

## **METHOD**

The chapter presents the details pertaining to the following sections:

- a) Terms and Definitions
- b) Research Design
- c) Selection and Description of the Sample
- d) Tool Description
- e) Pilot Study
- f) Procedure of Data Collection
- g) Plan of Data Analysis

### **Terms and Definitions**

- **Parental Ideas:** are the cultural understandings that parents have regarding children, families and themselves as parents (Harkness, 2003).
- **Independent Construal of Self:** preference is given to one's own internal attributes, traits, abilities (Kitayama and Markus, 1995).
- **Interdependent Construal of Self:** focus is on the shared duties, obligations and social responsibilities (Kitayama and Markus, 1995).

### **Operational Definition**

- **Parental Practices:** strategies undertaken by the parents that help their child achieve the developmental goals in specific context and situation.

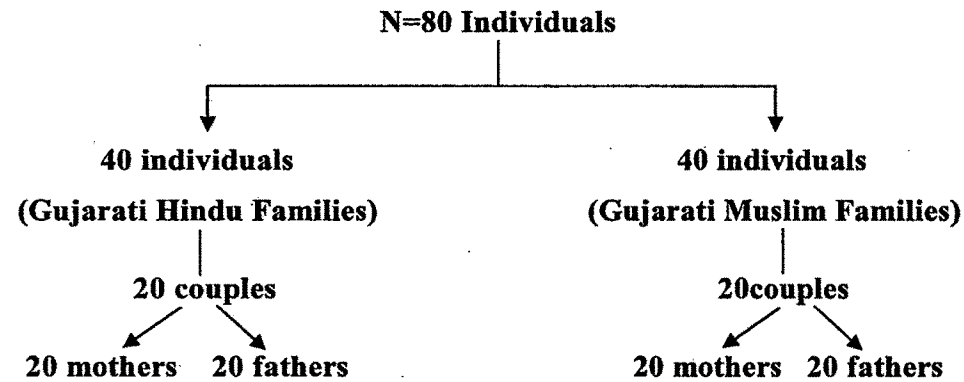
### **Research Design**

A descriptive research design has been adopted for the study. The purpose is to describe the ideas of parents about development and rearing of two to four year old children.

## Selection and Description of the Sample

### Sample Description

The sample comprised of parents that is mother and father of the same child, of two to four year old children, from Gujarati Hindu and Muslim low socio-economic status families, residing in Vadodara city. The total sample size was 80 individuals (Figure 3).



**Figure 3.** Sample design.

### Sample Characteristics and Rationale

To understand parental ideas in the context, Gujarati families were selected as in the state of Gujarat they form the major groups. These set of families belonged to the low socio economic group. The focus was on low socio economic group as they represent a majority group. The Social perspective, also suggests that irrespective of the problems that parents face like, financial constraints, limited space to reside, they try to give best to their children (Prof. Bame, personal communication, February, 17, 2005). Religion was taken as a variable because religion and culture are interwoven. An individual expresses one's ideas based on the religion he/she belongs too. Religion plays a vital role in identity formation and personality development. Moreover few studies have been conducted with religion as a variable. Specifically the study aimed to look at Hindu and Muslim religion as Hindus represent the majority group and Muslims represent the majority of the minority groups in Indian context. The similarities and differences in parental ideas and practices between the two

groups would provide a better understanding of how parents' ideas are constructed on various dimensions of child development. The sample constitutes of parents of two to four year old children. Parents are a young child's primary caregivers. Parents' ideas and practices have an impact on child development and child rearing. The phase of two to four year is considered as a transition period. At this age the child has the ability to reflect and relate to parents' ideas. There is emergence of culturally defined developmental characteristics especially, the emergence of self (Keller, 1999).

#### **Procedure for Sample Selection**

Initially contact was made with the in-charge, Vadodara Municipal Corporation (Appendix A). The details of the research subject and the sample requirement were shared. A list of communities was provided to the investigator. From the list the area and the specific communities were selected. The sample was identified through the communities in the Sayajigunj area in the city of Baroda. The communities identified were, Pashuram Ni chal, Sidumia Ni chal, Kaloomia Ni chali, Palajwala Ni chal, Petrolwala Ni chal, Subashnagar, Sattarmiya Ni chal and Railway colony. These communities are designated as low socio economic status (LSES) communities by the Municipal Corporation. The income of the parents ranged from 1500/- to 5000/- per month.

