WHAT APPROACHES DO FATHERS USE TO PROMOTE EMOTION SOCIALISATION IN THEIR CHILDREN?
(VOLUME 1)

By

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ABSTRACT

Despite the growing evidence of the significant role of fathers in the emotion socialisation (ES) process, their 'voice' is scarce within the literature, leading to a dominant discourse surrounding maternal ES practices. ES occurs directly and indirectly with significant 'scaffolding' provided by parents, therefore emotion management is heavily socialised. Two ES practices aid or restrict children's emotional self-regulation. Emotion coaching (EC) parents tend to use expression of emotion as opportunities for learning and development. Emotion dismissing (ED) parents are uncomfortable with negative emotions, so may dismiss, or use punitive responses. Fathers are thought to be shaped by socio-cultural norms and gender biases, therefore emotions may be socialised differently, according to child gender and the type of emotion being displayed.

An exploratory study of five fathers from a local authority in the East of England involved them responding to resource measures employing a combination of spoken and film scenarios reflecting negative emotions of sadness or anger in children. Transcribed data indicated that a number of positive ES approaches were being used.

Future large-scale research with fathers from a broad demographic would strengthen the knowledge-base, perhaps also including partner and child opinions. There is a view that research regarding children's emotional development should be considered incomplete, if data from fathers is not included.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my wife Audrey and our two children Amber and Callum, without whom I could not have completed this course of study. They have all encouraged and supported me unfalteringly over the past three years which has seen both highs and challenges. They have always made me aware that I would succeed, and their support has been integral in completing this course of study, culminating in the submission of this Doctoral thesis.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This thesis comprises a research study exploring the approach and range of strategies fathers employ when 'scaffolding' their children's emotional regulation (ER) development. Emotion socialisation (ES) is an 'umbrella' term for strategies and is shaped directly and indirectly through social referencing, family expressivity, or 'modelling' and the environment; explicit teaching, dialogue and back-up contingencies (Brand and Klimes-Dougan, 2010). The following sections briefly discuss the rationale for this research, and the methodological orientation.

1.1 Research rationale

Historically, fathers have been marginalised, either directly or indirectly regarding ascertaining their views about parenting (Wilson et al., 2016). Moreover, it is regularly stated that recruiting fathers into child research has been problematic (Cassano et al., 2007). This has led to a dominant discourse of mothers being the significant ES factor, through frequency of interaction. There is a paucity of first-hand paternal accounts regarding parenting in general, and specifically their ES practices (Bronte-Tinkew et al., 2006). This research aims to 'illuminate' the role fathers have in how their children are emotion socialised, and to discuss via interviews those factors that have helped shape their ES approaches, such as their meta-emotion philosophy, which can be a significant influence (Gottman et al., 1997). Meta-emotion is the thoughts and feelings about emotion expression that guides responses to one's own, and the emotional behaviours of others.

Few studies have employed a qualitative approach, therefore little is understood why fathers may adopt certain ES strategies. This research attempts to address this via a broad research question that was arrived at inductively following the literature review, having ascertained

that previous research in the ES field had not sufficiently represented the 'voice' of fathers. My research, via interviews, explores the various approaches fathers use to help children recognise and manage negative emotions (NE), such as being emotionally dismissive or implicitly emotion coaching. Strategies to help children cope with NE have not been explored sufficiently in the literature (Cassano et al., 2014; Sanders et al., 2013). There could be implications for parental training programmes if findings suggest that fathers are unclear about, or lack skills in how to support the appropriate development of their children's emotions. Therefore, this research may provide opportunities to re-examine the specific needs of fathers, with respect to supporting their children's ES. Through use of the broad research question the study aims are:

- Explore the myriad factors shaping paternal parenting practice.
- Explore if fathers actively coach or dismiss child emotions, with a particular emphasis on negative emotions (NE).
- Explore whether fathers socialise emotions differentially according to child gender, and the type of emotion being displayed. A central tenet will be that fathers' responses are likely shaped by socio-cultural 'norms' in the UK.

1.2 Literature search strategy

The approach to information gathering was to use a 'funnelled' strategy (Thomas, 2013) beginning with a broad focus, then narrowing to a specific area of investigation. Secondary sources comprising academic journals were sourced from worldwide literature. Appendix A offers a more detailed search framework.

1.3 Researcher identity

It is important to acknowledge my influence upon the data collection process, and this research in general. Moreover, I had a personal interest in undertaking this study. As a

parent, it was disappointing to discover that the views of fathers have been conspicuously absent, despite academics (e.g. Cooklin et al., 2016; Gregory and Millner, 2011; Milkie et al., 2009) highlighting their crucial role in child ER development. During the face-to-face interviews with participants my influence upon the data was inevitable, either through my line of questioning, or via responses to their opinions. In this sense I view the data to be co-constructed (Thomas, 2011). Furthermore, whilst presented data extracts have not been 'sanitised' in any way, it was my decision to select those elements making the final 'cut'. Moreover, I cannot claim any objectivity as I also generated the themes using an inductive approach. I therefore acknowledge a degree of researcher bias in this study, however, my data themes were also cross-checked by two experienced educational psychologists, to improve inter-rater reliability.

1.4 Methodological orientation

This study is underpinned by the theoretical approach of Social Constructionism (Burr, 2003. Social Constructionism is concerned with the individual's lived experience, and has roots in sociology. Knowledge is seen as being created through individual interactions, and how people use language to 'construct' reality (Schwandt, 2003), with an attempt to understand the 'how' and 'why' questions, from unique individual perspectives (Ashworth, 2003). In terms of ontology (the study of reality), Social Constructionism accepts that there is an objective and subjective reality, but is largely concerned with understanding how knowledge is assembled and understood. Thus, Social Constructionism does not assume an ontological perspective, theoretically its focus is epistemological - what we know, and how we know we know it (Andrews, 2012). Robson (2011) states that natural scientific methods cannot be applied to people to find objective 'truths' so typically a qualitative approach is adopted. My research employs a case study, utilising a semi-structured interview format.

1.5 Reflection boxes

Throughout this text I include a number of personal reflections at key points in the research. This is in order for the reader to have a more in-depth understanding of my thought processes at the time. Moreover, I believe the inclusion of such reflections are in keeping with the theoretical spirit of social constructionism, as I, as researcher, attempt to understand how the supporting narrative of this research is being jointly 'constructed' with my participants. Reflections are drawn from notes kept in my research journal which was used throughout the duration of the study.

1.6 Summary

This chapter has introduced the research rationale and methodological orientation. The following chapters offer a more in-depth and detailed account of the research. Chapter 2 provides a review of the relevant literature supporting this study, and presents the research question. It begins with a broad focus on factors shaping parenting and child emotional development, eventually narrowing to ideas about emotional self-regulation. Chapter 3 outlines the methodology and methods utilised, including the ethical considerations for undertaking research with people. Chapter 4 combines data analysis and discussion, in line with the final stage of thematic analysis (TA, Braun and Clarke, 2006). Key themes and sub-themes are presented in this chapter, having been abstracted inductively following the rigorous TA process. Chapter 5 presents my conclusion, which includes strengths/limitations and future research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews relevant literature around the topic of ES. It begins with a broad focus, and the sections below discuss a range of factors that may influence and impact upon parenting practices in a general sense. This is pertinent, as it is not just the ES process that helps shape healthy child emotional development. It is important to acknowledge factors that parents often have to contend with, factors that may alter their subsequent behaviours. For example, life stressors that may be experienced by families from low socio-economic status (SES) are relevant to discuss, as this research is located in an area experiencing high levels of social disadvantage. A threshold of 60% of the average UK household of disposable income is generally used to determine SES (PSE, 2016). Following the broad literature focus the review narrows through a so-called 'funnelled' method (Thomas, 2013) to concentrate on parenting and child emotional development, with a specific emphasis on the contribution of fathers.

Reflection box:

My interest in this research topic arose from a journal article sent to me by an external tutor whose area of interest is 'emotion coaching'. In the first instance I was interested because I had not heard of the term 'emotion socialisation' before, but more so because of the suggestion that fathers had been excluded from research. Once I had prepared a rationale and plan to take the research forward I was required to present my research idea to a panel of academics from the university. This proved a useful exercise. The panel thought that the research topic was interesting and worth exploring further. Moreover, they were able to offer suggestions about how the literature review should be focused. Their suggestion was to begin with looking at broad factors influencing parenting practices in general, and then narrow towards my topic of interest. I took their advice, therefore this is how my Literature review chapter is structured.

The literature review started in February 2016 and continued for the duration of the

research, in order to include up-to-date data. Academic databases relevant to the areas of

education and psychology were used for the searches. To take full advantage of these

databases 'Boolean operators' were used with 'nested' search queries within parentheses.

For example, ("parent* skills" OR "parent* style") AND mental health. Use of an asterisk

ensured that the terms 'parent', 'parental' and 'parenting' were addressed. Journals were

also 'limited' to include peer-reviewed, full text and within a 10-year time period. Appendix A

offers a comprehensive list of literature search criteria.

> **Reflection box:**
>
> I used 'mindmaps' to generate my search terms made from key words such as 'parenting' or 'socio-economic status'. These initial search terms had been derived from typing into Google 'key factors influencing parenting practice/style'. Further words were generated by using a thesaurus, or from utilising key terms listed in the journal articles. All of these key words were combined in a number of ways, often using 'boolean operators' to maximise the search potential. Earlier in the course we had received extensive training by the university's specialist librarian. He was able to show us which databases to access that were relevant to our area of study. This training, with supporting documentation, later proved invaluable in terms of maximising the use of search terms and academic databases.

2.2 The construction of fatherhood

When referring to families and parenting the focus of this research is on Western culture,

with particular emphasis on the United Kingdom (UK). Fatherhood however, is recognised as

a social construction that is not easily defined (Bruel, 1997). In general, two 'threads' feed

into this social construction. One is a powerful social discourse about what constitutes being

a 'good' father. The other is the legal system that defines paternal responsibilities towards a

child. Both serve to create a 'framework' in Western culture within which men perform the

paternal role (Doucet, 2006; Featherstone, 2009).

Feminism and celebrity fathers, such as David Beckham, have also helped to shape a powerful public discourse about the developing paternal role (O 'Brien et al., 2007). In their article comparing the construction of fatherhood in the UK and France Gregory and Milner (2011) state that the media has done much to present one version of the perceived paternal role, usually through the use of high-profile public figures. These portrayals are often centred upon family values and are usually exclusively based upon a heterosexual family unit. As America tends to dominate popular culture through its plethora of media outlets it is important to recognise that Western society generally only offers one view of what constitutes fatherhood, therefore it fails to reflect the cultural diversity of the modern age (Sellenet, 2007). This popular portrayal of fatherhood is likely to be skewed towards an ideal that is often disconnected from reality, such as representing divorced fathers, single fathers, gay fathers or many other adult combinations.

The UK is a multi-cultural society, therefore it is reasonable to assume that different cultures have their own 'norms' regarding both parental practices and how each parent conceptualises their role. It is beyond the scope of this research to explore fatherhood amongst the diverse UK population. However, in terms of context-setting it is important to recognise that my research is based upon one construction of fatherhood, one that tends to fit the broad Western cultural 'norm'. This is one where fathers are generally cast as 'provider', although underlying societal changes leading to the notion of 'new fatherhood' (McGill, 2014) are also discussed, later in this review. Inevitably, my research has a narrow focus when discussing fatherhood due to the demographics of the area this study is based in. For example, in the 2011 national census, the area that this research is located in covers 192km^2, with a population of roughly 160,000. Ethnic minority families only represent 4.5% of this population which is significantly lower than the national average (20.5%, ONS, 2011).

2.3 The review

The manner in which adults embark on their approach to parenting, and the strategies they use are well-recognised as being a significant factor in child development (Hoeve et al., 2009). However, parental style is shaped by many influences. Certainly, parents are largely responsible for assisting their children in terms of 'school readiness'. This is conceptualised as children having good executive functions whilst also employing emotional self-regulation, or 'effortful control' (Ursache et al., 2012). Popular beliefs imply that children need both parents for gender-specific capabilities, for example, mothers provide nurture and fathers provide structure, becoming role models for both gender children (Biblarz and Stacey, 2010). Beliefs that children thrive in a 'traditional' two-parent structure are maintained when powerful authority figures, such as former President Obama (New York Times, 2008) speak about the significance of the family unit:

"We know the statistics. Children who grow up without a father are five times more likely to live in poverty and commit crime; nine times more likely to drop out of school and twenty times more likely to end up in prison. They are more likely to have behavioural problems, or run away from home, or become teenage parents themselves."

In the following sections a range of factors are discussed such as parental mental health, socio-economic status, access to parenting courses and parenting styles/practices. All of these are relevant in terms of context-setting for my research, as they have the potential to impact upon children's emotional development. Moreover, in the sections below there is an emphasis upon how fathers help shape children's emotional regulation, as there are significant gaps in the literature reflecting their contribution, and their views have largely been omitted (Cassano et al., 2007).

2.4. Mental health

Barth (2009) highlights mental health as being a risk factor for maladaptive parenting, with psychologically robust parents having children with fewer social, emotional and mental health difficulties (Karre and Mounts, 2012). Research investigating parental mental health primarily focuses on mothers, making it difficult to ascertain if fathers are less resilient, in terms of coping in the parenting role (Dave et al., 2005). Fathers who have the capacity to be responsive to their child's needs positively influence mental health, as there is thought to be less maladaptive behaviours, and higher academic attainment (King and Sobolenski, 2006). Perlman et al. (2012) state that poor parental mental health impacts negatively upon parental engagement, such as reduced child interactions and elevated levels of harshness and hostility. Depressed fathers are thought to enjoy parenting much less than their non-depressed counterparts (Lyons-Ruth et al., 2002), and effective co-parenting may prove challenging if both parents are experiencing poor mental health. Research (e.g. Doherty et al., 1998; Thomson et al., 1994) suggests fathers are vulnerable to contextual influences in their socially-constructed role as 'breadwinner', therefore loss of employment may impact upon their level of child engagement. However, Schindler (2010) proposes good paternal mental health may lead to enhanced inter-parental and child engagement levels. Bronte-Tinkew et al. (2010) underline the importance of parent resilience, in that co-morbid factors such as low SES may also have a long-lasting detrimental impact.

Schindler (2010) undertook research looking into three areas of paternal well-being: self-efficacy, self-esteem and psychological distress. This research proposed a key aspect of paternal well-being is the role men typically assume as financial provider. This role affords status and the ability to acquire goods and services benefitting the family. However, McGill (2014) hypothesises that the paternal role has undergone seismic changes in recent decades,

so other factors may influence mental health, such as their perceived level of expertise in the nurturing role. Fathers may experience a 'double-whammy' stress effect in that they are socially expected to be income providers, then experience other stressors in the parenting role. Pleck (1995), in referring to gender role theory, suggests that when fathers do not fulfil socially constructed standards then their psychological well-being may be compromised.

