



‘Involved Fatherhood: The Quiet Revolution’

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Measuring Involved Fatherhood- GUI, 9 month-old cohort – Wave 1





Critical Juncture: Contemporary Irish Society –

(Lunn & Fahey, 2011; Fine-Davis, 2011)

Rapid and Dramatic Social Change:

- Family Structure - Stability**
- Gender Revolution**
- Decrease in 'breadwinner role'**
- Call to be 'nurturing fathers' –
Involved**
- Maternal-centred 'norm' - research**



Fatherhood – Involvement

Why is it important?

- **Influence on society (Coltrane, 2010)**
- **ALOOF**
- **INTIMATE**





The Quiet Revolution: Aims of Study

- **Explore how father's are constructing 'involved' fatherhood.**
- **Explore**
 - Attitudes
 - Practices
 - Levels of Involvement
 - Influences for Involvement - Structural
- Family
- **Gender similarities – Perspective**



The Quiet Revolution: Measuring Involvement (Pleck, 2010)

Construct for Involved Fatherhood

Primary Components

- **Positive Engagement Activities**
- **Warmth-Responsiveness**
- **Control**

Auxilliary domains

- Social and Material Indirect Care
- Process responsibilities





The Quiet Revolution: Measurement (2)

- **Fathers' activities with children (Var. FC3 a-n)**
- **Levels of father involvement**
- **Relative engagement measures – 'control' component**
- **Composite index measurements –**
 - - Emotional Activities - 'Warmth and responsiveness'
 - - Practical Activities) 'Positive engagement
 - - Educational Activities) Activities'



The Quiet Revolution: Sample

- **$n = 8,375$**
- **Gender**
- **Resident**
- **In a relationship: married (87%) partnership (13%)**
- **Completed 'Father's Questionnaire**



Characteristics of the fathers?

- **Age: 16 – 60+ years. Mean = 35 years**
- **91% Employed,**
- **7% Unemployed,**
- **1% 'home-duties', 1% retired/education**

- **57% Rural – 43% Urban**



Attitudes towards Fatherhood

Fatherhood Responsibilities	Total Fathers	Overall Percentage of cohort
Showing love and affection to my child	7,858	94%
Making sure my child is safe and protected	6,358	76%
Making time to play with my child	4,132	49%
Taking care of my child financially	2,663	32%
Giving my child moral and ethical guidance	2,017	24%
Teaching my child and encouraging curiosity	1,897	23%