As the ideas of the parents are influenced by various individual and contextual factors like, experiences of parents, the quality of life and so on, an attempt was made to identify the communities that are in near by areas, constituting both Hindu and Muslim Gujarati families.

#### **Sample Selection Technique**

Sample selection was purposive and the contact was made through snowball technique.

## **Tool Description**

The data for the present study has been collected through:

- I. Background information Schedule (Socio-Demographic profile)
- II. In-depth interviews
- III. Rating Scale
- IV. Adjective Checklist

### **I. Socio-Demographic Profile**

The socio-demographic profile of the respondents was obtained through a pre-prepared detailed questionnaire. Information was taken on their residence, religion, family type, socio-economic status, gender, age and ordinal position of the target child. Each respondent (parent) was coded from 01 to 80.

### **II. Interview Schedule (Appendix B)**

To explore the ideas that parents have about child development and child rearing, in-depth interview was conducted using a semi-structured interview schedule. The tool was developed on the basis of study done by Srivastava, R (2002). The tool was modified by editing few aspects. Like in Srivastava, R (2002), responses of the parents were sought on specific areas of development i.e. physical, social and emotional. Whereas in the present research more open ended questions were asked and the areas of development emerged from the responses of the parents. Pilot study was done on 8 subjects to field test the tool. Probes were added wherever required. It was content validated and then finalized. The experts from field of developmental psychology approved the interview schedule. They found the questions very relevant. They suggested that it would be interesting to explore the parents' reaction when the child moves from home to the school; as 2-4 years is the transition period and the child's socialization takes place across various interconnected context like, the school and the home environment. The suggestion was incorporated. The broad areas included in the interview schedule are:

- the developmental goals parents want their child to achieve at present and in future,
- the practices parents follow which help their child to achieve these goals.
- parents understanding of their religion.

### III. Rating Scale (Appendix C)

To understand the form of self that exists in the ideas of the parents regarding child development and child rearing, a rating scale was administered. It has been adapted from Keller, H (unpublished manuscript). It consists of 27 items. The items specify the parent's expectations/ reactions for their child's behaviour towards themselves, their parents and others in different life situations. Of these twenty seven items, 11 items indicate the independent construal of self like, "I want my child to realize his own plans in life", "my child should follow his own feelings even if it makes me unhappy" and "my child should rely on his/her opinions even if it is not shared by others". 16 items indicate the interdependent construal of self like, "my child should keep thoughts that would annoy me to him", "child's ability to maintain good relation with parents is a sign of maturity" and "in making decisions my child should go by significant others". Each item has to be rated on a score of 1 to 5 by the parents. The score of one represents that the respondent does not agree with the statement/ item at all. The score of five represents that the respondent displays 100% agreement for a particular item. Pilot study revealed that the parents were finding it difficult to rate the items as mentioned above, hence they were asked to rate the item with the help of figure representation.



Each parent individually rated the 27 items. The rating was for the form of self that parents wanted in their children.

## Pilot study

The main purpose of the pilot study was to field test the tools as well as to get accustomed to the method and the entire procedure of data collection.

### Field testing of the tools

The pilot study was conducted in phases. Initially the pilot study was conducted on two middle class Hindu - Gujarati joint families. Parents of children (1 boy and 1 girl) of three years of age were interviewed. Both the parents were graduate and the mothers were unemployed.

The pilot study revealed that:

- more probes related to aspect of gender have to be framed,
- in-depth interview is required,
- parents were finding it difficult to rate the items based on the scoring method.

This helped the investigator to familiarize oneself with the process of data collection, the specific probes that had to be added and the specific terminology that was to be used like palan-posan, vikas and so on.

With this background the 2<sup>nd</sup> pilot study was conducted on two low socioeconomic status joint families. The study included father and grandfather of a boy from Gujarati Muslim family; mother and grandmother of a girl from Gujarati Hindu family. The age of the children ranged between two to four years.