Schindler's (2010) research offered key findings. The financial contribution and levels of paternal engagement led to higher levels of psychological well-being, and this is how fathers may define their worth. Opportunities for a more 'hands-on' nurturing role led to increased self-esteem and less psychological distress. The study however had several limitations. Although the sample size of 1,686 males was large, the research only focused on biological resident fathers. Furthermore, there was a poor response rate using self-report measures, and respondents tended to reflect higher SES participants, thus skewing results towards a specific demographic. Parents of higher SES are less likely to face stressors commonly associated with poor mental health (Peruzzi, 2014).

Negative self-reflections regarding parenting skills may exacerbate depression, which is often co-morbid with anxiety (Feldman et al. (2009). Wenzel et al. (2005) report a number of factors that may make parents vulnerable to anxiety. The family economic capability is significant, as is the quality of a support network. Seymour et al. (2014) propose that high levels of parental anxiety make it difficult to create a stimulating home learning environment.

2.4i Home environment

Morris et al. (2007) emphasise the importance of the family unit for children's healthy emotional regulation (ER) development. They propose a tripartite model based upon 'observation', 'parenting practices' and the 'emotional climate of the family'. In this instance,

maintenance of positive mental health should be evident through parenting style and a positive HLE. Silk et al. (2006) postulate that children with depressed mothers not only have a limited range of ER coping mechanisms, but that these are also less effective than children of healthy mothers. Children with poor levels of ER may have lasting behavioural difficulties beyond nursery and the first year of schooling (NICHD, 2004). Morris et al. (2007) emphasise that the majority of literature regarding children's development of ER concentrates on maternal influence, despite the significant contribution of fathers within the home.
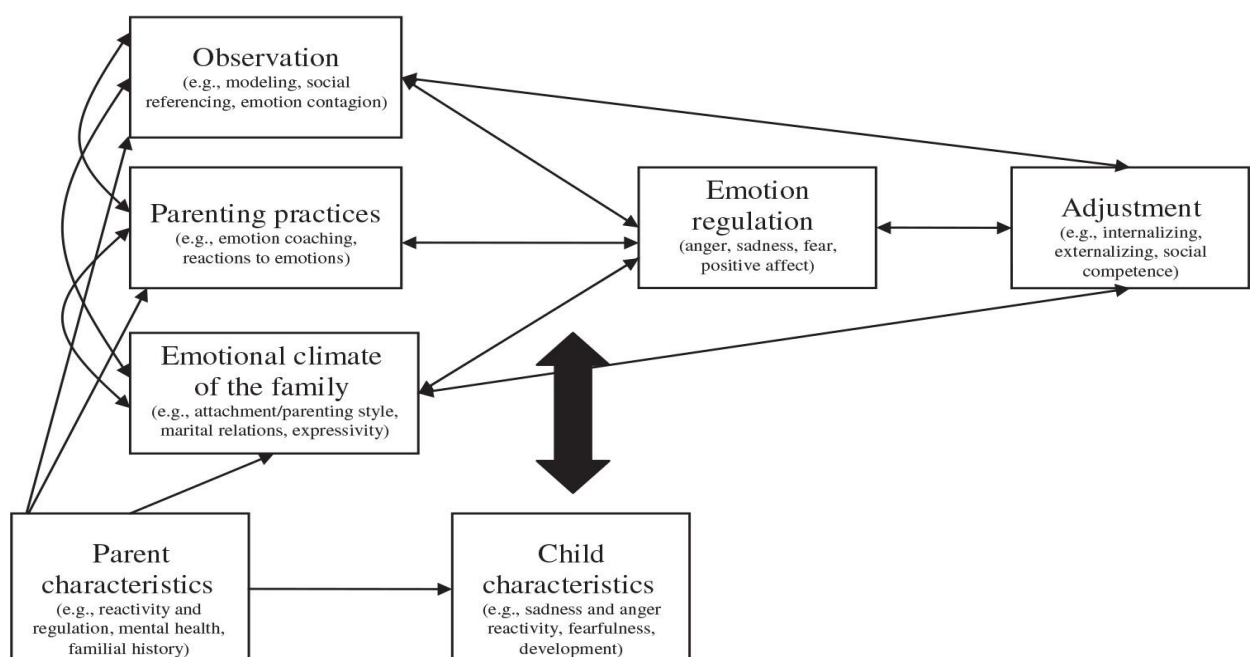
Figure 1. Tripartite Model of family impact upon child ER and adjustment (Morris et al., 2007).

The model incorporates bi-directional processes where children and parents have the capacity to impact upon one another. However, Halberstadt et al. (1999) hypothesise that if children are exposed to mild amounts of negative parental emotional expression this may not be so damaging. They postulate that this may help children understand that there are a range of emotions, so different coping strategies are required. It is when the negative emotional climate is persistent and ongoing that the impact can be severe, as children may come to view their parents as emotionally dysfunctional. Eisenberg & Morris (2002) state

many factors such as genetics, child temperament and cognitive development influence ER, therefore some children may be pre-disposed to developing difficulties when exposed to maladaptive parenting. In a negative environment children are thought to be less emotionally stable, possibly because they sense their parents as being unpredictable (Perlman et al., 2012). It therefore holds that the reverse may be true. In a responsive, warm environment children are likely to feel supported and emotionally secure. Depressed parents may have difficulties in promoting healthy ER in their children due to difficulty in self-regulation themselves, making it hard to consistently model a positive approach (Seymour et al., 2014). Professionals such as Educational Psychologists (EPs) are well-placed to upskill parents in how to create a positive HLE, due to their knowledge of child development, and regular access to families whilst undertaking casework within the school environment.

2.4ii Parental self-efficacy

Bandura (1977) proposes reflections upon one's performance is intrinsically linked to the construct of self-efficacy. Parent self-efficacy (PSE) is thought to be a significant factor in healthy child development, through positive parenting (Sevigny and Loutzenhiser 2010). Encouraging PSE skills may improve mental health, leading to more consistent parenting practices, possibly due to a reduction in anxiety, as parents experience the positive results of their efforts (Barth, 2009; DeGarmo et al., 2004). For fathers, the more opportunities for 'hands-on' parenting, the higher levels of PSE and confidence in their skill set, particularly when receiving positive child responses (McGill, 2014). In general, females have more opportunities than men during their early life to socialise with babies and infants (Parke, 2002), which could make PSE significant, given men's lack of opportunities to practice nurturing. Leerkes and Burney (2007) screened 120 mothers and 79 fathers and found that remembered paternal warmth was a significant predictor of PSE in new fathers, particularly if

their own needs were met as a child. Furthermore, post-natal measures examined social

support, infant temperament and parenting involvement. The study found that 'hands-on'

involvement combined with social support were predictors of PSE 6 months after child birth

for fathers, less so for mothers. The above research, whilst useful in identifying predictors of

PSE, has several limitations. There was participant drop-out between the pre and post-natal

data-gathering phase. Those that remained were primarily white and married (95%), thus

biased towards a particular demographic. The study employed self-report measures which

may be subject to distortion (Robson, 2011), which were required to be returned. This is

perhaps something of a 'big ask', with parents adjusting to the demands of their new role.

Indeed, there is no mention of the return rate. Moreover, the remaining participants

generally came from a high-SES background, thus potentially skewing the findings. It is

important to recognise that PSE is a fluid construct influenced by parent-child interactions

(Van Rijen et al., 2014), and that social support can be instrumental in PSE. This is likely due

to increased performance attainment through praise and encouragement from within the

support network.

2.4iii Support network

Social support, both perceived and actual is well-documented as a protective factor for well-

being, impacting positively upon parenting practices (O' Hara, 2009). Seymour et al. (2014)

state that lack of interpersonal and wider social support are risk factors for parental isolation.

McConnell et al. (2008) found that parents reporting high levels of depression combined with

social isolation displayed less positive parenting skills, and elevated levels of stress. However,

Fagan et al. (2007) propose paternal stress can be negated through social support, especially

in the transition to fatherhood. Furthermore, research (e.g. McConkey, 1994; Ballard, 1994;

Herbert and Carpenter, 1994; West 2000) suggests fathers are unintentionally overlooked by

professionals. This has been evident when parents have sought support for disabled children, with existing systems more responsive towards mothers, with some fathers describing themselves as the 'invisible or peripheral parent'. Such systems reduce paternal involvement to merely family 'provider/protector' (Carpenter and Towers, 2008). The Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities (FPLD, 2005) conducted research and found that fathers with disabled children were marginalised by support services, emotional needs were overlooked and that they had a less robust support network, compared to mothers. Twenty one fathers with children up to the age of 11 took part in semi-structured interviews. A combination of sampling techniques, including website recruitment, leaflets and direct contact with parent groups were employed to elicit a diverse range of participants. Of the participants, only three reported a significant support network. The remainder described their partner as a key source of support, this finding perhaps having implications during episodes of inter-parental conflict, where fathers may feel isolated.

The FPLD (2005) research exploring the experience of fathers had some limitations. A sample of 21 participants using a qualitative approach means findings are difficult to generalise widely. Inclusion of an interview schedule would have enabled readers to understand how data was compiled for analysis. Moreover, inclusion of a table of resulting 'themes' may have led to a nuanced understanding of unique paternal challenges. No Step, or non-cohabiting fathers were included in the study, further limiting generalisation. Fagan and Lee (2011) comparing adolescent and adult fathers found that social support was influential in promoting child engagement amongst younger fathers. This is particularly salient if young fathers can count upon the support of their partner's and their own parents (Fagan et al., 2007). Opportunities to 'network' with other fathers, particularly those facing similar parenting challenges, would be a positive development. Perhaps men may be more reluctant

to actively seek support compared to females, as it contravenes their socially constructed role (Pleck, 1995). Schools have recognised the importance of paternal support by arranging 'dad days' or compiling 'Dad packs' – specific information resources for fathers (Fathers Direct, 2006), such as how to access support services.

Social support may be difficult in areas characterised by social disorder and crime and this in turn can influence parenting behaviour, particularly if families are isolated (Turney and Harknett, 2010). Families do not live in a 'bubble', and environmental factors impacting upon families can be explained by the 'systems' surrounding them. Ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1992) emphasises the importance of environmental factors upon child development. Because child development is a dynamic process, it is shaped by those interactions with other 'systems'. How these systems function around the child, such as making them feel safe, loved and nurtured is key for healthy development (Cullen, 2011). However, there can be a tendency for poorer families to be restricted geographically, due to lack of resources (Criss et al., 2009).
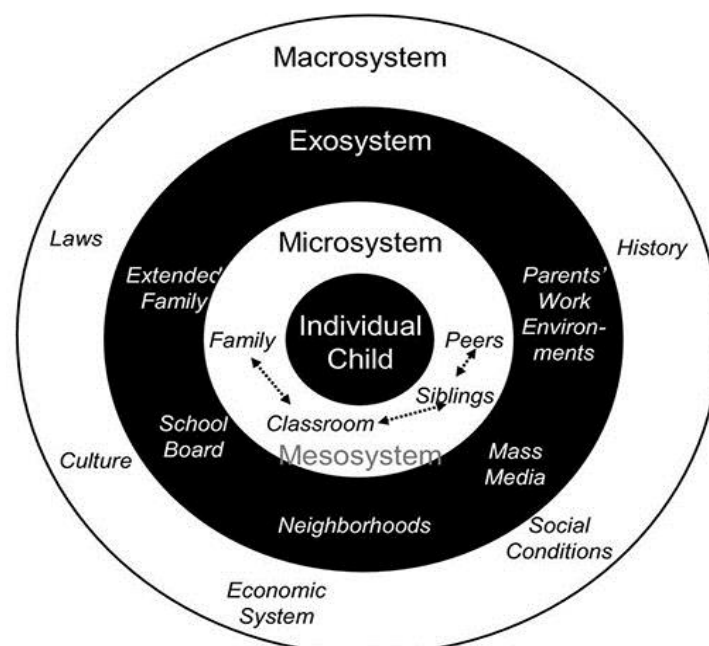
Figure 2. The Eco-systemic model (Bronfenbrenner, 1992).

Byrnes and Miller (2012) proposed high levels of social support promotes effective parenting, combining structure with increasing child autonomy, and is consistent with similar research (e.g. Marra et al., 2009). Although their sample of 614 mothers was large, the authors are unable to infer cause and effect. For example, they claim that perceived neighbourhood cohesiveness and social support enhances parenting practices. However, it is also possible that parents experiencing high levels of social support become more effective parents, then specifically select to reside in cohesive neighbourhoods. Therefore, the self-report measures addressing 'collective neighbourhood efficacy' (Sampson et al., 1997) were likely to reflect a positive participant view, as they may have chosen to live there. Others, (e.g. Carpenter and Towers, 2008) have suggested there should be more opportunities for parents experiencing isolation to access social support groups. Cycles of social disadvantage have the potential to impact upon both education and psychological well-being (Chen et al., 2005).

2.5 Social disadvantage

2.5i Socio-economic status (SES)

Low SES has the power to shape many aspects of child development, such as school experience and mental health (Stansfeld et al., 2008). Studies have shown that SES can be a predictor of a child's academic trajectory (Siraj-Blatchford, 2010), initially noticeable at pre-school and becoming more apparent during educational progression. Moreover, Cataldi et al. (2009) report that students from low income families are up to 10 times more likely not to complete school, compared to more affluent families. The Labour Government's 'Sure Start' initiative was set up to help develop parenting skills and child outcomes in deprived communities (Lister, 2003). Although well-intentioned, another view could be that this political initiative was aimed at within-person deficits, by inference that poorer parents

display less effective parenting. A further difficulty is that many families experiencing economic hardship either cannot, or do not access evidence-based interventions (Brotman et al., 2008).

The paradox is that the much larger eco-systemic factors such as employment and improved housing are often not effectively addressed in government re-generation schemes, thus maintaining families in a cycle of low SES (MacDonald and Marsh, 2005). Moreover, there can be a tendency to 'demonise' socially disadvantaged people. For example, Ritchie and Buchanan (2010) found that the police, doctors and the general public were more likely to report poor families to social services than middle class parents. This study led to an interesting finding when comparing 391 teenage pupils from both state and private schools, that privately-educated adolescents with professional parents reported higher incidents of parental discord, family violence and feelings of isolation than those growing up in low SES households. Indeed, this study proposed that being of low SES could make families more resilient, through a sense of 'togetherness', and that other protective factors could be found in the community and at school. A significant finding in comparison with previous literature was that being of low SES was not linked to sub-standard parenting. Whilst this study found that privately-educated teenagers experienced more negative parenting, there are methodological limitations. The study employed self-report questionnaires which have several limitations, such as accuracy of recall and subjective interpretation of events (Robson, 2011). There was also a presumption that all participants could comprehend the questions. Moreover, there was no clarification of questionnaire return rates. From an ethical perspective, there was no mention of how participants were offered support if any questions evoked painful experiences.