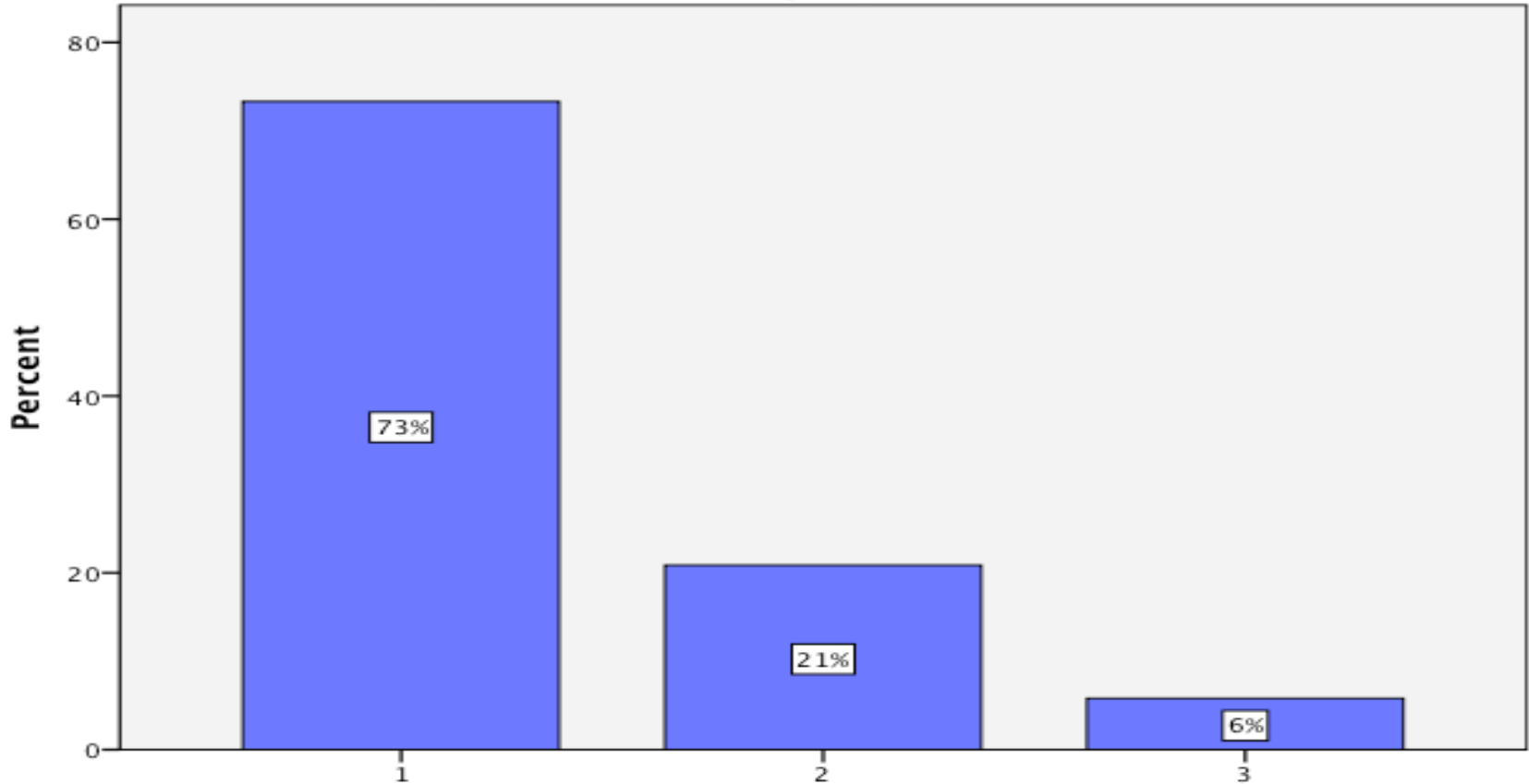


(GUI, Infant Cohort, 2010)



The Quiet Revolution: Attitudes towards Fatherhood

C2_a. Rank important – Showing my child love and affection



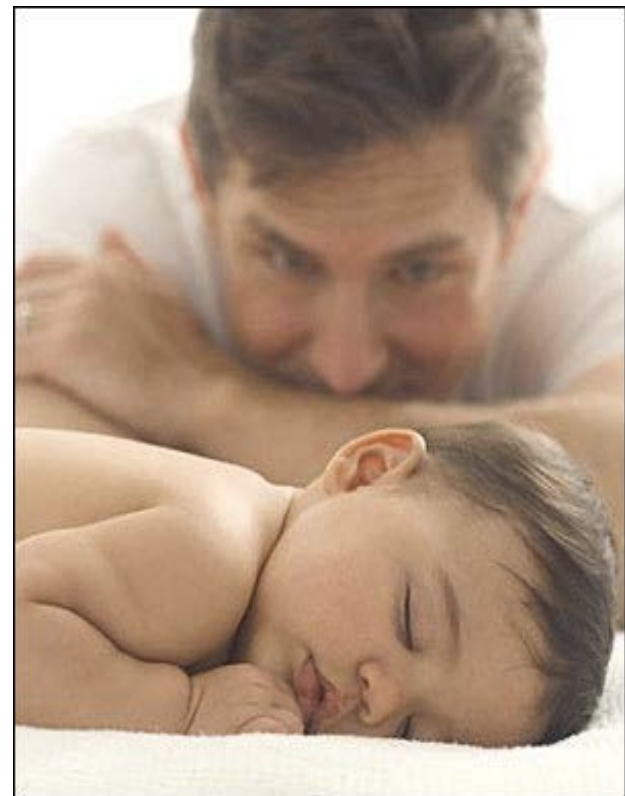
C2_a. Rank important – Showing my child love and affection



Present at Birth of child

- **94% Present**
- **3% Desire to attend, Missed Birth**
- **3% Did not attend.**

Coltrane (1996) Men felt being at the birth, important for bonding and future 'involvement'.

