellectual, social, and emotional development of children in areas that include health, nutrition, education, protection, and security, all of which are provided by the Jordanian ecological framework around the child and are represented in this report as follows: parents and caregivers, community leaders, numerous community institutions, services provided by key ministries and institutions, and policies available.

Gender Related Norms: A set of behavioral patterns concerning the differentiation of roles between men and women, which has been established in the Jordanian society and has become well rooted and formalized, giving each a sex-specific role; ideally the role of men as financial providers, and the role of women as family welfare keepers, all leading to behavioral biases of their respective roles.

Caregiver: A person who provides daily care for a child and with whom a child lives. In the Jordanian society caregivers may be fathers, mothers, grandfathers, grandmothers, uncles, aunts, etc. In addition, caregivers provide informal arrangements and support which are not of direct legal responsibility.⁷⁵

⁷⁵ Glossary of terms | Better Care Network

Annex 2: Male Engagement Workplan

Groups	Proposed procedures
Policies	Develop a compulsory course to university students about family education and child care
	Revise school curriculum to include key concepts of parental care
	Encourage males to join training courses about child-rearing
	Opportunities for males to enter vocational education in child-rearing specialization
	Advocate for work policies that allow the fathers to look after their children (e.g. school visits, medical visits, ...etc.)
	Enact the law which mandates the establishment of nurseries at the work places for male and female workers
	Advocate for increasing the paternity leave
	Hold counselling sessions for parents before and after birth in the hospital (this requires the rehabilitation of health personnel to provide sessions and the distribution of booklets covering the most important concepts of parental care)
	Hold regular parenting meetings in public schools
	Consider hiring surrogate fathers in children's orphanages.
	Encourage the integration of fathers throughout pregnancy, childbirth, vaccination and beyond
	Include parental care sessions in mandatory premarital training courses
Revise school curriculum to ensure gender sensitivity.	
Institutions	Encourage parents to visit the health centers together
	Build the capacity of the service providers (health and education) to provide services considering the various needs and capabilities of fathers and mothers.
	Provide parental information to patients during treatment
	Design visual aids including posters about parenting and gender roles
	Ensure high-level coordination between actors providing parental care services
	Involve youth initiatives in promoting male engagement – community involvement
	Ensure the integration of municipalities in organizing family activities for parents and children
	Training and capacity building of male service providers in parental care
Hold joint activities between children, fathers and mothers	
Community	Support media campaigns to raise awareness on the importance of parents' participation in raising young children
	Invest in influencers and community leaders in promoting the concept of male engagement in ECD
	Maintain effective coordination between local actors providing parental care services
	provide recreational activities to enhance parents' participation in raising young children
Individuals	Address gender norms that prevent males from working in nurseries.
	Incentivize male participation in parental care programs
	Raise awareness on the importance of fathers' participation in raising young children and invest in media in this regard
	establishing facilities and programs that ensure quality time
	Raise awareness of available parental care services provided for mothers and fathers.
	Adapt existing parental programs to be held at convenient times (e.g. evening sessions) to encourage the participation of fathers.
Hold online sessions for fathers and mothers (flexibility) particularly for those in remote areas.	
Encourage peer support to facilitate the spread of knowledge.	