2.5ii 'Risky neighbourhoods'

'Social disorganisation theory' (Sampson and Groves, 1989) may explain behaviours in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. According to this theory, a sub-culture may exist running counter to mainstream society, based on violence and intimidation, therefore representing a barrier to social cohesiveness. Byrnes and Miller (2012) state that so-called 'risky neighbourhoods' may impact upon parenting practice, for example, community trust may be difficult to establish because of the sub-culture threat. However, positive family communication and parental monitoring of children in these neighbourhoods can serve as a protective factor. 'Strain theory' (Merton, 1938; Cohen, 1955) explains social disorder as the distance between aspiration and actual achievement. So, communities experiencing disadvantage are unlikely to flourish if there is little hope of viable employment. In his seminal work 'The truly disadvantaged', Wilson (1987) proposes aspirational parents displaying positive parenting practices eventually extricate themselves from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, resulting in fewer community role models. What this means therefore, is that those parents wishing to nurture their children's growth face significant stressors living in risky neighbourhoods, and disadvantage may be self-perpetuating. Parental desire to promote positive behaviours in their children may see their efforts undermined, due to a pervasive sub-culture of violence and intimidation.

2.5iii Social status

Sohr-Preston et al. (2012) propose that social background is a risk factor for child development even before formal schooling begins. Not only may children lack school 'readiness', they can be disadvantaged throughout their education and over the life-term, such as reduced employment opportunities. The authors propose that the cyclical effect of low SES may be seen through the lack of parental vocabulary and vocal interactions, which

subsequently impact upon academic progression. A strength of this study is that three generations of one family were analysed regarding the impact of low SES on child outcomes. Two indicators are frequently used to gauge parental SES – income and education. Income gives a family financial capital – essentially economic resources, whereas education promotes human capital (Conger and Donnellen, 2007). Human Capital consists of people's health, knowledge and skills – a pre-requisite for future employment. Enhancing human capital through education is central to a flourishing economy. It is important to note the key role of education, as this can later be 'exchanged' for financial capital. It would appear therefore that raising educational attainment in poor families should be a goal, as it may represent both a social and financial 'passport' to improved opportunities.
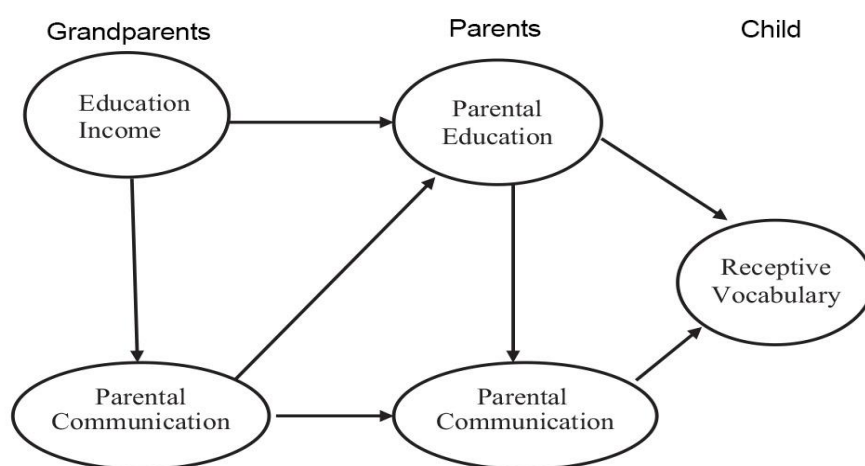
Figure 3. A third-generation investment model (Sohr-Preston et al., 2012).

A key finding from interpreting the model was that education had more of a long-term impact, suggesting that parental education may be more influential than income for child development. For example, studies show that young mothers who remained in education for just one extra year displayed more positive parenting skills than those who left education early (Pogarsky et al., 2006). In terms of the long-term investment in children, MacDonald and Marsh (2005) note:

"Education represents by far the single largest social policy investment in poor neighbourhoods." (p.213).

A key point is that well-educated parents possess more 'social capital' than poorer parents. Social capital is those networks of people with shared social norms and values and understandings that facilitate co-operation amongst groups (OECD, 2010). This can be a potential barrier for low SES or so-called 'hard to reach' families. They may be less familiar with the educational system or feel a power imbalance between themselves and school, due to cultural differences, or their own educational experience. Moreover, disadvantage can be cyclical, for example, poorer families may only be able to live where others do not want to (Criss et al., 2009). Several authors (e.g. Webster-Stratton et al., 2001; Brotman et al., 2008) suggest one way for disadvantaged parents to enhance their skills and their children's ER is through parent training courses.

2.6. Parent training

There is a need to 'upskill' some parents in the use of positive parenting practices and the creation of a positive HLE (Siraj-Blatchford, 2010). Research indicates that parenting programmes for low SES families delivered during the pre-school phase helps to reduce the onset of child behavioural difficulties (Lunkenheimer et al., 2008; Brotman et al., 2005, 2008). However, attracting low income families to parenting programmes is challenging for a number of reasons. For example, factors such as lack of transport, work routines or the residual negative impact of their school experience can make engagement problematic. This could lead to anxiety, which may be exacerbated if there are also cultural or language differences (Brotman et al., 2011). Parenting programmes are typically designed to improve PSE in child-rearing skills, and understanding of child development, and are rooted in social

learning (Bandura, 1977) and attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969). However, Brotman et al. (2011) state that within some minority families there is a history of low take-up of professional services, due to interventions not being 'fit for purpose'. Often, minority families are expected to work with white, middle class staff (Hughes et al., 2005). In essence, there is a need to consider that parents are not a homogenous group, therefore flexibility is required to take into account family diversity.

Historically, parenting programmes have neglected fathers, focusing on mothers as the primary child-rearing figure (Lundahl et al., 2008). Harper and McLanahan (2004) state the literature should not ignore the significant role fathers play in children's social development, particularly their emotional well-being. It is thought as little as 20% of training programmes have included fathers with Tiano and Macneil (2005) proposing that men have not been motivated to attend, due to course content (mother-focused) and the logistics of attendance. Using a meta-analysis of 26 studies, Lundahl et al. (2008) found that including fathers in parenting programmes increased the chances of intervention success, although less so compared to mothers. Fathers were less likely to make significant changes in their parenting behaviours following training. Others (e.g. Fagan and Hawkins, 2001; Sirridge, 2001) have proposed that parent training should be appropriately tailored to meet fathers' needs, such as encouragement to discuss their own experiences with male professionals. Lundahl et al. (2008) noted that recruitment and retention of fathers into parent training is problematic. Although rigid selection criteria was applied for this study, the authors were unable to control for confounding variables, such as the original sampling strategies, or the potential biases of researchers. Furthermore, no study sought to offer a mechanism explaining why the inclusion of fathers enhanced intervention effectiveness, or why they made fewer changes in parenting practices overall.

Brotman et al. (2011) looked at the efficacy of the American initiative 'parent corps', a pre-school intervention for parents and children run by teachers and mental health professionals. The programme was largely aimed at minority families living in large urban areas lacking community resources. Moreover, it was a culturally-informed intervention developed in conjunction with community leaders, parents and teachers (Brotman et al., 2008). Over 13 weeks, the purpose was to increase PSE and reduce child behavioural problems. 171 families participated, with assessments including filmed parent-child interactions, parental interviews and teacher questionnaires. Children were randomly assigned to either the intervention or 'control' group. The intervention was viewed as relevant and engaging and yielded significant post-intervention effects. The benefits of a parent/child/teacher intervention is that it is based on collaboration and shared ownership to bring about positive change. Such an initiative is not currently being used in areas of high deprivation in the UK. Although seen as a success, the 'parent corps' study has some methodological drawbacks. The most glaring is that the control group were not assigned to a 'wait list', therefore deliberately excluded from receiving the intervention, which must be viewed as ethically and morally questionable. Furthermore, teachers allocated to each group were aware of the intervention condition they were working in, which may have biased results. Lastly, data was missing from parents, in terms of either filmed observations or interviews.

Although the residual impact of parental training may be reduced compared to mothers, fathers should be included as a matter of course, and not marginalised (Lunkenheimer et al., 2008). However, no matter how well intentioned, it should be recognised that the offer of a parenting course in isolation is unlikely to bring about long-term positive change for families if other environmental factors, such as poor housing, crime and employment are not addressed in tandem.

2.7. Parenting and child development

2.7i Parenting styles

Parenting is a challenging task that essentially represents 'on the job' training. Parents need to remain flexible as much of the early process is in response to infant needs, and interpreting those needs in the absence of language (Keenan, 2002). However, there is a general consensus regarding three parenting 'styles' in research literature. In his seminal work, Baumrind (1971) identified the following which may impact upon child development:

1. **Authoritative parenting:** children have better social skills and achieve good academic levels.

2. **Authoritarian parenting:** children have low rates of poor behaviour but have less social skills and less self-esteem.

3. **Permissive parenting:** children tend to have lower academic levels but high social skills and self-esteem.

The authoritarian style is characterised by lack of parental warmth, emotional detachment and controlling behaviours. It is seen as a rigid approach, where although children are compliant, they are also less expressive. Parents may also display elevated levels of control and hostility in their inter-personal relationships, which may lead to internalising/externalising behaviours in children (Barber and Harmon, 2002). Control may incorporate psychological elements, such as withholding affection, and may have a long-lasting detrimental impact upon children's ER (McEwan and Flouri, 2009). Perhaps there is also an element of 'learned helplessness', as fathers who are psychologically controlling may have children less able to self-regulate their emotions (McEwen and Flouri, 2009).

The permissive style is characterised by parents who tend to be warm and affectionate.

However, their *laissez faire* approach often means children have few boundaries to adhere to. Whilst expressive skills may be high, they may lack the focus and determination that goes hand-in-hand with academic achievement (Spera, 2005). In general, the authoritative style is thought to be the most effective approach, combining consistent use of boundaries and structure with encouragement for increasing child autonomy (Goodall, 2013). Moreover, it has been linked with a range of positive child outcomes, including being a protective factor against substance abuse (Steinberg et al., 2006). Those parents displaying the authoritative parenting style tend to have children with an all-round positive adjustment which is reflected in their academic, social and emotional development (Steinberg et al. 2006), and in some ethnic groups, this style has even more impact when delivered by the father (Kim and Rohner, 2002). Children of authoritative parents have been shown to have high levels of self-efficacy, self-esteem and academic achievement, in comparison to other parenting styles (Heaven and Ciarrochi, 2008). Different parenting approaches have been associated with attachment styles, and all have different consequences for children's development.

2.7ii Attachment

Attachment is the relationship or emotional bond that develops between an infant and the primary caregiver. Over time, the child learns how its basic needs will be met (Bowlby, 1969). Based on observational data Ainsworth and Bell (1970) originated three attachment styles, with a fourth being added later, after further research (table 1 below). Although research has examined the child-primary caregiver relationship, Sanders et al. (2013) state the importance of children having secure attachments with both parents.

Table 1. Attachment styles (Ainsworth and Bell, 1970).	
Secure attachment	This is the ideal relationship between primary caregiver and infant. The infant demonstrates a willingness to explore new environments, in the caregiver's presence. An infant becomes upset when left alone or with a stranger, but greets the primary caregiver happily upon their return, and actively seeks comfort.
Insecure-avoidant attachment	Children do not orientate to their attachment figure while investigating the environment, or when distressed, but are heavily-reliant on this figure for physical and emotional needs. Such children are likely to have a caregiver who is insensitive and unavailable during times of emotional distress
Insecure-resistant attachment	Children adopt ambivalent behaviours toward the attachment figure, and will reject them during episodes of interaction. Significantly, feelings of security around the attachment figure will be difficult to develop. This means the child lacks the confidence to explore new environments, and when distressed, are difficult to soothe. These behaviours develop due to inconsistent responses from the primary caregiver.
Insecure-disorganised attachment	This category was derived later by researchers who noted that infants appeared dazed by being reunited with their primary caregiver.

2.7iii Fathers and childcare

In Western society, the role of fathers has evolved beyond that of simply 'breadwinner' (Goldberg 2015). Indeed there is an expectation that fathers will spend more time with their children and embrace a more caring and nurturing role than ever before (Milkie et al., 2009). In his seminal work, Belsky (1984) identified three foundation factors shaping paternal involvement in childcare: father characteristics, child characteristics and the quality of the inter-parental relationship. Moreover, research (e.g. Cabrera et al., 2000) identifies specific involvement factors:

Accessibility – the time a father has available for interaction, whether this occurs or not.

Engagement – the direct father-child interactions, including 'modelling' of target behaviours.

Responsibility – how the father responds in relation to the child's basic needs. Cooklin et al. (2016) proposed other factors they saw as complimenting these areas of paternal involvement:

Warmth – this is characterised by how attuned a father is to their child's needs, and recognised as a 'buffer' when maternal nurturing is not forthcoming (Martin et al., 2010). Paternal warmth has been linked with a range of positive child outcomes such as academic and socio-emotional, and sets the tone for future interactions (Webster et al., 2013).

Consistency – the structure for discipline and child behaviour management put in place by fathers and is thought to enhance school 'readiness' and pro-social behaviours (Herbert et al., 2013).

Irritability – characterised by a lack of paternal responsiveness, such as being harsh or rejecting, and is thought to lead to maladaptive child outcomes, such as internalising/externalising behaviours (Giallo et al., 2013; Kawabata et al., 2011).

Family structure generally requires at least one, if not both parents to work full-time (Roeters et al., 2009). Research suggests this burden of expectation is heavily weighted upon fathers (Haney and March, 2003; Wall and Arnold, 2007). Moreover, whilst childcare for mothers is viewed as a natural progression, paternal over-involvement may be seen as a deliberate move away from gender 'norms' (Shuffleton, 2014). Cooklin et al. (2016) propose that tensions created by a 'work-family conflict' places fathers in a difficult position, with the potential to impact upon all of the childcare involvement factors listed above. Whist many have embraced a more egalitarian role under the broad term 'new fatherhood' it is clear that a tension exists in an attempt to fulfil the dual role of involved parent and financial provider

(Gregory and Milner, 2011). Moreover, the drive to fulfil the role of provider is strong, with a suggestion that this becomes more pronounced following child birth, with longer hours spent at work and less at home (Townsend, 2002). Historically, the balancing of childcare with employment has been distinctly framed as a female dilemma. However, with significant numbers of women returning to the workforce following childbirth there has been an impact upon the paternal role, and men are routinely expected to carry out duties that were historically feminised, such as household chores (McGill, 2014). Cooklin et al. (2016) make the valid point that whilst the role of being a father has undergone seismic changes, due to shifts in cultural 'norms', work institutions have been slow to make appropriate adjustments. Moreover, although research indicates fathers would like to be more involved in childcare (Gerson, 2010), others (e.g. Bianchi & Milkie, 2010; Todd & Binns, 2013) propose they face gender inequalities favouring mothers, such as flexible working arrangements.