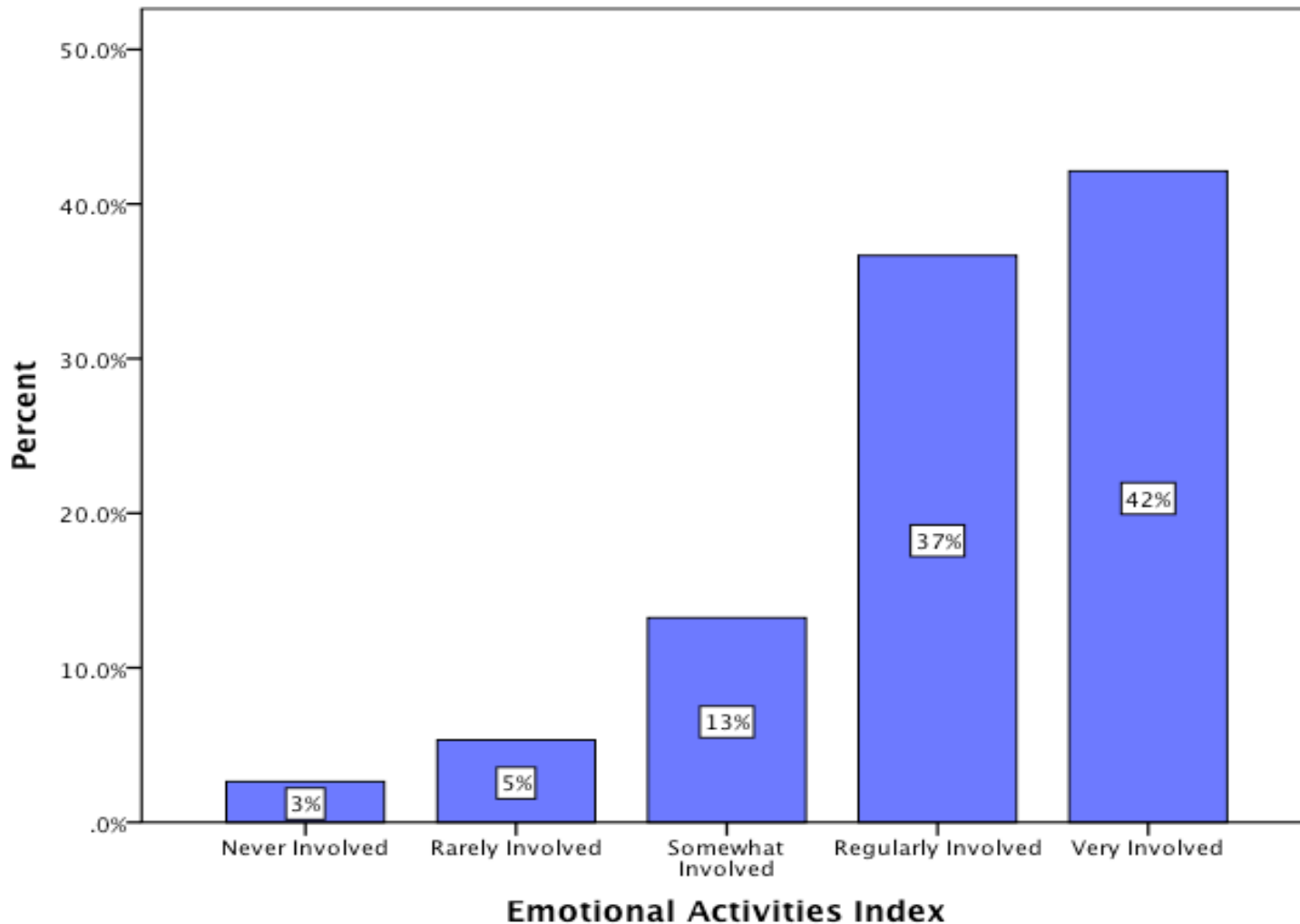




Father Involvement: Daily Childcare Activities

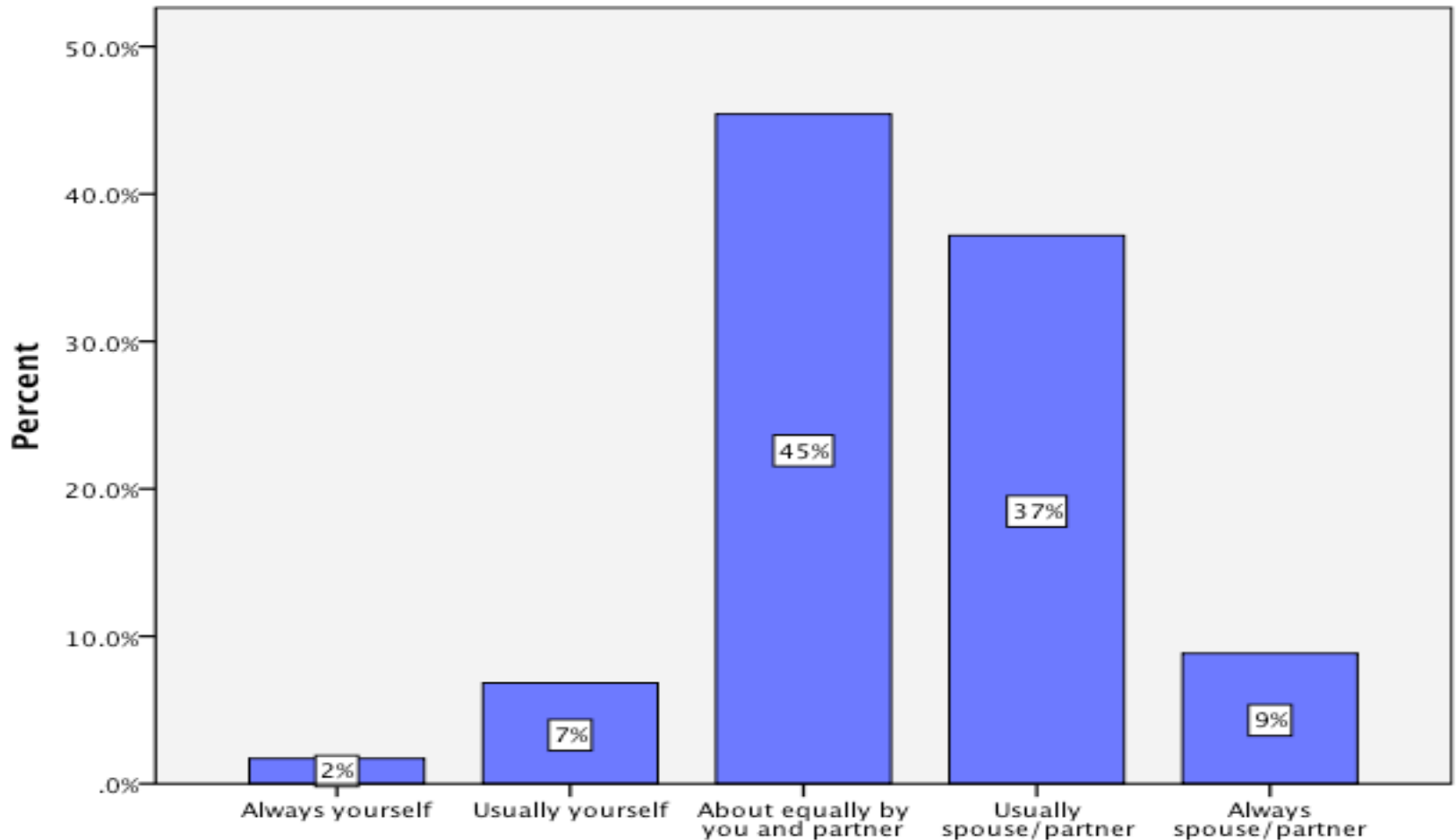
Levels of Father Involvement	Emotional Activities	Practical Activities	Educational Activities
'Very'	42%	18%	19%
'Regularly'	37%	28%	24%
'Somewhat'	13%	26%	26%
'Rarely'	5%	17%	21%
'Minimal'	3%	11%	10%
	100%	100%	100%

