

Study of Paternity Leave Benefits in India

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Abstract

Paternity leave has become a significant topic in India's ongoing discussions on gender equality, work-life balance, and family welfare. Recognizing the importance of fathers' involvement in parenting and their active participation in childcare is crucial for societal norms. However, there is a notable knowledge gap regarding specific research on the implementation, utilization, and outcomes of these benefits in India. The purpose of this literature review is to synthesize existing research findings related to paternity leaves in India and highlight knowledge gaps for potential future research directions. A mixed-methods approach was employed to collect primary data from 118 employees working in various organizations. Primary component analysis (PCA) with a varimax rotation was used to extract underlying factors and achieve a more interpretable solution. The study derives conclusion that successfully confronting paternity leave benefits can lead to Work life balance, better workplace culture and communication with supervisor.

Index Terms: Paternity Leave Benefits, Work life Balance, Gender Equality, Fatherhood, Paternity Leave Policy

I. INTRODUCTION

Paternity leave provides a wide range of advantages that go beyond the individual father and extend to the entire family unit and even the organization itself. By granting fathers dedicated time off to bond with their newborn or adopted child, paternity leave facilitates the formation of strong emotional connections and nurturing relationships right from the earliest stages of life. Additionally, it encourages shared responsibilities between partners, promoting a more equal distribution of caregiving tasks and fostering a supportive family environment. Moreover, paternity leave allows fathers to support their partners during the challenging postpartum period, reducing stress and promoting maternal recovery and mental well-being. From an organizational standpoint, offering paternity leave demonstrates a commitment to supporting employees' work-life balance and family needs, ultimately boosting morale, loyalty, and retention. Furthermore, it contributes to a positive organizational culture characterized by inclusivity and support, reinforcing the company's reputation as a socially responsible employer. In conclusion, paternity leave is a valuable investment that yields long-term benefits for fathers, families, and organizations alike.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Paternity leave is an important aspect of gender equality in the workforce, and it has been a topic of interest in various countries, including India. In this literature review, we aim to synthesize existing research findings related to paternity leave benefits in India and highlight knowledge gaps for potential future research directions. Paternity leave benefits in India have gained significant attention in recent years as the country strives towards achieving a more gender-balanced and inclusive society. Currently, paternity leave policies in India vary across different sectors and states, with the national legislation providing for a meagre paternity leave duration of only 15 days. The purpose of this literature review is to explore the existing landscape of paternity leave benefits in India, examining their implications on fathers, families, workplaces, and society, while also addressing the challenges faced in implementing and accessing these benefits. Existing research on paternity leave benefits in India suggests that an extended duration of leave positively impacts fathers by fostering stronger bonds with their children and promoting gender equality within households. Furthermore, it has been found that organizations benefit from reduced turnover rates and increased employee satisfaction when offering generous paternity leave provisions. However, challenges such as societal stereotypes around caregiving responsibilities and lack of awareness among employers hinder widespread acceptance and utilization of paternity leave.

To enhance paternity leave policies in India, it is crucial to consider extending the duration of leave granted to fathers, ensuring equal access across all sectors, and actively promoting the importance of work-life balance for both men and women. By advocating for improved paternity leave benefits, India can take significant strides towards creating a more equitable society where caregiving responsibilities are shared equally between parents, ultimately leading to enhanced well-being for individuals, stronger family units, and more productive workplaces. Flacking, Dykes, and Ewald (2010) investigate the influence of fathers' socioeconomic status and paternity leave on breastfeeding duration, emphasizing the role of fathers in family dynamics. While the study focuses on breastfeeding, it underscores the importance of including fathers in family-oriented policies, which is relevant to discussions about paternity leave benefits in India. Mukherjea (2015) discusses informal labour, formal politics, and dignified discontent in India, shedding light on the complexities of the Indian labour market. Although the study does not directly address paternity leave benefits, it provides a broader context for understanding the social and economic dynamics in India, which could influence the implementation and utilization of paternity leave policies. Amin, Griffiths, and Dsouza (2020) explore strategies for work-life balance during the COVID-19 pandemic in India, shedding light on the evolving dynamics of work and family life in the Indian context. While the study does not directly address paternity leave, it provides insights into the changing landscape of work-life balance, which could have implications for the uptake and impact of paternity leave benefits in India. While the reviewed literature provides valuable insights into various aspects of gender dynamics, family policies, and work-life balance in India and other countries, there is a notable knowledge gap regarding specific research on the implementation, utilization, and outcomes of paternity leave benefits in India. Future research should focus on empirical studies that investigate the impact of paternity leave policies on workforce participation, gender equality, and family well-being in the Indian context.