The attitude that men adopt to fatherhood also influences the work-family life balance. For example, McGill (2014) found a conflict of interests between fathers described as 'traditional' or egalitarian. The latter were more inclined to relinquish or incorporate children into personal leisure time, whereas traditional fathers were more likely to adhere to gender expectations as 'breadwinner' as their primary family support mechanism. However, Cooklin et al. (2016) propose fathers have a unique role in child development, even if this role often adheres to stereotyped behaviours, such as engaging in 'rough and tumble' play. Furthermore, several authors (e.g. Koivunen et al., 2009; Premberg et al., 2008) state that fathers are increasingly more responsible for shaping the emotional tone and expectations for child behaviour within the home. However, Hawkins et al. (2006) postulate that a discourse can still exist about fathers, such as being cast in a stereotypical role as the 'fun parent'.

Goldberg (2015) proposes that the quality of the inter-parental relationship is critical in determining the level of commitment men make to their identity as a father. Non-resident fathers may therefore be at a disadvantage, due to reduced opportunities for child interaction, and circumstances influencing the relationship breakdown. They also face other obstacles with the reality or perception of mothers acting in a 'gatekeeping' role (Allen & Hawkins, 1999). Moreover, access to children may be used as leverage in negotiations for enhanced child support payments, and this may also lead to fathers showing a reluctance for involvement (Amato, 2000; Greif, 2001). Whilst 'gatekeeping' by the mother may benefit the child, it may serve to marginalise fathers in their parental role. Sano et al. (2008) state the amount of paternal involvement in a child's life is linked to the quality of the relationship with the child's mother. They feel this feature warrants investigation when ascertaining the level of paternal involvement in childcare.

2.7iv Paternal re-adjustment

Barnett and Gareis (2007) researched parents where mothers were nurses working night shifts. They found that fathers were able to re-adjust to a nurturing role, due to the enforced mother absence, and this was more pronounced when there was little overlap in parental work routines (Presser, 2000). However, research suggests that children's social and emotional development can be compromised when a parent (invariably the mother) works non-standard hours, likely to the lack of physical availability of the adult (Barnett and Gareis, 2007).

Barnett and Gareis (2007) propose that fathers time spent with children may act in a compensatory way for the missing mother. Their research included self-reports from both fathers and children (aged 8-14). High levels of paternal self-efficacy regarding skills were

reported. In the mothers' absence, the quality of paternal involvement increased significantly, with children remarking they were more likely to make personal disclosures, and that fathers knew more about their lives. Self-reports from children about what their fathers did was crucial in this study. This is rarely included in research, possibly because children are considered too young to give insightful opinions (Punch, 2002). The authors concluded that fathers with partners working night shifts are more willing to adopt a nurturing role, compared to families where the mother works standard hours. This perhaps also supports a view that family functioning should be viewed holistically, rather than focusing on the mother-child relationship. Ecological Systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1992) emphasises the importance of a variety of factors that potentially impact upon children and families. Therefore, both immediate and wider family members are likely to be a source of influence, representing the interactive element of 'systems' upon child development.

Trust likely plays a key role, with perhaps women more likely to commit to evening work if they feel their partner has the necessary paternal skillset. Nevertheless, this study demonstrates that in particular circumstances fathers do have the capacity to become more involved in the nurturing process. Perhaps an enforced change of circumstances can be viewed positively, encouraging fathers to step out from socially-constructed roles. However, in the Barnett and Gareis research, not all participants felt comfortable with enforced changes:

"When I'm not alone I find parenting easier. In her absence it can be difficult, so I'm learning through trial and error."

Findings from this study perhaps underline that the skillset of fathers takes longer to hone compared to mothers, and may be affected by lack of opportunities in a nurturing role. A

possible downside to family functioning is that non-standard work hours may impact

negatively upon the quality of the marital relationship (Presser, 2003). However, others

suggest the marital bond may become stronger when the mother acknowledges the positive

child-rearing impact fathers are having (Ozer et al., 1998). The Barnett and Gareis (2007)

research was based on skilled professionals who are generally well paid and have some say in

their work pattern compared to other shift workers in the service sector. Therefore other

factors such as SES may introduce extra challenges to positive parenting not addressed in

their research.

2.7v Change in paternal identity

The term 'mother' is heavily value-laden in perhaps ways that 'father' is not. Ritchie and

Buchanan (2010) propose that parenting is a gendered occupation, with women generally

expecting motherhood to take precedence above other roles, and commit themselves

accordingly. It is thought men are less motivated (or biologically programmed) to make such

sweeping adjustments, and retain much of their former identity (Blumer, 1969; Sano et al.,

2008). A change in parental identity is perhaps more challenging for men as females may

have more investment in identity change, because being a parent is central to a woman's

transition (Leeks and Burney, 2007). Moreover, women have at least 9 months preparation,

during which time their body undergoes fundamental changes. Following childbirth there is

also a shift in the relationship between parents, as the female devotes significantly more

attention to the offspring, which may be difficult for the male to adjust to. There is no exact

template for paternal parenting but those factors aligned with an authoritative style, in

combination with a supportive relationship, are more likely to be beneficial in terms of child

development (Baumrind, 1971).

2.8. Shaping children's emotional development

2.8i Emotion socialisation

Fathers may employ a range of strategies to shape ER, for example, Emotion socialisation (ES) which is shaped by indirect methods: social referencing, family expressivity, or 'modelling' and the environment; and direct methods: explicit teaching, dialogue and back-up contingencies (Brand and Klimes-Dougan, 2010). Denham et al. (2007) propose that a child's emotional development is heavily socialised by parents, for example, the development of resilience. An example of explicit teaching might be 'Mindfulness' (Kabat-Zinn, 1990) or Emotion Coaching (EC) (Gottman, 1997). ES is underpinned by key psychology, such as social learning (Bandura, 1977) and Socio-cultural theory (Vygotsky, 1987). The parent-child relationship is thought to be the most significant factor in the ES process, with children learning the 'rules' for emotion expression/ management and regulation from within the family unit (Cassano et al., 2007; Root and Rubin, 2010). Baker et al. (2010) point out that there may be a bi-directional impact of ES between parents and children. In their seminal work Eisenberg et al. (1998) highlight that whilst children are heavily socialised, those with good ER will likely draw better ES practices from their parents. Conversely, the reverse may be true if children have poor levels of ER. How parents respond to emotional expressions can either hinder or facilitate a child's adaptive emotional development (Shewark and Blandon, 2015). Brand and Klimes-Dougan (2010) also point out that a number of environmental factors may impact upon the expression of emotion, including teachers, peers and wider society. However, the ability to self-regulate emotions and cultivate empathy early is one of the key components in making children 'school ready' – a platform for learning and a positive school experience (Zeman et al., 2006). Historically, research has largely focused on maternal reactions to expressions of negative emotions (NE), such as sadness and anger.

Parental responses to children's emotional displays provides them with 'scripts' regarding a likely outcome of expressing themselves within a particularly context, or with a particular parent. If such scripts are reinforced, either positively or negatively, it is another factor helping to shape ER (Cassano et al., 2007). Gottman et al. (1997) propose the theory of 'meta-emotion', how parental emotions are conceptualised based upon their own upbringing and social norms. Meta-emotion will have a significant impact upon parental ES practices. Gottman et al. (1996) suggest the ideal environment is where children can freely express their emotions, whilst learning how to process both positive/negative emotions in socially acceptable ways. ES is vitally important in helping to shape children's ER, and is linked to increased social acceptance and fewer internalising/externalising behaviours (Zeman et al., 2006). Denham (2007) proposes that children with good ER are more likely to be 'school ready', such as having good levels of empathy development than those with poor ER. In contrast, children who are frequently encouraged to suppress their emotions are more vulnerable to maladaptive psychological functioning (Sanders et al., 2013). Children who habitually suppress may end up in a belief cycle that NE should not be discussed, or expressed (Lunkeheimer et al., 2007).

2.8ii Mindfulness-based stress reduction

Mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR, Kabat-Zinn 1990) has gained empirical support as an intervention to support children experiencing behavioural difficulties (Burke, 2010). MBSR helps to restore calm and aids focus and concentration, as it supports executive functions. Executive functions play a key role in emotion regulation and higher order thinking (Blair and Diamond, 2008). Felver et al. (2013) state that MBSR is frequently used in schools to support emotional well-being. The approach utilises breathing exercises, sensory awareness and visualisation techniques, and may reduce emotional arousal.

2.8iii Gender and ES practices

Boys and girls may experience different emotion management trajectories because of how emotions are socialised. For example, in Western culture it is more acceptable for young girls to display sadness, fear and anxiety (Garside and Klimes-Dougan, 2002). Girls also tend to use more emotion-based language and discuss feelings more than boys from an early age (Fivush et al., 2000). Moreover, mothers are thought to use more emotion-based talk with their daughters, and differential trajectories may start from birth, with boys thought to experience difficulties in regulating negative impulses, thus eliciting increased soothing, compared to girls (Cassano et al., 2014). Buss and Kiel (2004) propose toddlers may use displays of sadness to elicit specific support from the primary caregiver, usually the mother. Therefore, perhaps children are using 'scripts' regarding which parent to approach for meeting their needs. Brody and Hall (2000) state that boys face cultural pressures to dampen down any expression that might be linked to vulnerability, and NE is generally discouraged, particularly by fathers. In Western culture, such emotions are not viewed as masculine and children understand these 'rules' for emotion expression from an early age (Root and Rubin, 2010).

Brand and Klimes-Dougan (2010) state that the differential ES practices of mothers and fathers may be a critical factor in shaping the emotional development of their sons and daughters. However, there is some support in the literature that as long as one parent provides effective ES practices then this could counter-balance deficits from the other parent (Fletcher et al., 1999; Ryan et al., 2006). However, children are more likely to receive emotional support from mothers as they develop. Perhaps children perceive that as they grow, certain emotions are not age, or gender appropriate. Cassano et al. (2007) suggest that parents may readily identify with same-gendered children's NE and ER, as using meta-emotion philosophy they are reminded of their own transitional experiences.

Baker (2010) found that fathers employ a 'coherent structure' in their approach to ES shaped by factors such as meta-emotion, and the child's social functioning. This study proposed that the changing role of fatherhood means men are able to understand the importance of ER – and the significance of their role in shaping it. However, the limited literature available suggests fathers are more inclined to engage in gender stereo-type norms, such as discussing anger with boys and sadness with girls (Wilson, 2016). Research exploring paternal reactions to children's NE have found that generally they are less supportive, compared to mothers (Nelson et al., 2009; Wong et al., 2009). Moreover, in retrospective research, young people reported expressing sadness less with their fathers through fear of negative responses, such as teasing or ridicule (Cassano et al., 2007). Cassano and Zeman (2010) propose fathers respond negatively if their child displays emotions not in keeping with gender 'norms'. However, fathers utilising using more authoritative parenting have children with good ER (McDowell and Parke, 2005). Gottman (1997) found that fathers who were more compassionate with their children's displays of NE at age 5 went on to display high levels of social competence by the age of 10.

Cassano et al. (2007) hypothesised that fathers would find it difficult to accept their son's expression of sadness, due to that emotion not fitting the socially constructed 'norm'. In general, fathers reported minimising or dismissing their children's displays of sadness, whereas mothers used expressive encouragement. Both parents were more likely to encourage the expression of sadness in their daughters. Perhaps mothers view daughters as more vulnerable than boys, particularly as they approach puberty. The Cassano et al. (2007) research investigated parental perceptions of sadness regulation in 113 6-11 year old children. It also explored responses to hypothetical scenarios regarding sadness expression. Although this study found very different parental views, depending on gender, there are

some drawbacks that limit generalisability of findings. Of the participants 95% were white, and all came from middle to high SES backgrounds. Notably, all had good levels of education. The benefits of having high levels of social capital have previously been discussed (OECD, 2010). Root and Rubin (2010) also found that fathers reported more surprise if their son displayed NE, such as anxiety compared to their daughters. This effect wasn't found for mothers, perhaps reflecting the notion that parenting is affected by gender and cultural 'norms'. However, this study did find that having processed the initial surprise, fathers were more likely to soothe their son's feelings of anxiety compared to mothers. Mothers were seen as adopting a more solution-focused approach that involved exploring factors that might have led to the anxiety. Root and Rubin (2010) propose their findings regarding paternal responses to their son's NE contradicts existing literature, and may indicate a shift in men's parenting styles.

In general there is a paucity of information investigating paternal ES practices (Sanders et al., 2013), and precious little regarding families or fathers from low SES (Root and Rubin, 2010). Furthermore, it is rare for fathers to be included in any research related to children's emotional development (Lamb, 2004; Cassano et al., 2006; Phares et al., 2005). Consequently, little is known about the impact of fathers emotion talk with their children, although both parents report using distraction techniques to soothe feelings of sadness (Cassano et al., 2007). Zeman et al. (2010) propose that available evidence supports the view that fathers make a significant contribution to children's emotional development. For example, McElwain et al. (2007) state that ES is more effective when fathers are supportive of NE expression. Whereas Shewark and Blandon (2015) found that paternal ES practices had a greater impact upon children's ER, compared to the mother's. For example, if fathers were unsupportive of NE then children had less effective ER skills, compared to if the mother was

unsupportive. Their study compared the ER of two siblings within the same family to see if child age was a factor. They also investigated parental ES of positive emotions (PE) as well as NE. Although illuminating from the fathers' data, this research has a number of limitations. The study used self-report questionnaires which are prone to 'social desirability' effects, such as giving responses linked to social norms (Robson, 2011). Moreover, 25% of the 70 participants did not complete the questionnaire. A further limitation was that parental responses were in relation to hypothetical scenarios, so perhaps not an accurate reflection, compared to 'live' observational data. Overall, these limitations call into question the validity of findings, and their generalisation to a wider audience.

The ES literature has predominantly focused on child outcomes, rather than look at specific parental practices (Denham et al., 2007). Cassano et al. (2014) also propose that the NE of sadness has not been sufficiently explored in ES research. Moreover, Morris et al. (2007) state there is a gap in the literature regarding how the ES process, aided by parents, impacts upon neurological development in children. They suggest this is an area that warrants further investigation, given the significant role of the pre-frontal cortex in emotion management. McHale (2007) however, reminds us to consider that parental co-operation is a significant factor in healthy child development – rather than focus on what individuals are doing. Baker et al. (2010) make a key point in stating that despite growing evidence that links parental ES practices with children's healthy emotional development, few parenting programmes offer specific advice, regarding improving ES knowledge.