The Quiet Revolution: Warmth-Responsiveness





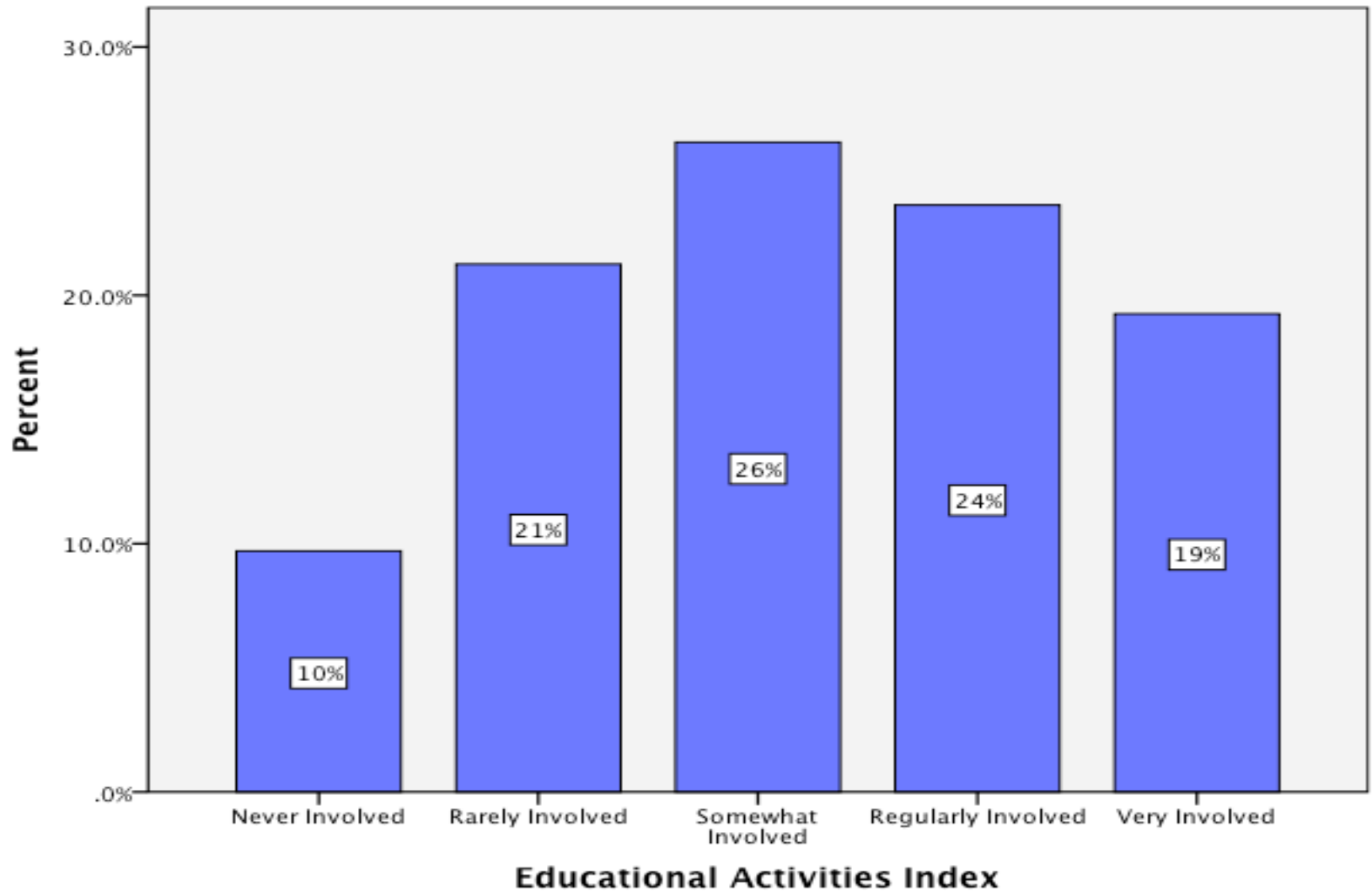
The Quiet Revolution: Tending to Baby at night