The analysis of the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the pilot study revealed information related to

- gender oriented responses,
- parents use of specific strategies to enhance the positive traits and to curb the negative one, and
- traits of both independent and interdependent from of self emerged.
- It was also found that parents could rate the item with the help of figure representation.

Thus at this stage the final version of the interview and the rating scale was confirmed. The data that emerged seemed appropriate to fulfill the objectives.

#### **IV. Adjective Checklist (Appendix D)**

A list of 40 adjectives describing children was compiled. The list emerged from parents' descriptions of children in previous researches done in the department related to parenting by Patel, R (2001), Patel, J (2001), Srivastava, R (2002) and Shastri, J & Mendiratta, A. (2006). The above mentioned researches also focused on the parental beliefs regarding child development. In these researches the parents were asked to respond for the positive and negative traits their child possessed. Based on the varied responses that parents mentioned, a comprehensive list of attributes (adjectives) was formed. The list of 40 adjectives/ traits was given to the sample parents or was read out if they were

illiterate. They were asked to select five adjectives that they want in their child (target child) and five that they do not want the child to possess and give reasons for the same.

Before starting the actual data collection the checklist was field tested to confirm that the adjectives/traits are easy to understand. It was found that the parents could clearly understand the terms and were comfortable in choosing the adjectives.

### **Language Validation**

The tools were validated for language by the experts from the Department of Human Development and Family Studies, Faculty of Home Science, M.S.University, Vadodara. Translation was done into Hindi and Gujarati and back to English for validation of language.

### **Procedure of Data Collection**

The communities as mentioned earlier were selected that are in near by areas, constituting both Hindu and Muslim Gujarati families. Individual homes in the communities were visited with the help of community workers. Sample was identified and rapport was built. Details about the research were shared and consent was obtained. In consequent visits data was collected.

Interviews were held in 2-3 sessions with each subject.

**Ist Session:** An initial visit was personally made to build rapport and to introduce the topic. The purpose of the study was shared. The background information was collected. The process took about 15-20 minutes approx. The interaction gave the subjects an overview of the research study but actual questions were purposely avoided till the next session.

**IInd Session:** It was held after an appointment was sought personally. The interview took one and a half hours approx. It was followed by gathering data through rating scale and adjective checklist. The total time required to complete the entire procedure per subject was two and a half hours approx.

**IIIrd Session:** The subjects were revisited for some clarifications, finding missing links and further elaboration in some cases. Also visits were made when it was not possible for some subjects to respond to all the tools in one visit.

The interviews were conducted in Hindi. Gujarati was used to complement and supplement as per subjects preference. The responses were recorded manually during the interviews.

### **Plan of Data Analysis**

The data was analyzed for each of the areas.

- I. Socio-Demographic profile
- II. In-depth Interviews
- III. Rating Scale
- IV. Adjective Checklist

To support the study the parents were asked to respond to few independent research questions that provided a conceptual context to the study. These were:

- When did you start thinking about your child's development?
- What do you understand by the term sanskar?
- How will you feel when your child began school?
- What does Hindu and Muslim religion convey?
- What are the sources of your information?

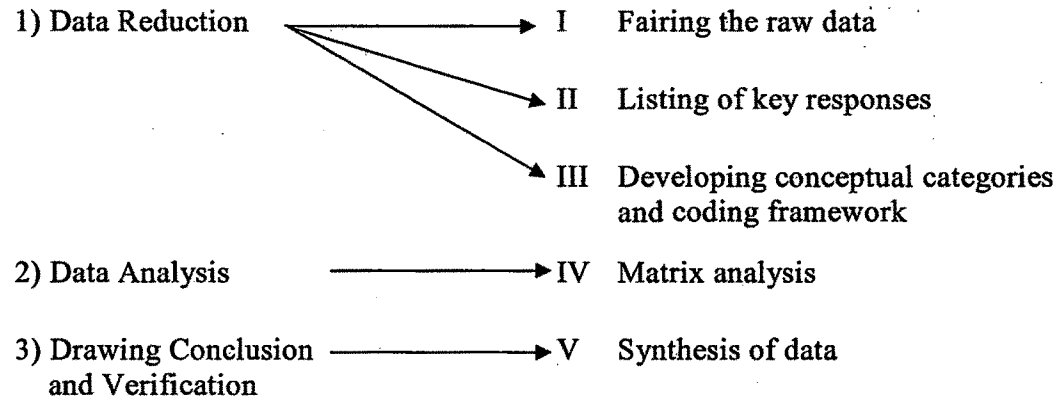
The data was analyzed for these research questions also.