2.8iv Emotion coaching vs emotion dismissing

Gottman et al. (1997) proposed two distinct parental ES practices that either aid or restrict children's ability to self-regulate emotions. These can be categorised as parents who

explicitly 'coach' emotion management, or who actively 'dismiss'. Emotion coaching (EC) parents tend to use children's expression of emotion as opportunities for learning and development. For example, speaking with children when they are calm about sadness and anger, and validating these emotions as being normal, whilst also offering coping strategies (Parker et al., 2012; Stelter and Halberstadt, 2011). Strategies are often employed to re-focus a child's attention away from feelings of distress. EC helps children to understand the different emotions they experience 'in the moment', why they occur, and how to handle them. Teaching children to recognise and 'label' their emotions is a key element in EC, and is linked to enhanced emotion self-regulation, social competence and lower levels of internalising behaviours (Castro et al., 2015). However, Snyder et al. (2003) make the valid point that for EC to be successful, parents must recognise and adapt their own behavioural responses that may be provoked by children's emotional behaviours. In this way there is a co-regulation of behaviour. The importance of parental responsiveness to children's emotional displays is highlighted by Gottman et al. (1997). They propose that skilful use of EC is a cornerstone of effective parenting, and as such, makes a fundamental contribution to children's emotional self-regulation and well-being. A growing body of research suggests that parents employing EC have children with less emotional difficulties, more verbal expressivity, better coping strategies and positive psychological functioning (Cunningham et al., 2009). Gottman et al. (1997) hypothesise effective use of EC leads to a range of positive outcomes, such as improved peer relationships and vagal tone. Vagal tone is a function of the vagus nerve, a key component of the parasympathetic nervous system, regulating heart rate during periods of arousal. High levels of vagal tone indicates someone with well-balanced ER (Kok et al., 2013). The evidence base for the effectiveness of EC comes from the use of RCTs in both American and Australia (Rose et al., 2015).

Gottman et al. (1996) found that the impact of EC was significantly influenced by parental

meta-emotion philosophy (figure 4) and they proposed the following steps for effective use

of the intervention:

1. Parental awareness of emotions in themselves, and their children.

2. Viewing displays of negative emotion as an opportunity for intimacy and teaching.

3. Validation of the child's emotion.

4. 'Scaffolded' assistance in helping the child 'label' the emotion.

5. Problem-solving with the child, including setting behavioural limits, and discussing

   strategies to employ, for future scenarios.
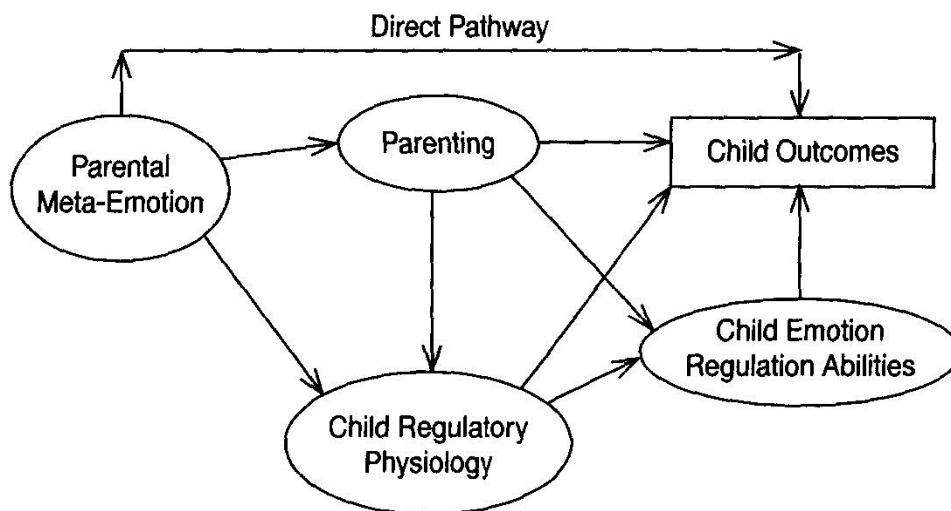
Figure 4. Summary model for how parental meta-emotion may influence child outcomes

(Gottman et al., 1997).

A key element during the teaching phase is that of 'co-regulation' of behaviours. Co-

regulation is defined as the social process in which people alter their responses with regards

to ongoing, and anticipated actions of others (Fogel, 1993). In other words, parent and child

adjust their behaviours based on what they expect the reaction of the other will be. This underlines the importance of a child knowing how responsive a parent will be. If the response to NE is warm and soothing, then this will 'scaffold' the child's positive ER. Essentially, adults 'model' the desired target child behaviour. Validation of a child's emotion can be summarised using the key phrase 'Connect before correct' (Golding, 2015), which highlights the importance of parents adopting an empathetic, warm response.

Emotion dismissing (ED) parents are uncomfortable with NE and may view them as damaging, so quickly dismiss, or use punitive responses. Parents may downplay the significance of the child's emotion and be driven by a need to 'fix' the problem, rather than explore it. This may lead to children being unable to find an outlet for negative feelings, with possible maladaptive internalising/externalising behaviours (Lunkenheimer et al., 2007). Moreover, Cassano et al. (2007) propose ED parents may have an "impoverished emotion vocabulary" themselves, seeking to control and extinguish children's displays of NE. A noteworthy point is that boys may be particularly vulnerable to ED practices, as they generally receive less emotion-based talk compared to girls, so may be more susceptible to maladaptive outcomes (Engle and McElwain, 2010). This may be particularly salient given that despite parental self-reports, observational data and retrospective child interviews suggest that fathers are more likely to punish boys than girls for displays of NE (Nelson et al., 2009; Wong et al., 2009).

Parents using an ED approach have children who hide their NE, with higher levels of negative emotional arousal (Thompson and Meyer, 2007). Moreover, Fabes et al. (2001) found that when parents reinforced minimising and punitive responses, children were less likely to employ effective problem-solving strategies, or elicit adult help. Gottman et al. (1997)

propose fathers are more likely to use EC in response to anger than sadness. Perhaps this is a perpetuation of social expectations for gender roles and cultural 'norms' for emotional expression, depending upon child gender. It is likely that meta-emotion plays a key role in paternal EC practices. For example, fathers aware of their own NE expression are more likely to use EC with their children (Gottman et al., 1997).

2.9 Summary

Having read the initial journal article sent to me from a former tutor I felt there were enough 'threads' to warrant further exploration regarding claims about a lack of paternal 'voice' in the ES literature. Clearly, I could not embark on a large research project on the strength of a single journal article. Other key authors emerged from this literature review, and gradually a significant amount of research lead towards a convincing argument that the ES literature was skewed towards mothers. Indeed, this review suggests that the clear majority of research into ES practices such as emotion coaching/emotion dismissing has utilised maternal self-reports, without including fathers (Cassano et al., 2014).

Several authors (e.g. McDowell and Parke, 2005; McElwain et al., 2007) propose that fathers make a unique contribution to children's emotional development. Blandon (2015) further adds, that despite the growing evidence for the significant role of fathers in ES practices, their 'voice' is scarce within the relevant literature. Indeed, Cassano et al. (2007) propose that any research regarding children's emotional development should be considered incomplete, if data from fathers is not included. In an attempt to address this significant imbalance my research poses the question: "What approaches do fathers use to promote emotion socialisation in their children?" The following chapter details how I set about answering this broad research question.

Reflection box:

Cassano's point that the ES research must be considered incomplete without the views of fathers resonated within me. I felt at the heart of this rhetoric was an ethical point, and I was somewhat incredulous regarding the suggested treatment of fathers, made apparent through the research of other professionals. One article spoke of how fathers had been invited to multi-agency meetings and then not spoken to at all. I felt such practice was nothing short of scandalous. At this juncture I reflected upon how educational psychologists (EPs) go about their routine business. Moreover, I observed colleagues as they conducted case work. More often than not their point of contact regarding a child was the mother, and I reflected upon this practice. I can understand why this approach happens, for example, perhaps through a process of habitualisation. However, does this make the practice right? Are EPs, as well as other professionals somehow complicit in automatically marginalising fathers, in terms of attempting to try and seek their views?

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The approach adopted for the structure and presentation of this chapter is based upon

Denscombe's (2010) strategy for outlining a research design and process of enquiry. In

keeping with this strategy, this chapter is presented under the headings of: Research

rationale and question, Design strategy, Design philosophy, Participants and data collection,

Data analysis, Threats to reliability and validity in qualitative research, Evaluation and Ethical

considerations. Denscombe (2010) asserts that: "the account of the research design should

always keep an eye on the way in which the design is connected to the purpose and

outcomes of the enquiry" (p. 110). It is for this reason that his framework for structuring this

section has been chosen.

3.2 Research rationale and question

Little is known about the impact of fathers in relation to shaping their children's emotion

management. Emotion socialisation (ES) is seen as the process of learning about the 'rules'

of emotion expressivity (Sanders et al., 2013). Previous research has predominantly focused

on mothers, largely omitting the views of fathers (Cassano et al., 2006). My research looks

at various paternal approaches utilised to help their children recognise and manage

emotions, such as being emotionally dismissive or implicitly 'coaching'. The ability to self-

regulate emotions is a key component in making children 'school ready', a platform for

emotional and academic development (Zeman et al., 2006). Research suggests that fathers

are likely to engage in stereotypical parenting, such as discussing anger in boys and sadness

in girls (Cassano et al., 2007). Few studies have employed a qualitative approach, therefore

little is known why fathers adopt certain ES strategies.

3.2.i *Research aim and question*

My research aims to understand why fathers may use particular ES strategies with a focus

on NE, and to explore factors shaping their approach. My research will also explore if

fathers respond to/teach emotions differentially according to child gender, and the type of

emotion being displayed, such as sadness or anxiety. A central tenet will be that fathers'

responses are likely shaped by socio-cultural 'norms' that elicit stereotypical behaviours. For

example, using more emotion-based interactions with girls than boys (Cassano et al., 2007).

Specifically, my research poses the question: *"What approaches do fathers use to promote*

emotion socialisation in their children?" It is hoped this research will highlight important

influences fathers have in their children's emotional development. Table 2 provides a

chronology of key points in the research process.

Table 2. Research chronology.	
December 2015	Receive initial ES journal article from external tutor.
January-February 2016	Began scoping ES literature.
February 2016	Began Literature review chapter skeleton framework.
March 2016	Presentation of research topic to academic panel.
March 2016	Began broad literature search.
March-April 2016	Resource measures identified.
April 2016	Questions linked to resource measures generated.
April 2016 onwards	Targeted literature search around ES topic.
May 2016	Resource measures and questions are piloted.
June-July 2016	Conduct 1:1 interviews with five fathers.
August 2016	Began Methodology chapter
August-September 2016	Data transcription phase.
October-December 2016	Back and forth data immersion process.
January-March 2017	Began writing Analysis and Discussion chapter.
April-May 2017	Began writing Conclusion chapter.
May-June 2017	Final amendments from academic tutor.
June 2017	Thesis submission for examination.

3.3 Design strategy

3.3.i An exploratory design

This research utilises an exploratory design which is used to determine the nature of a specific topic or problem, and is useful when there are limited studies to refer to. The focus is on gaining insights and familiarity for further investigation, therefore it is a design that simply facilitates exploration of the research question(s). This type of research is not intended to provide conclusive evidence, but may generate a better understanding of the topic being explored. It has been noted that exploratory research can be the initial approach, which forms the basis of more conclusive research. The goals of exploratory research are intended to produce the following possible insights:

- Familiarity with basic details, settings and concerns.

- Well-grounded picture of the situation being explored.

- Generation of new ideas and assumptions, development of tentative theories or hypotheses.

- Determination about whether larger studies are feasible in the future.

- Issues get refined for more systematic investigation and formulation of new research questions.

- Direction for future research.

3.3.ii Strengths of an exploratory design

- A useful approach for gaining background information on a particular topic.

- Exploratory research is flexible/adaptable and can address research questions of all types (what, why, how).

- Provides an opportunity to define new terms and clarify existing concepts.

- Exploratory research is often used to generate formal hypotheses and develop more precise research problems.

- Exploratory studies help establish research priorities.

- Exploratory research is effective in laying the groundwork that will lead to future studies.

- An exploratory study can potentially save time and other resources by determining the types of research that is are worth pursuing at the earlier stages.

3.3. iii Limitations of an exploratory design

1. Exploratory research generally utilises small sample sizes, thus findings are typically not generalisable to a wider population.

2. The exploratory nature of the research inhibits an ability to make definitive conclusions about the findings.

3. The research process underpinning exploratory studies is flexible but often unstructured, leading to only tentative results that have limited value in decision-making.

4. Exploratory studies generate qualitative information and interpretation of such type of information is subject to bias.

3.3.iv What other design options could have been chosen?

I could have chosen to adopt a purely Positivist approach such as using 'The Coping with Children's Negative Emotions Scale' (CCNES, Eisenberg and Bernzweig, 1990). However, use of an experimental design cannot provide a nuanced account of the experiences that fathers' encounter that may shape their parenting style. To quantify the ES approaches used by fathers a mixed methods approach could have been used. Thomas (2013) points out that Positivism and Interpretivism can complement each other and need not be viewed as either/or. Such an approach may utilise statistical analysis combined with observation or interviews. For example, I could have used a questionnaire to capture the views of mothers in relation to their partner's parenting skillset. However, any resulting data may have been subject to bias, depending on the quality of the parental relationship. It may also have been valuable to include the views of children, and their experience of paternal ES skills. However, extra ethical consideration is then required such as informed consent, ability to withdraw, feedback and storage of data (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 2008). Moreover, due to the ages of children referred to in this study one has to consider the reliability of their responses.

3.3.v Interview format chosen for this research

I adopted a semi-structured interview as the primary source of my data gathering, as this approach combines a pre-set list of questions, with the flexibility for more in-depth exploration (Thomas, 2013). For these reasons it is represents a popular approach in qualitative research (Coolican, 2009). A semi-structured interview allows the researcher to ask questions around specific topics, and is flexible enough to allow freedom to both interviewer and interviewee. For example, the semi-structured format allows the researcher

to be responsive to participant feedback, by adjusting and modifying topic-related follow-up questions (Robson, 2011). By using a schedule of questions to be covered the researcher is afforded a reasonable amount of security in knowing that participant responses are in the main going to be topic related. Furthermore, As Thomas (2013) notes, use of an interview schedule allows for the identification of possible follow-up questions, prompts and probes to ascertain deeper meaning. As with any research tool, there are strengths and limitations.

Strengths

- Researcher can 'tap' into non-verbal cues from the participant.

- The researcher can be responsive to the participant in ways that cannot be achieved using other data-gathering methods. For example, questionnaires.

- There is the potential for obtaining 'rich' data.

- Allows for 'natural questioning', where dialogue feels real and not artificial.

Limitations

- Participant responses may include 'social desirability effects'. This is when participants feel they are expected to respond in a certain way.

- Interviewing is time-consuming and needs careful co-ordination.

- The transcription process and data analysis is laborious.

- Semi-structured interviews are very demanding of the interviewer. Unlike quantitative research, analysis happens 'live' during the interview, so the interviewer is never a casual, passive listener (Coolican, 2009).

3.3.vi Resource measures

The four child emotion scenarios used in my research are derived from the CCNES (Eisenberg and Bernzweig, 1990). This is a parent self-report tool employing a Likert scale to

gauge responses to emotion-related scenarios. My research specifically looks at how

negative emotions such as sadness and anger are socialised in young children, as this has

not been explored extensively in previous literature. I decided to use a mixed medium

approach of film and spoken dialogue to present the scenarios to participants. The rationale

behind this was to add a degree of realism and cater for any potential language difficulties,

regarding my participants. Two spoken scenarios were taken verbatim from the CCNES. The

other two were sourced from the internet, specifically 'YouTube' educational programmes.