C3i. Who does the following with baby – (i) Getting up in the night to see to him / her

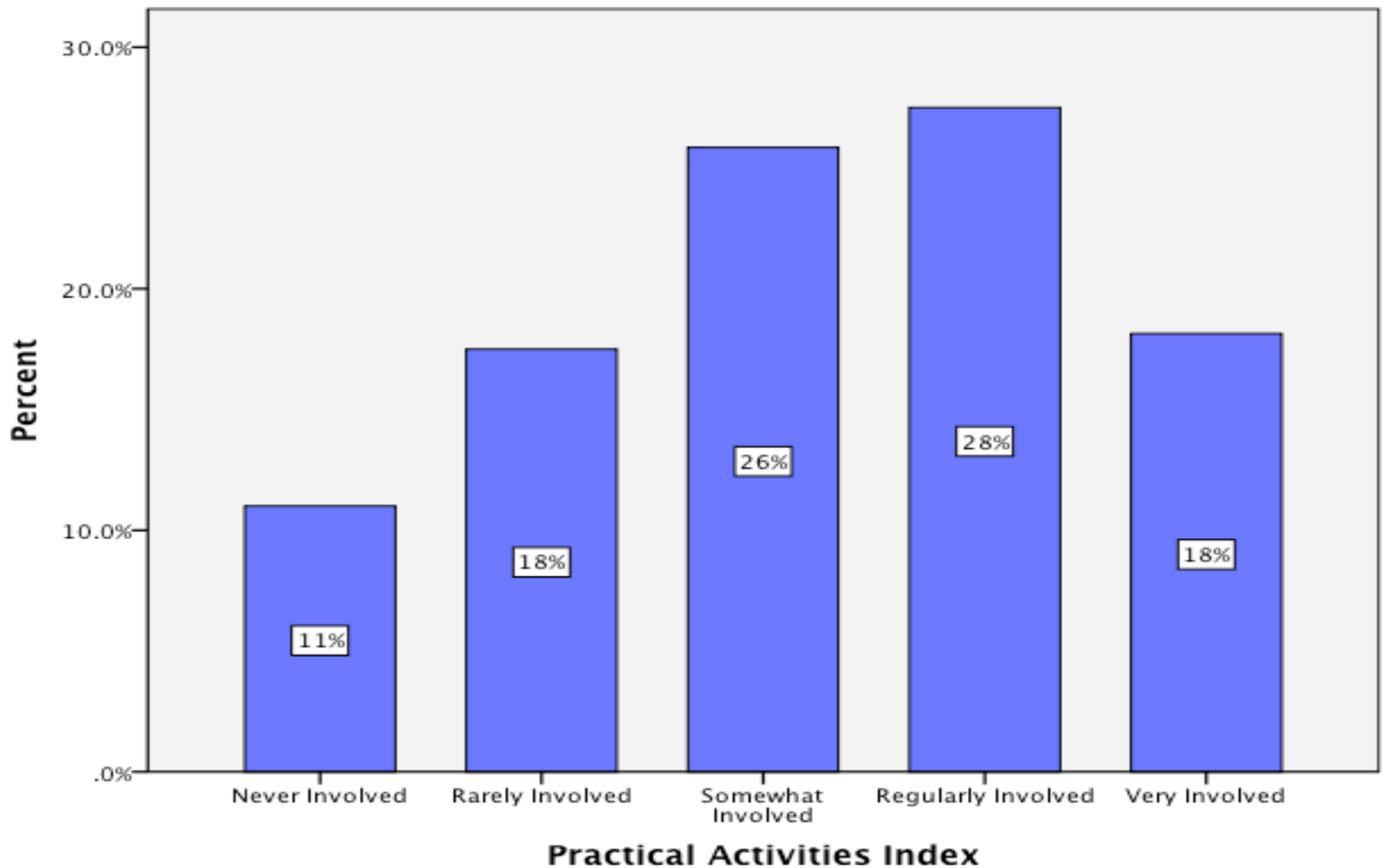