Additionally, qualitative research exploring the cultural and social factors that may shape attitudes and behaviours related to paternity leave in India would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of this important policy issue.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Objectives of the Study

This study explores the impact of paternity leave on fathers' involvement in childcare, personal lives, and careers. It also examines workplace dynamics (satisfaction, retention, productivity) and societal attitudes towards paternity leave in India. Specifically, the study investigates Indian corporate employees' perspectives and assesses current practices and benefits related to paternity leave.

Type of Research

This study employed a correlational research design to examine the relationships between variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Correlational research aims to describe the strength and direction of the association between variables without establishing causation (Polit & Beck, 2017). In this specific case, the study explored the potential relationships between employee perceptions and various factors related to paternity leave support. A mixed-methods approach was used to collect data for this research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Data Sources

A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect primary data from employees working in different sectors such as technology, finance, manufacturing etc. Secondary data sources included websites, research papers, and magazines relevant to paternity leave policies and employee perceptions.

IV. SAMPLING UNIT AND PROCEDURE

A simple random sampling technique was employed to select participants for this study. This method ensures that each employee within the target population (i.e., employees working in the organization) has an equal probability of being chosen at any stage of the selection process (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2014). The sample comprised **118 participants**, including both male and female employees working in the organization. All participants reported awareness of their organization's paternity leave policies.

V. DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

For Data Collection

A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect primary data from employees working in various organizations. The questionnaire consisted of 33 items and included personal demographic information (e.g., age, gender) and questions on a **5-point Likert scale** to assess employee attitudes towards various factors related to paternity leave.

For Data Analysis

Data were analysed using Jamovi (Version 2.4.11) and IBM SPSS. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, were calculated for the demographic variables and responses to the Likert-scale items.

VI. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Reliability Statistics and Factor Analysis

Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated to assess the internal consistency of the 24-item measure. A value of .846 was obtained, which indicates good reliability. The KMO statistic was .801, exceeding the recommended threshold of .6 for satisfactory sampling adequacy. Bartlett's test of sphericity was statistically significant ($\chi^2 (276) = 1431.487, p < .001$), indicating that the data were suitable for factor analysis. Principal component analysis (PCA) with a varimax rotation was employed to extract underlying factors and achieve a more interpretable solution. Five factors were identified to account for the majority of the variance.

Component Interpretation

The analysis revealed five key dimensions related to the perception of paternity leave support:

Component 1: Communication & Supervisor Encouragement	
The paternity leave policy in my organization is clearly communicated.	0.876
I feel adequately informed about the process and requirements for applying for paternity leave.	0.762
I am aware of the paternity leave policy in my organization.	0.708
The organization provides sufficient information about the benefits and rights associated with paternity leave.	0.692
I believe that taking paternity leave is viewed positively within the organization.	0.619
My supervisor actively encourages a healthy work-life balance, including the utilization of paternity leave.	0.518
I feel comfortable discussing my intention to take paternity leave with my supervisor.	0.508
Component 2: Workplace Culture & Perceived Benefits	
Organizations that prioritize paternity leave are more likely to have a positive workplace culture.	0.891
I believe that organizations with supportive paternity leave policies attract and retain top talent.	0.873
I believe that paternity leave policies contribute to a more diverse and inclusive workplace.	0.807
The organization actively promotes diversity and inclusion through its paternity leave policies.	0.695
Component 3: Workload Management & Supervisor Support	
I feel that my workload is manageable when considering the prospect of taking paternity leave.	0.796

I feel that my supervisor is understanding and accommodating when it comes to taking paternity leave.	0.763
I believe the work environment is supportive when a colleague takes paternity leave.	0.705
I would consider taking paternity leave again in the future.	0.609
Component 4: Work-Life Balance	
Paternity leave has a positive impact on my work-life balance.	0.824
I feel supported by my organization when taking paternity leave.	0.627
I feel comfortable discussing my intention to take paternity leave with my supervisor.	0.563
Component 5: Perceived Cultural Barriers to Leave-Taking	
I believe there are cultural barriers within the organization that discourage men from taking paternity leave.	0.593
I would be more likely to recommend this organization to others if paternity leave policies were enhanced.	0.583
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.	