However, when attempting to locate specific film clips the questions from the CCNES

became the key search criteria:

1. If my child falls off his/her bike and breaks it, and then gets upset and cries, I would . . .

2. If my child loses some prized possession and reacts with tears, I would . . .

Having watched the film clips and heard the story vignettes fathers were asked "imagine it

is your child in that scenario. How would you respond in managing their emotions?" Further

questions were guided by the participant's responses (Robson, 2011).

Reflection box:

I wanted to base my resource measures on a recognised psychological instrument. The CCNS (Eisenberg and Bernzweig, 1990) is recognised as having good construct validity and test re-test reliability. I only chose four scenarios from the original 12 because I reasoned that the interviews would be around an hour long. This gave my participants roughly 15 minutes to address each scenario. All of the scenarios looked at negative child emotions, so I chose two representing sadness and two for anger. I decided to use two spoken and two film clips in order to make it more accessible for all participants. At this stage I did not have my participants, so I wanted to be prepared in case some were EAL. I reasoned in such circumstances at least they would be able to understand a film clip.

3.4 Design philosophy

3.4 i Why consider epistemology and ontology in social science research?

In research there are two broad epistemological positions, that of Positivism and Interpretivism. Epistemology is the study of knowledge and relates to our understanding of the world - what we know, and how we know we know it (Robson, 2011). Ontology, the study of reality, relates to what is observed in the social world. This can often be based on assumptions regarding things we believe to exist (Thomas, 2013). There are two broad ontological positions that of Realism and Relativism. A realist approach is to accept that facts are real, independent of the human mind (being objective). A relativist approach is to accept that reality is subjective, and open to interpretation. Ontological theories are based on either one or the other. Positivism is ontologically realist regarding social laws becoming apparent through observation, generally employing quantitative measures. Interpretivism is ontologically relativist, with roots in sociology through the work of Mead (1934). As a researcher it is important to acknowledge where my study is positioned, both theoretically and philosophically.

3.4.ii Philosophy of research in the social sciences

One can understand why psychology would wish to be considered alongside the natural sciences, regarding empirical evidence, replication and validity. The acquisition of nomethetic knowledge, derived from applying a 'method' has generally been seen as the 'gold standard'. However, social science, such as psychology, cannot be addressed so succinctly. It has a myriad of ontological perspectives, depending on the school of thought – be that behaviourism, psychodynamic or humanism for example. Moreover, research

involving people can never hope to apply the 'scientific method' with any certainty of outcome (Robson, 2011).

Historically, Positivism has largely been the dominant paradigm - a desire to quantify through replicable experiments. However, psychology has often struggled to quantify its core subject – the mind. There has remained doubts that the scientific method cannot encompass the full human experience. This means that subjective experiences have been best catered for by the humanities. Interpretivism, often seen as the antithesis of Positivism, offers the perspective of meaning, usually through qualitative exploration (Thomas, 2009). The roots of Interpretivism can be traced to ancient Greece and hermeneutics, the study of meaning and interpretation in texts. This is why interpretivist research takes a qualitative stance such as interviews or analysis providing themes (Mitchell and Egudo, 2003). The focus is on 'rich' data in terms of meaning for participants (Angen, 2000). Interpretivism is also influenced by phenomenology, the study of experience and consciousness (Ernest, 1994). Generally, Interpretivism takes a particular philosophical and theoretical stance.

3.4.iii Qualitative traditions in social science research

The broad epistemological positions noted above are intrinsically linked to two paradigms, that of quantitative and qualitative research. Quantitative research is empirical and based upon hypothesis testing through the use of variables. These variables are analysed through mathematical means, usually statistics. It is a deductive approach that seeks to measure and analyse causal relationships. The researcher and researched are considered independent of one another. Furthermore, this approach seeks to generalise findings to a wider audience through use of random sampling of participants (Yilmaz, 2013). In contrast, qualitative research is seen as an interpretive, inductive approach to the study of social phenomena, in

order to understand the meaning behind the lived experiences of people. Table 3 documents

the philosophical assumptions underpinning qualitative research.

Table 3. Philosophical assumptions underpinning qualitative research.			
Assumptions	*Questions*	*Characteristics*	*Practice implications*
Ontological	What is the nature of reality?	Reality is subjective and multiple, as seen by participants in the study.	Researcher uses quotes and themes in words of participants and provides evidence of different perspectives.
Epistemological	What is the relationship between the researcher and that being researched?	Researcher attempts to lessen distance between himself or herself and that being researched.	Researcher collaborates, spends time in field with participants, and becomes an 'insider'.
Methodological	What is the process of research?	Researcher uses inductive logic, studies the topic within its context, and uses an emerging design.	Researcher works with particulars (details) before generalisations, describes in detail the context of the study, and continually revises questions from experiences in the field.
Source: Adapted from Creswell (2007).			

Qualitative research is not embedded into a specific discipline, nor restricted to a single

methodological approach (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). As Thomas (2013) notes, there is a

wide range of approaches in the qualitative tradition, such as action research, case studies,

ethnography, narrative inquiry and life history. Qualitative research tends to use a small,

purposeful sample of participants. There is the understanding that the researcher and

researched are intrinsically linked, impacting upon one another to produce a co-constructed

narrative (Thomas, 2011). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) state that qualitative research should

be judged on individual merit, therefore notions of generalisability are unrealistic, as data is

context-specific. Table 4 documents the fundamental differences between quantitative and

qualitative research.

Table 4. Comparison of Quantitative and Qualitative research paradigms.	
Assumptions of quantitative research	*Assumptions of qualitative research*
• Reality is single, tangible, and fragmentable. Social facts have an objective reality. • Knower and known are independent, a dualism. • Primacy of method. • Variables can be identified and relationships measured. • Inquiry is objective, value-free.	• Realities are multiple, constructed, and holistic. Reality is socially constructed. • Knower and known are interactive, inseparable. • Primacy of subject matter. • Variables are complex, interwoven, and difficult to measure. • Inquiry is subjective, value-bound.
Purposes • Generalisability (Time and context free generalisations through • nomothetic or generalised statements). • Prediction. • Causal explanations.	*Purposes* • Contextualisation (Only time and context bound working hypotheses through idiographic statements). • Interpretation. • Understanding actors' perspectives.
Approach • Begins with hypotheses and theories. • Manipulation and control. • Uses formal, structured instruments. • Experimentation and intervention. • Deductive. • Component analysis. • Seeks consensus, the norm. • Reduces data to numerical indices. • Abstract language in write-up.	*Approach* • Ends with hypotheses or theory. • Emergence and portrayal. • Researcher as the instrument. • Naturalistic or non-intervention. • Inductive. • Searches for patterns. • Seeks pluralism, complexity. • Makes minor use of numerical indices. • Descriptive write-up.
Researcher Role • Detachment and impartiality. • Objective portrayal. • Etic (outsider's point of view).	*Researcher Role* • Personal involvement and partiality. • Empathic understanding. • Emic (insider's point of view).
Source: Adapted from Glesne & Peshkin (1992); Lincoln & Guba (1985).	

The research paradigm chosen should be driven by the type of research question(s) being asked (Yilmaz, 2013). Thomas (2013) outlines 4 basic types of research question:

- What is the situation? This usually involves a descriptive study.

- What is going on here? This may be viewed as interpretative or illuminative research.

- What happens when? This may lead to a study investigating causality.

- What is related to what? This may lead to a study investigating causal relationships.

My research addresses the 'what is going on here' category, and seeks to 'illuminate' what fathers are doing to shape their children's emotional growth. Moreover, through the use of interviews, parenting strategies are explained in their own words, therefore data analysis is aligned with the interpretative approach. Yilmaz (2013) states that qualitative research looks to answer the 'what', 'how' and 'why' questions, and is primarily concerned with quality over quantity. Taking into account philosophical traditions and the nature of my research question, my study is appropriately positioned within the qualitative paradigm.

3.4.iv Epistemology and ontology of this research

My research is underpinned by the theoretical perspective of Social Constructionism, which is concerned with the individual's lived experience, and having roots in sociology (Burr, 2003). Berger and Luckmann (1991) have done much to expand the understanding of Social Constructionism. They are interested in how knowledge emerges, and its significance for society. Knowledge is seen as being created through the interactions of people, and how they use language to construct reality (Schwandt, 2003). It is these social practices that are the focus of enquiry. Social Constructionism adopts the postmodernist stance in absorbing context in self-identity construction, and perception of the world changes from person to person (Gergen, 2001b). There is also the recognition of synergy between society and

mankind, in that they both influence each other (Darlaston-Jones, 2007). Social Constructionism is thought to tie someone both physically and socially in time and space (Harré, 1999).

Robson (2011) states that natural scientific methods cannot be applied to people to find objective 'truths', with an emphasis on understanding their lived experiences. Typically, this involves a qualitative approach, such as ethnographic studies or interviews. It is acknowledged that the researcher has an impact, due to their experiences shaping interpretations (Thomas, 2011). In using Social Constructionism there is an attempt to understand the 'how' and 'why' questions, from unique individual perspectives (Ashworth, 2003).

Participants in research are seen as constructing reality with the researcher. It is understood that the researcher brings their own values to the process, and their own versions of multiple realities and perspectives. Research underpinned by Social Constructionism is by nature highly subjective. However, this is what 'illuminative' research is concerned with - understanding someone's lived experience, documented in 'rich' accounts of their interpretation of the social world (Schwandt et al., 2007). Robson (2011) proposes that interviews and observation afford a means for the researcher to understand these multiple perspectives that may exist from each individual's 'constructed' reality. Berger and Luckmann (1991) propose society exists as both objective and subjective reality. Over time, layers of knowledge through social interactions become habitualised and part of a routine. It is through this institutionalised process that people claim to have objective knowledge, and the use of conversation allows people to construct their subjective reality. Language acts as

a framework for structuring how the social world is experienced. Eventually, there is a shared understanding, so ideas and concepts are not constantly redefined.

Social Constructionism accepts that there is an objective reality, and is largely concerned with understanding how knowledge is assembled and understood. This is a key theoretical point. Social Constructionism does not take an ontological perspective, theoretically its focus is epistemological. Andrews (2012) postulates criticisms of Social Constructionism arise when this theoretical point has not been fully understood.

3.5 Participants and data collection

3.5.i Piloting of research measures and questions

The resource measures of two film clips and two spoken scenarios were piloted with one father in May 2016, before my research participants had been identified. The father, who was recruited via a work contact was married with a 2 year old child. Although the child was much younger than my 'target' children I took advantage of a convenience participant readily available. Moreover, it also represented an opportunity to explore what parental practices were being used at a time when toddlers are forging their own identity. The piloting exercise proved to be extremely useful. The original questions to accompany the resource measures had been developed following discussions with colleagues in the educational psychology service. The piloting exercise allowed further refinement of these questions, for example, changing question construction in order to achieve greater clarity of meaning. Moreover the participant in the piloting exercise offered to review all research measures for a second time in private. This led to the suggestion of further questions and prompts/probes that could be used to elicit 'rich' data. The piloting exercise was invaluable, as not only were new lines of inquiry generated, it prompted me to reflect on how I might

elicit depth to the questions. Moreover, this exercise allowed the interviewee to comment in a general sense regarding my interviewer performance. Coolican (2009) recommends this approach as a means ascertaining one's skill-set.

Reflection box:

I took the advice of my academic tutor and sought to secure a pilot participant for my resource measures. Questions to accompany the resource measures had been derived from trialling the measures with my work colleagues. I initially used social media and generated two possible leads for potential pilot participants, however, they would not commit to interviews. I was a little despondent that this might be the pattern for my study, particularly given the suggested difficulties regarding attracting fathers to family research. A former work colleague mentioned he could ask his son-in-law who had a two-year old boy. Contact details were exchanged via my former colleague and a date was set to meet up. The pilot participant was extremely helpful which was good as I was slightly nervous. After all, I felt that this was the start of the most exciting aspect of my research – the data-gathering phase. During the interview it was apparent that he was well-educated and highly articulate, offering many perspectives into his view of being a father. I wondered at the time if I would be so fortunate when it came to interacting with my main research participants. I reflected that I might have to work a great deal harder if I was going to have fathers open up about their own personal experiences.

The piloting exercise gave me confidence regarding my interview skills, but also allowed for the refinement of questions. Although not stated, I felt that perhaps my pilot participant thought that some questions were either awkwardly phrased or confusing. The exercise helped achieve greater clarity, whilst new questions were also generated.

3.5.ii Participant recruitment

During early 2016 I had face-to-face discussions with the Special Educational Needs co-ordinators (SENCos) at my 'patch' of schools, with regards to securing participants for my research. At the same time I was also trying to secure a pilot participant, in order to trial both the resource measures and questions. The SENCos were sent letters to be passed to prospective participants for my research (Appendix B). This letter outlined the broad details of my study, explaining the criteria for taking part and the research focus. There are

positives and negatives to consider in using the SENCos as an intermediary. On the one hand they access parents frequently and have an idea who may be approachable. However, there is also the possibility that resulting data may not reflect the heterogeneous nature of parenting, due to the likely prosocial nature of selected participants.

Reflection box:

It was suggested to me by work colleagues that it might prove beneficial accessing participants via my school contacts. As a trainee I had already built up a good relationship with a number of schools. I therefore saw the benefits of having a purposeful, convenience sample of fathers. Indeed, three SENCOs were more than willing to initially enquire in an informal way if any fathers were prepared to take part in research. The early signs were encouraging, particularly as at the time my fellow trainees were finding it difficult to secure participants in their research. I reasoned I was in a good position, and felt confident that I would secure at least four participants.

3.5.iii Participant selection criteria

Five fathers were selected for this study with a good mix of child gender. They were also sent a follow-up letter (Appendix C) which supplied contact details for my Supervisor and limits to confidentiality. Child gender was not a constraining factor for participant selection, however, having a balanced boy/girl ratio helped to explore any gender-specific parenting bias. In some cases there were multiple children in the participants' household. The participants came from diverse SES areas of a local authority, with children in four different schools. The main selection criteria was that the participants should have children attending either Reception, or Year 1 class. This was an integral factor, as I wanted to ascertain what ES practices fathers were using at the very beginning of their child's education. Heckman and Wax (2004) state it much harder to extinguish established behaviours beyond the age of five. Having step-children was not a constraining factor for participant recruitment. The criteria

was that the participant had a duty of care towards the child. Table 5 offers a brief

participant 'pen portrait'.

Table 5. Participant 'pen portrait'.	
Participant one (P1)	White British, married, employed, two children: girl &boy
Participant two (P2)	White British, married, employed, two children: 2 boys
Participant three (P3)	White British, married, employed, one child: 1 boy
Participant four (P4)	White British, married, employed, two children: 2 girls
Participant five (P5)	White British, married, employed, two children: girl & boy

3.5.iv Interview location

Initially I considered offering the participants the option of 3 locations: their home, their

child's school and offices at the Educational Psychology Service. Following feedback from the

University of Birmingham's Ethics Committee, it was deemed inappropriate to conduct any

interviews within the participant's home. This advice was heeded, as it also addressed the

issue of researcher safety. In the initial participant recruitment letters, the fathers were

offered the choice of our offices, or their child's school. In every instance the participants

opted for the school setting. In the majority of cases this was also convenient for them, as

they lived within the vicinity. The convenience for participants was a necessary

consideration, given that their time was offered freely.