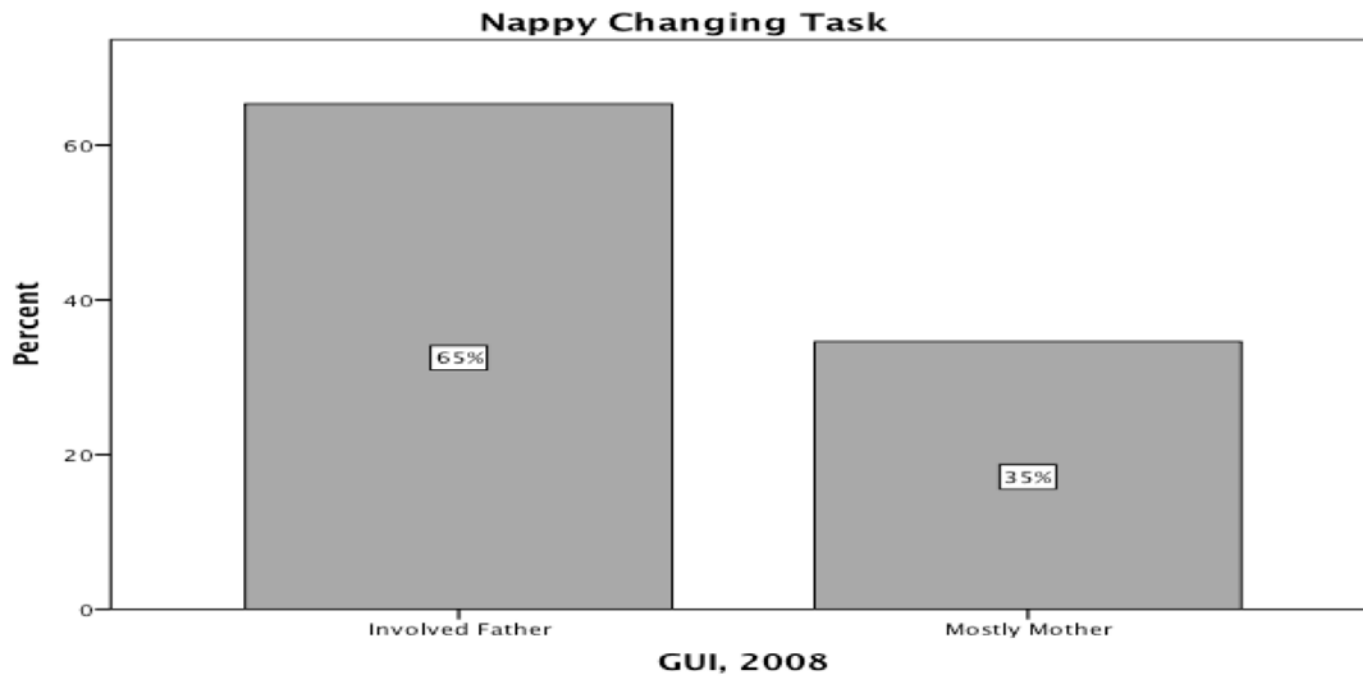
The Quiet Revolution: Positive Engagement/Educational





