



# “Father's engagement in responsive caregiving with child development outcomes: a cohort study from rural Central India”

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## Background

Responsive caregiving involves appropriate responses to the cues of a child

- Role of mother is well known & extensively studied
- Father's role in shaping a child's future is equally important.
- But, research is limited in the Indian context on father's involvement in parenting and child development.
- To better understand father's role in child-rearing, this study was conducted

## Objective

- To study association of father-child interaction and engagement in child care activities as well as fathers' perception of their roles with child development outcomes

## Methods

### Study design:

*Prospective cohort study*

embedded in Rural pregnancy cohort already registered in the medical college

### Study setting:

Three primary health centers (part of the field practice area of the medical college)

### Study Population

**(n=260):**

Children aged 3-6 months born to women enrolled in the -mentioned pregnancy cohort from January to June 2018

### Exposure (at 3-6 months)

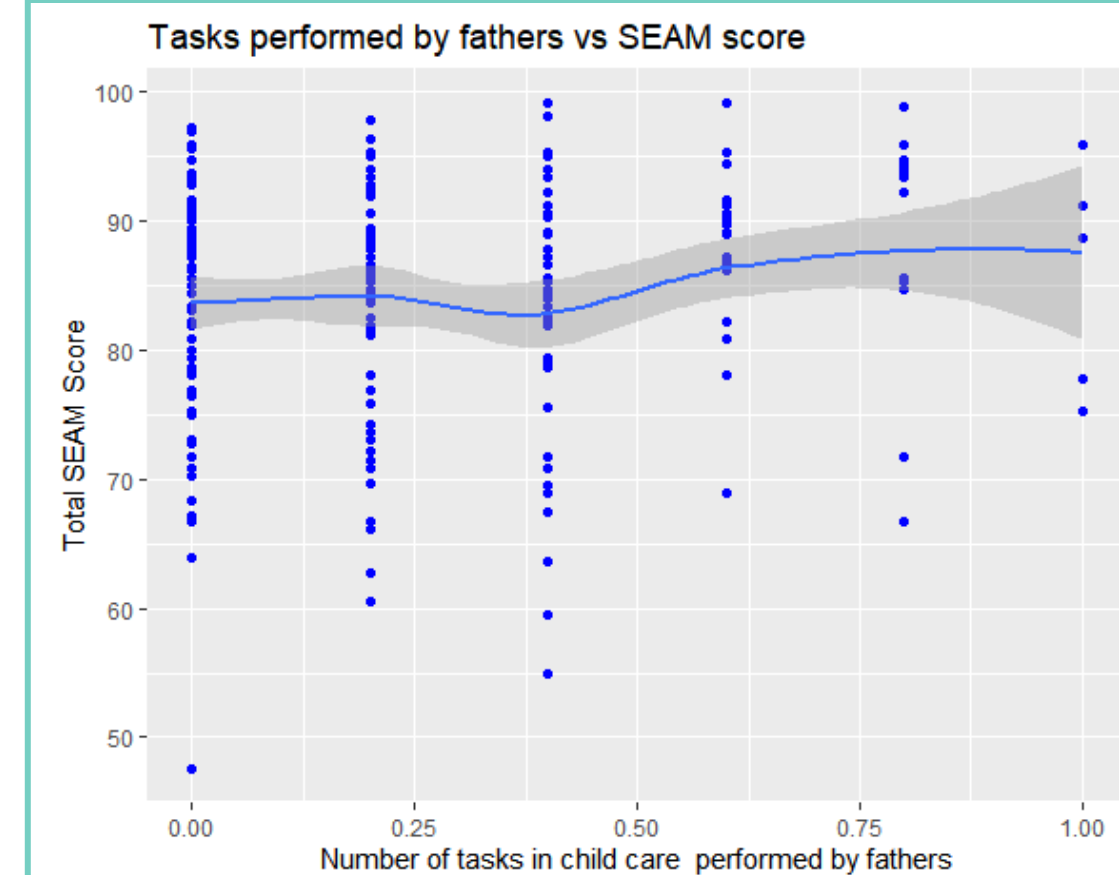
- Sociodemographic variables
- Perception of fathers regarding their role in responsive caregiving (*Role of Father questionnaire*)<sub>1</sub>
- Quality of Father-Child interaction adapted version of the early childhood *HOME Inventory*<sub>2</sub>
- Fathers engagement Bathing, Cleaning, Helping to remove burp, making child sleep, Taking to Anganwadi or health centers