3.5.v Data collection format

Following the piloting exercise five one hour interviews were conducted, although invariably

due to conversation 'flow' these over-ran, in one instance by 30 minutes. Appendix D

documents initial questions put to all participants, in conjunction with the four scenarios.

Fathers were asked: "imagine this is your child." Appendix E details the full list of initial

exploratory questions. The four scenarios were:

1. A Child learning to ride a bike.

2. A child not allowed to attend a party.

3. A child having an explosive tantrum.

4. A child being marginalised at school by peers.

3.6 Data analysis

The method chosen for data analysis was Thematic Analysis (TA) using the approach set out

by Braun and Clarke (2006). They state: "It is a method for identifying, analysing and

reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organises and described your data set

in (rich) detail" (p. 79). There are a variety of approaches that seek to find 'themes' within

data. However, the Braun and Clarke (2006) approach to TA was chosen as it was developed

for psychological research, and has a rigorous approach. Specific phases for analysing data

are set out in Table 6.

Table 6. Phases of Thematic Analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006).	
Phases	**Description of the process**
1. Familiarise yourself with the data.	Transcribing data, reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.
2. Generating initial codes.	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data-set, collating data relevant to each code.
3. Searching for themes.	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4. Reviewing themes.	Checking if the themes work in relation to the codes extracts (Level 1) and the entire data-set (Level 2), generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis.
5. Defining and naming themes.	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
6. Producing the report.	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

3.6.i Why select TA over other approaches?

Although previously TA has been poorly demarcated as an analytical tool (Boyatzis, 1998;

Braun and Clarke, 2006), it is now widely regarded as a method in its own right (Joffe, 2012).

The APA (2012) handbook for conducting research lists the following strengths for using TA:

- Ease of use, TA is accessible and flexible and not constrained by an underlying theory as in

  Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) or Discourse Analysis (DA). IPA seeks an

  idiographic focus, whilst DA requires the researcher to have knowledge of theoretical

  perspectives concerning linguistics and language use. Furthermore, both approaches are

  methodologies, therefore highly prescriptive regarding how the research should be

  conducted.

- TA is a foundation skill for those new to qualitative research.

- TA is just a method of analysis, not a framework for the research.

Historically qualitative research has suffered from criticism for lacking rigour and robustness,

in comparison to quantitative research. For example, Laubschangne (2003) writes: "For

many scientists used to doing quantitative studies the whole concept of qualitative research

is unclear, almost foreign, or "airy fairy" – not "real" research". However, as previously

noted, qualitative research has its own criteria for quality assurance. Moreover, Braun and

Clarke (2006) formulated a step-by-step approach consisting of a 15-point checklist which is

detailed below (Table 7).

Table 7. A 15-point checklist for conducting Thematic Analysis.

Process	Step	Criteria
Transcription	1	The data have been transcribed to an appropriate level of detail, and the transcripts have been checked against the tape for 'accuracy'
Coding	2	Each data item has been given equal attention in the data process.
	3	Themes have not been generated from a few vivid examples (an anecdotal approach), but instead the coding process has been thorough, inclusive and comprehensive.
	4	All relevant extracts for each theme has been collated, for each data set.
	5	Themes have been checked against each other, and against the original data-set.
	6	Themes are internally coherent, consistent and distinctive.
Analysis	7	Data have been analysed - interpreted, made sense of - rather than just paraphrased or described.
	8	Analysis and data match each other - the extracts illustrate the analytic claims.
	9	Analysis tells a convincing and well-organised story about the data and the topic.
	10	A good balance between analytic narrative and illustrative extracts is provided.
Overall	11	Enough time has been allocated to complete all phases of the analysis adequately, without rushing a phase or giving it a once-over light approach.
Written report	12	The assumptions about, and specific approach to thematic analysis are clearly explicated.
	13	There is a good fit between what you claim to do, and what you show you have done - i.e. described method and reported analysis are consistent.
	14	The language and concepts used in the report are consistent with the epistemological position of the analysis.
	15	The researcher is positioned as 'active' in the research process; themes do not just 'emerge'.

(15-point checklist of criteria for good Thematic Analysis, Braun and Clarke, 2006).

3.6.ii Data familiarisation

All interviews were transcribed by myself, with each transcript read 6 times to ensure

familiarity. The APA (2012) state this process of data immersion is actually the start of

analysis, when one begins to look beyond surface meaning for more critical analysis. During

this phase notes were made on the printed transcripts such as "what is the participant

saying here?" A key aspect of this phase was making links from the rough notes to the

research question as a means of generating 'kicker' devices that could help with the coding

phase.

3.6.iii Generating initial coding

Braun and Clarke (2006) state: "codes identify a feature of the data that appears interesting

to the analyst" (p.88). They also recommend coding as much data as possible, as it may

prove useful later on. During this phase they also recommend using techniques for

identifying potential 'patterns' in the data. I did this by utilising different coloured highlighter

pens. I found it helpful to use a two-level coding system. In the left-hand column next to the

text I wrote "Level 1: what is being talked about?" Then a rough notation. In the right-hand

column I wrote "Level 2: how is this being talked about?" Then a rough notation. This

procedure was followed systematically on every transcript during this phase, and an

example extract is given below:

Transcript quote	Rough notation	Levels of coding
Well I definitely wouldn't have laughed at him and just left him. I would have been asking if he was okay and just making sure that he hadn't injured himself as well. You know, obviously he came down on his hands or his helmet came off, if he had banged his head, I would have made sure that he was okay so he felt reassured.	This parent is talking about how he would react to his own son falling off a bike.	1. Paternal response 2. Warm/ re-assuring

3.6.iv Searching for themes

This phase is described by Braun and Clarke (2006) as 'collating codes into potential themes,

gathering all data relevant to each potential theme' (p. 87). I proceeded by assembling all of

the codes and categorising them dependent upon general similarities to form an initial thematic 'map' (Figure 5). The transcripts were re-read following this procedure, whilst having the map visible, to ensure codes had been appropriately placed. No codes were deleted or amalgamated during this phase. Braun and Clarke recommend not abandoning anything during this phase as following further refinement some codes may need re-categorising or deleting, as was indeed the case with my approach.
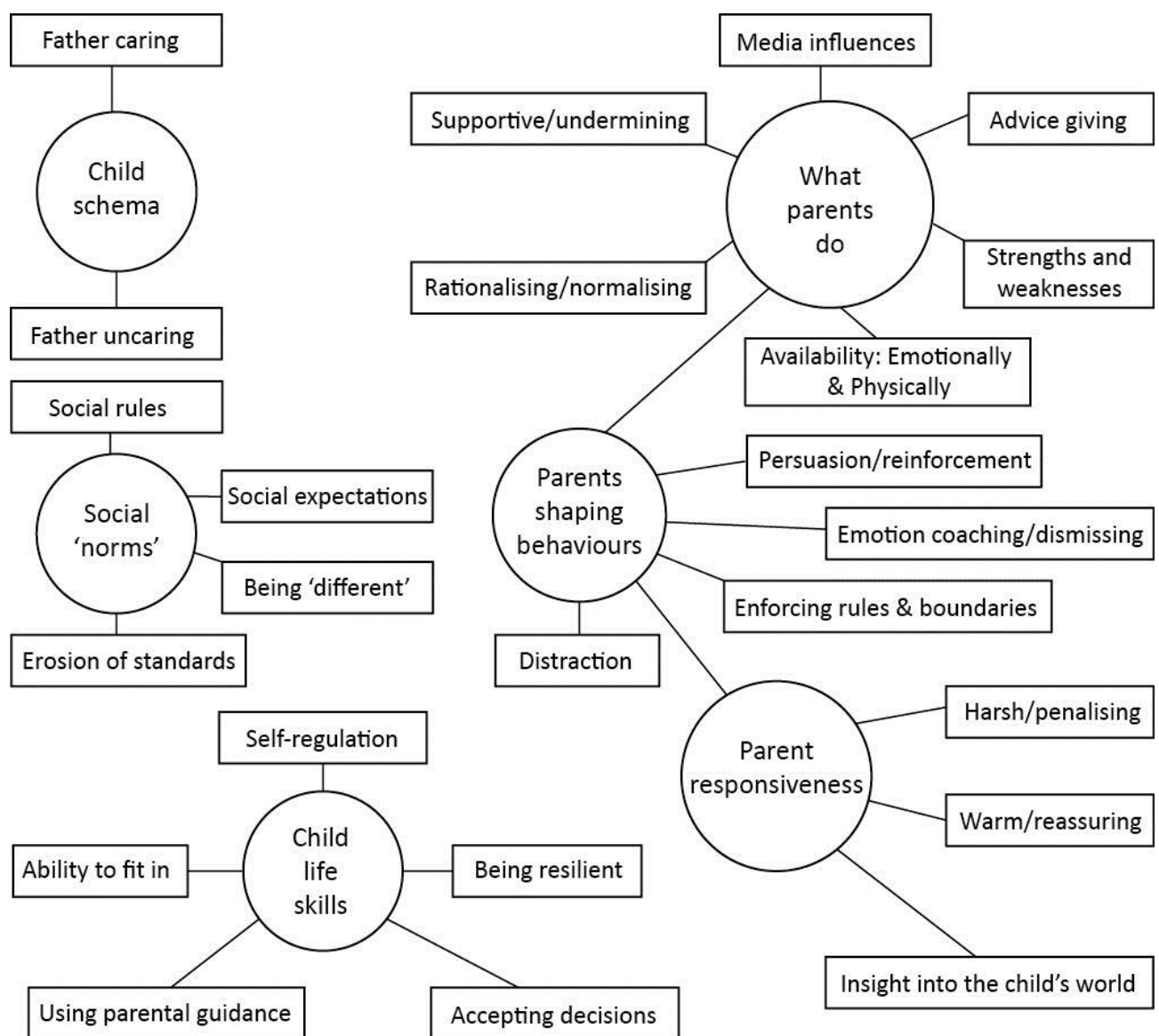
Figure 5. Initial thematic 'map'.

3.6.v Reviewing themes

This phase is essentially one of quality checking (APA, 2012). Braun and Clarke (2006) warn

of a potential pitfall at this stage by stating: "as coding data and generating themes could go

on *ad infinitum*, it is important not to get over-enthusiastic with endless re-coding" (p. 92).

Inevitably, having reviewed themes against the transcripts there was some 'collapsing' or

amalgamation in order to present a more coherent 'pattern' in relation to data extracts. The

next thematic 'map' underwent two refinement phases, as during re-reading of the

transcripts I felt further adjustments were required. However, when all data extracts had

been coded, grouped and checked against the original transcripts I considered this phase to

be complete.

3.6.vi Defining themes

This phase required interpretation of the data, beyond the semantic level. Doing this

required engagement with the transcripts in a 'back and forth' manner in order to clarify

what was of interest about particular data extracts, and why this might be the case (Braun

and Clarke, 2006, p. 92). Much of the deep analytic work connected with TA must take place

here, as selected extracts should illustrate relevant points being made. Moreover, this phase

requires coherence in that all themes not only require developing individually, but in relation

to each other whilst considering the research question (APA, 2012). The final thematic map

(Figure 6) should give a coherent account of the data.
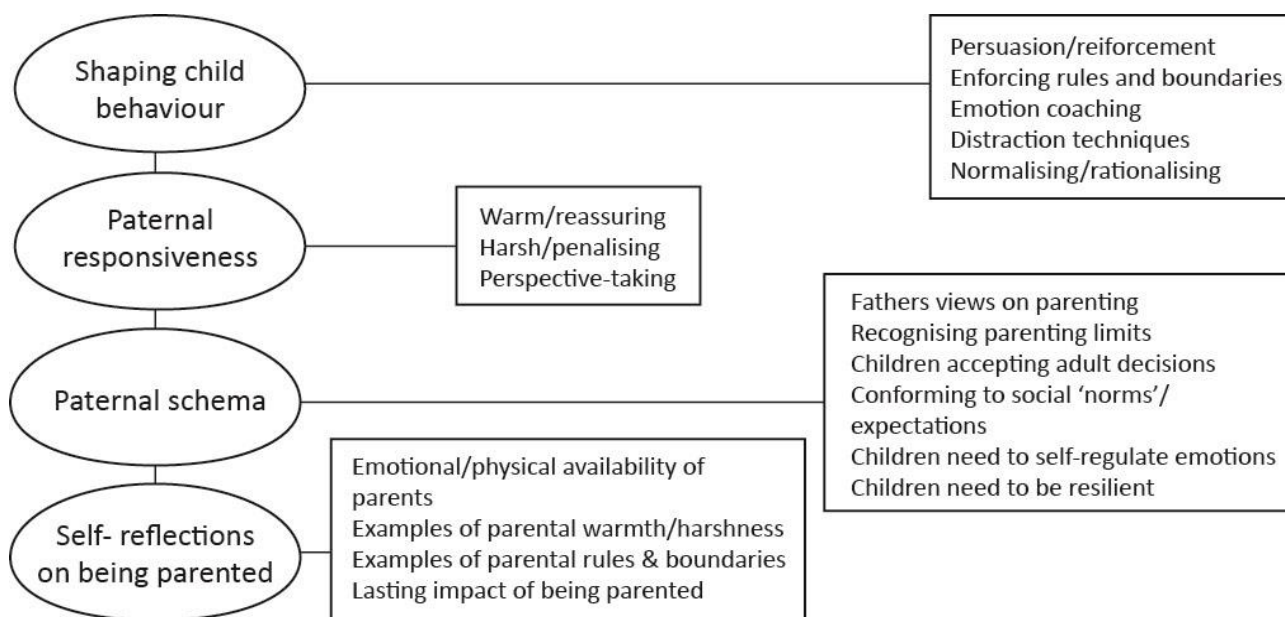
Figure 6. Final thematic map.

Reflection box:

It is fair to say that the coding and theme-generation process was both laborious and tiring. I had 'immersed' myself into the data so many times, I began to question whether I was on the right track at all, regarding having my themes capture the bulk of the data. I felt uneasy about submitting any finalised themes without having an independent fresh pair of eyes also read through my hand-marked data transcripts. I was very grateful when two work colleagues, both experienced EPs, agreed to cross-check my themes against the data. I felt that this process would give my research more 'trustworthiness' in terms of at least following a scientific process. Following their review I felt a sense of validation as an academic researcher. They felt that very little needed changing, therefore I gained greater confidence in my analytical skills. Inevitably, given their own subjective interpretation of the data, there was some 'collapsing' or merging of material. Some data extracts they felt were misplaced, whilst others were deemed not strong enough to represent a theme. This refinement process is evident when viewing the two thematic maps.