The Quiet Revolution: Practical Activities







Level of Involvement/ Sex of Baby

Levels of Father Involvement	Emotional Tasks		Practical Tasks		Educational Tasks	
	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy
Very/Regularly'	78%	79%	45%	46%	42%	44%
'Somewhat'	13%	13%	25%	27%	25%	27%
'Minimally/Rarely'	9%	8%	30%	27%	30%	32%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

p. = .003

p. = .03

GUI, 2008



The Quiet Revolution: Influences on Involvement

- **Motivation: Attitudes, Identity, Ideology**
- **Socio-economic Class – Middle Class**
- **Employment status - Both parents**
- **Age of the parents, size of family.**
- **Kinship support: maternal/wider family**
(Coltrane, 1996, Pleck, 2012)



Practical Activities– Social Class

Level of Father Involvement	Profess./m anagerial	Non manual/ skilled manual	Semi-skilled/ unskill manual	All other employment	No class
'Very/Regularly'	47%	44%	43%	32%	46%
'Somewhat'	26%	27%	25%	32%	24%
'Rarely/Minimally'	27%	29%	32%	36%	30%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
p. = .018					



Practical Activities/ Age of Father

Level of Father Involvement	16-25 years	26-35 years	36-45 years	46-60+ years
Very/Regularly	49%	44%	41%	42%
Somewhat	27%	26%	26%	29%
Rarely/Minimal	24%	30%	33%	29%
	100%	100%	100%	100%

GUI, 2008



Practical Activities/ Parental Employment

Levels Father Involvement	Dual Earner Families	Dad Unemploy / Mum Full Time	Dad Full Time/ Mum Part Time	Dad Unemploy/ Mum Part Time	Dad Full Time/ Mum at Home	Dad Unemploy/ Mum at Home
'Very/Regular ly'	58%	73%	47%	69%	47%	64%
'Somewhat'	23%	15%	28%	23%	26%	22%
'Minimally/ Rarely'	19%	12%	25%	8%	27%	14%

GUI, 2008



Size of Family and Employment

Dual Earner Families

- **1 Child/ Very/Regularly Involved = 62%**
- **2 Children Very-Regularly Involved = 53%**

Mum at home – Dad Employed

- **1 Child Very/Regularly Involved = 40%**
- **2 Children Very/Regularly Involved = 36%**



Paternal Involvement/ Kinship support

Level of Father Involvement	Positive Engagement - Practical Activities/ Regular contact with Grandparents	Warmth and Responsiveness/ Regular contact with Grandparents
Very/Regularly	46%	79%
Somewhat	26%	13%
Minimal/Rarely	28%	8%

p. value = .000

Involved Fatherhood

- A parents gender is far less important in affecting child development than broader qualities such a warmth and kindness (Lamb and Tamis-LeMonda, 2004)





The Quiet Revolution Conclusions

Attitudes – Men overwhelmingly have opted for a more nurturing/involved role as fathers.

Traditional ‘Breadwinner model’ has lost ground

Warmth and Responsiveness: 79% Fathers are ‘Very/Regularly’ involved in daily direct emotional care of their children.

Involvement for both Practical (46% - Very/Reg) and Educational Activities (43%), although, showing a ‘stalled revolution’ pattern, fathers engage at the same level for both types of tasks.





Conclusions Cont.

- **Observed that involvement levels increased with social class.**
- **Unemployed men showing high levels of involvement in their children's lives even when wives are at home.**
- **Levels of involvement decrease in larger families**
- **Unobservable influences unknown.**
- **Family life is a dynamic and fluid space, for fathers to be involved with their children, and challenge the gender specialisation of childcare, for the benefit of all members and society (Lamb, 2010; Coltrane, 2010)**