#### **I. Socio-Demographic Profile**

The data was analyzed which provided the geographical profile and the socio-demographic profile of the community.

## II. Interview Schedule

The information that was obtained through interviews was analyzed objective wise. The data was analyzed in line with the following steps (Figure 4) given by Miles & Huberman (1994).



**Figure 4.** Steps of the analysis of the interviews.

### 1) Data reduction

#### *I Fairing the raw data*

The interviews were faired out. Efforts were made to retain the verbatims. Footnotes were made where ever required.

#### *II Listing of key responses*

The relevant data emerging from the responses was comprehensively listed. The responses were listed keeping the atypical and culturally favoured words and phrases in the original language.

For example,

- Bacho ka vikas, parvarish, dehkrekhi achi ho
- larke ko hafiz banana hai aur larki ko halima
- Malik ki ebadat kare
- Sanskar ko kehta hai tarbiyat Urdu me, lalan-palan Gujarati me aur aadate Hindi mein

### *III Developing conceptual categories and coding framework*

Numbers were given to indicate the responses that should fall in the same conceptual category, from the comprehensive list. Few responses/ categories overlapped. The mutually exclusive and inclusive conceptual categories were developed and items were grouped together. Scope was provided for unique responses which do not fit into the conceptual categories. The categories were checked with three other professionals. They independently created categories. In case of discrepancy the data was discussed and final categories were developed. The reduction table was prepared. The data was reduced and categorized. The conceptual categories with their representative number codes and an appropriate heading were brought together in a coding framework. Also memos were given where ever required. Mnemonic codes were developed to identify the respondents.

**Memos:** “memo is the theorizing write – up of ideas about codes and their relationship as they strike the analyst while coding” (Glaser, 1978 cited in Miles & Huberman, 1994 pp-72).

#### **2) Data analysis**

Frequencies were given to depict the occurrence of responses under each category. Care was taken that repetition of the same response by the same subject is not marked more than once.

### *IV Matrix analysis*

To explore gender and religion linkages matrix analysis was done. The data was analyzed quantitatively also. Percentages was used to represent the distribution of responses in various categories both as per the total ‘responses’ and as per the total ‘respondents’ wherever required.

#### **3) Drawing conclusion and verification**

### *V Synthesis of data*

Analytical inferences were made and results were reported. It was ensured that the results fulfilled the objectives of the study.

To fulfill the objective 5, that is explore the existence of self (independent and / or interdependent) in parental idea about child development and child rearing; the data was primarily collected through two sources:

- Rating Scale
- Adjective Checklist

### **III Rating Scale**

1. Mean rating was computed for each item of the rating scale. This helped identify the items which had got high rating.
2. Mean/ SD was calculated.
3. Items from the rating scale were grouped together based on the construal of self they addressed. Ratings for each group were then compared.
4. t- test and ANNOVA was calculated for each item to explore the linkages between gender of the child, gender of the parents and the religion.

### **IV Adjective Checklist**

It was analyzed by making taxonomies. "Taxonomy is one of the commonly used techniques in qualitative analysis. It is a description of how people divide up domains of culture and how the pieces of the domain are connected. Domains can be the list of words that somehow belong together" (Berlin et al., 1974).

In adjective checklist, the taxonomy was done for the traits that parent want and do not want in their child. Those traits were scrutinized which were selected by 50% and more parents (9 desirable adjectives and 9 that parents did not desire). Responses of the parents were recorded as to why they have chosen the specific adjectives. Qualitative analysis was further done for these adjectives separately. The responses/ reasons as given by the parents were classified into domains of self as independent, interdependent and independent and interdependent both. Percentages were used to depict the occurrence of responses in each domain. Data was analyzed with respect to religion, gender of the parents and the child; only those traits were analyzed/ described which have 40% and above scores with respect to the form of self.

Attempt was made to analyze/describe the data obtained through rating scale and adjective checklist in totality.