### Outcome (at 16-18 months)

- Socio-emotional development using the *SEAM questionnaire*<sub>3</sub>
- Attainment of milestones for different domains of child development using the *Developmental Screening Test (DST)*<sub>4</sub> (developed by Dr. Bharat Raj)

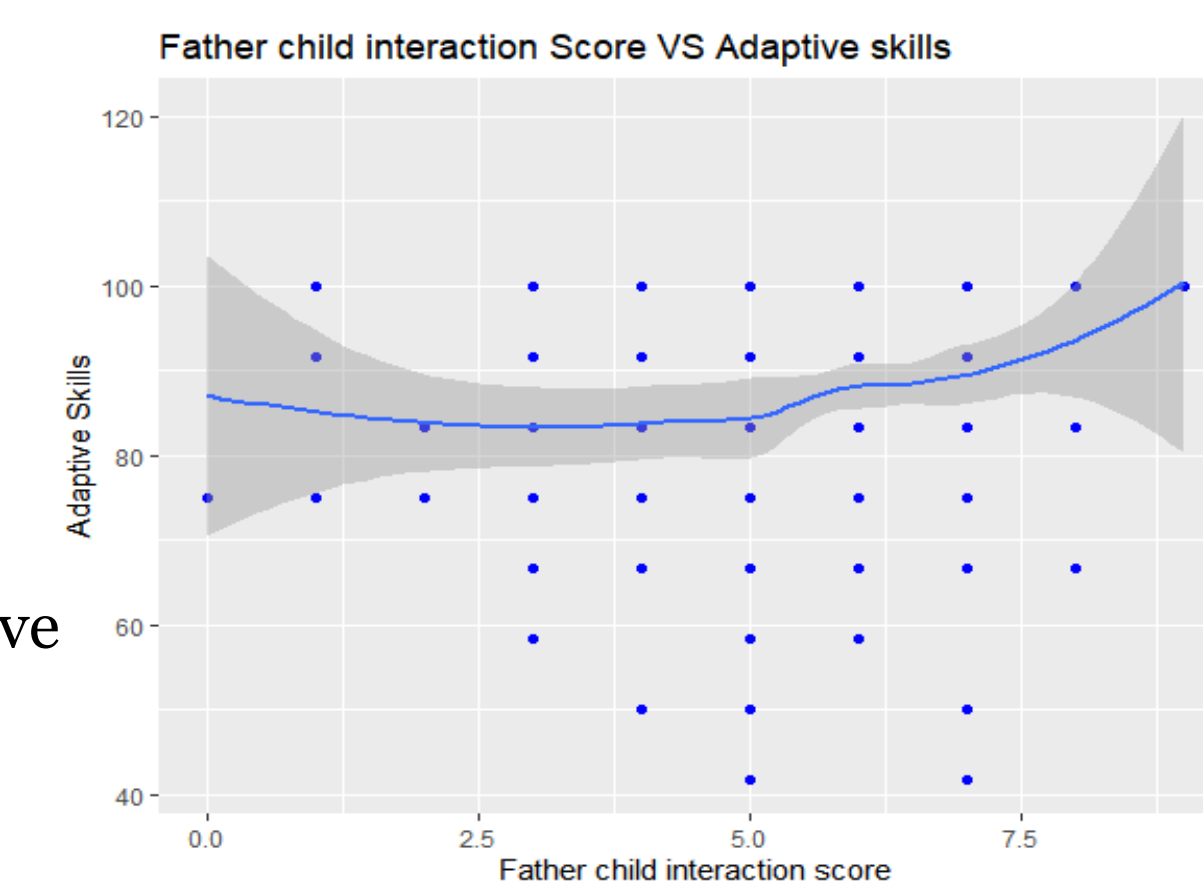
## Measures

## Results



as the number of tasks identified to be carried out by fathers increased in number SEAM score improved ( $rs = 0.13$ ,  $p < 0.05$ )

positive correlation between Child Father's interaction score with adaptive skills ( $rs = 0.16$ ,  $p < 0.05$ )



## Conclusion

The involvement of fathers in parenting plays a role in improving all domains of development.

Our findings suggested increased involvement of fathers in responsive caregiving (interaction and child care activities) were associated with improved child socioemotional outcomes.

These findings would be useful in providing insights for future child development interventions, particularly those aimed at increasing fathers involvement in child-care.

## References

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