One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Further, the results of one-way ANOVA can be considered reliable as long as following assumptions are made - Response available residuals are normally distributed (or approximately normally distributed), Samples are interdependent, Variances of population are equal, Responses for a given group are interdependent and identically distributed normal random variables (not a simple random sample (SRS)), ANOVA is relatively robust procedure with respect to violation of normality assumption. Paternity Leave benefits in India analysis in terms of ANOVA are as follows. Paternity Leave Benefits availed on Birth of child, Adoption of child or Surrogacy of Child were considered to be independent variable in this study. There is no difference in Paternity leave benefits availed in the organization was null hypothesis and vice versa as alternative. There are 16 hypothesis statements which shows there is no significant difference in Paternity leave benefits availed in the organization and 6 hypothesis statements which have a significant difference on Paternity leave benefits availed in the organization and their reasons are stated below:

1. **B&C16** Comfortable discussing intention to take paternity leave with supervisor.
Discussion of Paternity Leave Benefits availed in the organizations with supervisor with reference to $P= 0.023$, $p<0.05$ is significantly different due to personal privacy or fear of bias or discrimination. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis.
2. **C&A19** The organization provides sufficient information about the benefits and rights associated with paternity leave.
Sufficient leaves given from organization on Paternity Leave Benefits availed with reference to $P= 0.043$, $p<0.05$ is significantly different due to lack of awareness and insufficient policies in the organization. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis.
3. **OC25** The organizational culture promotes equal opportunities for men and women regarding parental leave.

Organization promotes equality on Paternity Leave Benefits availed with reference to $P= 0.017$, $p<0.05$ is significantly different due to traditional gender roles. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis.

4. **FI27** Recommend the organization to others if paternity leave policies were enhanced.
Recommend the organization if policies on Paternity Leave Benefits availed were enhanced with reference to $P= 0.048$, $p<0.05$ is significantly different due to workload concerns or lack of support beyond policies. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis.
5. **OB29** Organizations with supportive paternity leave policies attract and retain top talent.
Supportive Paternity Leave Benefits policies availed, attracts and retain top talent with reference to $P= 0.013$, $p<0.05$ is significantly different due to inadequate implementation of the policies. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis.
6. **D&I32** The organization actively promotes diversity and inclusion through its paternity leave policies.
Diversity and Inclusion promoted through Paternity Leave Benefits availed with reference to $P= 0.009$, $p<0.05$ is significantly different due to limited support and resources. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis.

VII. CONCLUSION

This study, examining employee perceptions of paternity leave support in Indian organizations, identified five key components:

- **Communication & Supervisor Encouragement:** Clear communication, supervisor support, and readily available information regarding paternity leave policies were crucial for employee comfort and understanding.
- **Workplace Culture & Perceived Benefits:** A positive workplace culture that values diversity and actively promotes paternity leave policies was seen as attractive to talent and fostering a supportive environment.
- **Workload Management & Supervisor Support:** A manageable workload, along with understanding and supportive supervisors, were essential factors influencing employees' decisions to utilize paternity leave.
- **Work-Life Balance:** Paternity leave was perceived as having a positive impact on employees' work-life balance, further highlighting its importance.
- **Perceived Cultural Barriers to Leave-Taking:** The existence of perceived cultural barriers that discourage men from taking paternity leave suggests a need for HR to address these issues.

These findings offer valuable insights for HR departments in Indian businesses: Develop clear and comprehensive communication strategies to ensure employees are well-informed about paternity leave policies, benefits, and procedures. Train supervisors to be supportive and encouraging of employees considering paternity leave. Foster a positive workplace culture that values work-life balance and actively promotes the utilization of paternity leave. Review workload management practices to ensure workloads are manageable for employees planning to take paternity leave. Identify and address any cultural barriers that may be discouraging men from taking paternity leave.

This could involve awareness campaigns, workshops, or policy revisions. By focusing on these areas, HR departments can create a more supportive environment for paternity leave utilization, potentially leading to increased employee satisfaction, retention, and a more diverse and inclusive workplace.

VIII. LIMITATIONS

The current study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the data were collected from a limited range of industries. This restricts the generalizability of the results to the broader Indian workforce. Second, the sample may not have been sufficiently diverse in terms of age. Future research should aim for a more representative sample across different industries and age groups. Finally, a lack of employee awareness regarding the 2017 Paternity Bill suggests a need for further education and outreach efforts. This highlights the importance of HR departments in disseminating information about paternity leave policies and benefits.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am deeply grateful to all those who have contributed to the completion of this research paper. Firstly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Shine David, for his invaluable guidance and support throughout the research process. Their expertise and encouragement have been instrumental in shaping this work. I would also like to thank the participants of this study for their willingness to share their experiences and insights. Their contribution has been essential in enriching the quality of the research findings. Furthermore, I am thankful to my colleagues and peers for their constructive feedback and discussions that have helped me refine my ideas. Last but not least, I extend my appreciation to my family and friends for their unwavering encouragement and understanding during this undertaking. Their belief in me has been a constant source of motivation. Thank you to all who have been a part of this journey.

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