3.6.vii Producing the report

This phase was undertaken following data analysis and is presented in Chapter Three, in conjunction with the results. At this juncture, analysis was considered in response to existing literature about parenting practices, and the main research question of my study. Due

consideration was given to the order of theme presentation in the final analysis. It was important to consider the reader, therefore themes are presented in a manner that builds upon one another in a way that presents a coherent account (APA, 2012).

3.7 Threats to reliability and validity in qualitative research

Lincoln and Guba (1985) are generally recognised as setting the 'gold standard' for qualitative research, in terms of providing an alternative assessment criteria for research rigour (Robson, 2011). 'Validity' and 'reliability' are terms deeply entrenched within the field of quantitative research – the notion of replicability and generalisation of research findings. However, as Cresswell (2009) points out, such terms are inappropriate for qualitative research, due to the uniqueness of material. Qualitative research therefore has its own criteria for assessing robustness:

3.7.i Trustworthiness, authenticity and credibility: to establish this, the data has to be sufficiently 'rich' in description so that the reader may immerse themselves into the unfolding story. Data must be viewed as accurate from the perspective of both researcher and participants (Cresswell and Miller, 2000). Moreover, it is critical to foster a close rapport in order for both researcher and participants to be congruent. Researchers must also be explicitly transparent about their own background and biases that will likely impact upon the emerging account.

3.7.ii Dependability and auditability: Gibbs (2008) proposes this relates to the research process being consistent over time and with different researchers, employing alternative methods. However, this is much harder to determine compared to quantitative research. It is perhaps a little naive to suggest that researchers utilising a qualitative approach can be consistent, as each person brings with them their own life experiences and biases. Research

is said to have dependability if the approach and methods employed can be explained, and justified. Table 8 compares the terminology for rigour and robustness in both quantitative and qualitative research.

3.7.iii Transferability: Yilmaz (2013) states that a 'thick' description of context, people and their views are required, and that this should enable findings to be transferred across other settings.

3.7.iv Confirmability: this is said to exist when the research analysis is grounded in the data and findings are cross-checked via a neutral audit 'trail'. In essence, this means someone examining whether due diligence has been observed in the process of compiling data coding to originate main and sub-themes that underpin the analysis. Transcripts were read by two qualified Educational Psychologists to check the accuracy of my coding. In one instance it was felt there was not enough evidence to support a sub-theme, and four data extracts were considered more appropriate for another sub-theme.

Table 8. Criteria for Judging the robustness of research: quantitative vs qualitative terminology.

Aspect	Quantitative terms	Qualitative terms
Truth value	Internal validity	Trustworthiness
Applicability	External validity or generalisability	Transferability
Consistency	Reliability	Dependability
Neutrality	Objectivity	Confirmability

Source: Adapted from Lincoln and Guba (1985).

3.8 Evaluation

Yardley (2008) outlines key criteria for evaluating qualitative research, and should be used in conjunction with Lincoln and Guba's (1985) previously mentioned approach.

Yardley highlights the following key areas of evaluation, and I asked these questions of my research:

3.8.i Commitment and rigour:

- Do I have reasonable justification for my participant selection? Participants were 'offered' to me by SENCo's, I had no influence in this process.

- Have I demonstrated competence in my data analysis? I showed a commitment to using TA which involves a 'back and forth' process of immersion with the data in order to derive coded 'themes', reflecting patterns.

- Does the use of TA yield insights previously missing from research literature? The first-hand views of fathers and how they use ES with their children has been explored. It is widely acknowledged in the literature that recruiting fathers in research about their children has been problematic (Cassano et al., 2007).

3.8.ii Coherence and transparency:

- Can I justify a need for my study, and how it was conducted? Yes, this study is linked to the lack of research literature regarding ES practices of fathers, with a focus on NE.

- Does my study 'hang' together because of my choice of methods employed? The methods were appropriate for my research.

- I have shown a commitment to avoid drawing inferences from the data with regards to causal relationships.

- I have specified that there can be no generalising of findings from my data, as reality only exists from the perspective of the participant.

- The readers of my research can ascertain what was done and why.

- It is hoped that 'rich' data extracts help to give transparency by highlighting the source of analytic interpretation.

3.8.iii Impact and importance:

- Can my research make a difference? It has helped to address a gap in the literature regarding the contribution of fathers to the ES process, therefore addresses the "so what?" question.
- The study has theoretical importance – understanding the contribution of fathers, and their commitment to being good role models for their children. This research has helped to understand a shift in parenting, compared to previous decades where there was a delineation of mothers as homemakers, and fathers as 'breadwinners'.

3.9 Ethical considerations

Obtaining informed consent from my participants to take part in research was essential. This was achieved by them ticking either 'yes' or 'no' on my 'request for participation information sheet' (Appendix B). A key element in this process was ensuring that I was completely transparent about both the nature of my research, and why the participants had been targeted. It was crucial that they understood that recruitment to my research was entirely based upon my selection criteria of them having paternal responsibility for a Reception or Year 1 aged child. Participants were asked on the 'request for participation information sheet' if they understood why I was undertaking the research, and if they had further questions these could be raised either with me, or my academic supervisor. None of the participants raised further questions or asked for more details about the research.

Offering anonymity was also essential, and all participants indicated that they were happy for this to be the case. Therefore, I had to take care to ensure that their wishes were upheld

during the data transcription and analysis phase. Offering participants the right to withdraw

from my research was a key consideration too. One of the most important ethical

considerations was making all participants aware of limits to confidentiality. They needed to

be aware of my ethical, moral and legal position as a council employee working in the area

of children's services. It was crucial that everyone understood the possible implications,

should certain disclosures be made during the course of the interviews. All of these key

points were outlined in the 'request for participation information sheet'. Moreover,

participants were also reminded of key ethical points verbally prior to the commencement of

the recorded interviews. Table 9 offers a comprehensive list of other ethical considerations

related to my research.

Reflection box:

There were a number of key ethical considerations that underpinned the data-gathering phase. I felt it was essential that all participants were made aware that their involvement in my research was not linked to any suspicion about their parenting skills. Being transparent about the nature of my research guided me throughout the time I had contact with my participants. I also deliberated about how I was going to present myself. During the course of my normal work day I wear a shirt, tie and my security badge. I was keen not to create a perceived power imbalance, due to how I dressed. For this reason, during the interviews held at the inner city schools I removed my tie and rolled my sleeves up. I reasoned this approach may make be appear more accessible.

I initially felt uneasy about broaching the subject of limits to confidentiality. I was aware of the necessity and importance of including such a caveat. Nonetheless, I thought it might impact upon the depth and quality of participant disclosure, due to them perhaps being guarded. I was also mindful that I didn't want to present myself as a council 'snoop', someone with a hidden agenda. Fortunately, all participants understood my ethical and legal stance, and I felt this was aided by having children as the central subject matter.

Table 9. Ethical considerations.
Consent and withdrawal
• Informed consent was obtained in line with guidelines from the British Psychological Society Code of Ethics (BPS, 2009), Code of Human Research Ethics (BPS, 2014), and the University of Birmingham Code of Practice for research.
• Participants in both the pilot and full-scale research were given a 'request for participation information sheet' (Appendix B) as well as individual follow-up letters (Appendix C).
• All participants were briefed regarding details of my research. There was no element of deception employed, and participants were fully aware of my research aims.
• My research supervisor contact details were also included, should any participant have concerns that they did not want to raise directly with me.
• Participants were free to withdraw at any time before or after the interview. Participant withdrawal time after each interview was limited up to a month, due to the significant work and time involved in the transcription process.
• All participants were informed of this time limit via the 'request for participation information sheet' and verbally before interviews commenced. There were no consequences for any participant should they have wished to withdraw from the research as I was reliant on their goodwill in offering their time, and insight. Any digitally recorded data would have been erased and any partial or fully transcribed data shredded.
• All participants, and SENCo's who facilitated access to them, were offered access to a public briefing, regarding my summary research findings.
Confidentiality
• Audio recording and transcript were labelled by a unique code known only to me and my supervisor. These codes were stored separately to the data in a password-encrypted file.
• The research did not include any information that could result in the identification of any individuals, or their place of residence.
Data storage
• Following each interview digitally recorded data was moved into a password-encrypted computer file that only I had access to. Audio files were then erased from the recording device.
• All printed and marked-up transcripts were kept in a secure storage cabinet with a key that only I had access to.
• In line with policy from the University of Birmingham, the data will be kept for 10 years following research completion. After this time, all electronic data will be erased, and printed transcripts shredded.

3.10 Summary

This chapter has outlined my methodological approach to answering my main research

question. Through the interview process and subsequent analysis I felt I was able to compile

a 'story' that contained 'rich' data, reflecting my participants' experiences. These

experiences, coupled with analysis and discussion are now presented in the following

chapter.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The final stage of applying Thematic Analysis as described by Braun and Clarke (2006) involves presenting the worked out themes and data analysis. The culmination of this process is presented in this chapter, and was derived using an inductive approach. Each individual theme and their sub-themes are presented with the pertinent data extracts. The purpose of this is to help the reader access a coherent account of participants' views in relation to the main research question. Braun and Clarke (2012) state that each theme should stand alone in its own right, but also be interconnected to the other themes. I believe my approach to presenting the data addresses this. Moreover, key findings from the data are linked-back to the literature presented earlier. My rationale for having a combined results and discussion chapter is to avoid repetition of findings. Table 10 offers a reminder of the resources used to elicit participant responses.

Table 10. Aide memoir of thesis resource measures.	
1. A young boy learning to ride his bike.	The mother films the exercise whilst the father holds onto the back of the bike, eventually releasing it. The bike topples over and the boy is hurt. Both parents start laughing and the boy runs home.
2. A young child unable to get their own way, due to illness.	A child is absent from school due to illness but still wants to go to a friend's party. The parents tell the child that they cannot go.
3. A young girl having an explosive tantrum because she has lost her favourite toy.	The mother films the exercise, but is heard laughing as the young girl's emotional arousal increases. Eventually the mother reaches her limit and admonishes the girl harshly.
4. A young child being marginalised at school by peers.	A young child eventually tells their parents that their friends at school are not letting them join in with games at break time.

4.2 Overview of main themes and sub-themes

Table 11 details the four main themes and pertinent sub-themes derived from

comprehensively reviewing the data. Each theme is presented, with relevant data extracts

for each of the sub-themes. Initially, there is a brief overview of each sub-theme, then

supporting evidence that serves to address my main research question. At the end of each

theme, analysis is presented in relation to the collective sub-themes. This approach is

repeated throughout the results section.

Table 11. Main data themes and sub-themes.	
Main theme	**Sub-themes**
4.2.1 Shaping child behaviour	4.2.1 a. Persuasion/reinforcement 4.2.1 b. Enforcing rules and boundaries 4.2.1 c. Emotion coaching 4.2.1 d. Distraction techniques 4.2.1 e. Normalising/rationalising
4.2.2 Paternal responsiveness	4.2.2 a. Warm/re-assuring 4.2.2 b. Harsh/penalising 4.2.2 c. Perspective-taking
4.2.3 Paternal schema	4.2.3 a. Fathers' views on parenting 4.2.3 b. Recognising parenting limitations 4.2.3 c. Children accepting adult decisions 4.2.3 d. Conforming to social norms/expectations 4.2.3 e. Children need to self-regulate their emotions 4.2.3 f. Children need to be resilient
4.2.4 Self-reflections on being parented	4.2.4 a. Emotional/physical availability of parents 4.2.4 b. Examples of parental warmth/harshness 4.2.4 c. Examples of parental rules/boundaries 4.2.4 d. Lasting impact of being parented

4.2.1 Main theme: Shaping child behaviour

4.2.1 i. Sub-theme: Persuasion/reinforcement

The participants revealed several techniques they would apply in relation to the resource

measures, regarding addressing negative behaviours. Moreover, in many instances real-life

scenarios were also offered. Persuasion was used to some degree by every father, but they

also recognised a need for children to operate within a behavioural framework, set by

parents. The majority of fathers recognised that young children often need adult assistance

to guide their emotion regulation, and either consciously or unconsciously were applying

behaviour-shaping principles.

Evidence in the data to support the 'persuasion/reinforcement' sub-theme:
P1. *And there is a little reward at the end of every week . . . she gets a reward and that is the motivation because I think as a 4 year old apart from you know they quite like to please don't they when they are child A's age. But what I want her to see is that yeah like you say it is self-managing yourself but there is also seeing that actually by doing some jobs around the house there is a reward at the end of it and that through work . . . and we are not slave labour, do you know what I mean? For her, those are little jobs and through her little jobs she gets a reward at the end of the week. And that is you know I think that is an important life skill again, you know, you work, if you want something. Because we give her little targets if you know if she saves up the pennies that we give her, she might have a target or something . . . well she has got to do that for a period of weeks. We don't then give it to her, you know . . . I think it's important to learn that idea.*
P3. *Yeah. "the more you do on this bike, let's start by going back out of the house and getting back on that bike. All you have to do is sit on the seat. You sit on the seat; I will get you a bag of sweets." And then I will be like "right, now if you start riding that bike, I will take you to the toy shop and I will get you a Ninja Turtle." Ninja Turtles, he is very into Ninja Turtles. "Alright then dad." And he started peddling forward. "Just keep going," and he wouldn't stop and he got off the bike and he went "so now I get sweets and a turtle?" and I went "yeah." "For just getting on my bike?" "Yeah, because once you fell off it was fine, you get back on and you try and you try again. You never give up." He was like "okay dad."*
P4. *And I would also say "because you can't go (to the party) you can watch a DVD of your choice with, because I know that you like films" "yes daddy" "and you can have some sweets while you are watching it". Obviously she loves films and she is happy as Larry. Yeah we always use some kind of use bribery. I mean bribing 9 times out of 10 works.*

4.2.1 ii. Sub-theme: Enforcing rules and boundaries

The fathers spoke of the importance of children understanding that within the home there is

a hierarchy, and that parents make decisions with good intentions. They also recognised the

importance of both parents supporting each other, in order for children to understand the

limits to negative behaviour, or attempts at manipulation. All of the fathers spoke about a

need to use sanctions in order to reinforce 'house rules'. However, some were prepared to

go to any length to ensure rules were not transgressed.

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Evidence in the data to support the 'enforcing rules and boundaries' sub-theme.
P3. *No she lives down South. So he goes for a week and when he comes back it is taking us a month and a half to two months to get him back into that procedure that we have got. It is hard but there is still a knock on effect, "but Gran does this and Gran does that." "Child A, I am not your Gran. At the end of the day I am your Dad and you go to Grandma's for a holiday but when you come back home my rules are my rules and you will obey them."*
P1. *Yeah you have got to, she would probably at some point go "I want a cuddle or I want my snuggly" and you would get her the snuggly or you would give her the cuddle but then you still deal with what happened after. You can't, it is not just cuddle and forgotten, it is cuddle right, still naughty step because that is what you have asked in the first place. Go back to that and then go from there.*
P4. *And then she gets bored. Once she knows dad is not interested, I will just sit there reading my paper or watch telly, yeah I can see her out of the corner of my eye paddying and carrying on and I will say "yeah just carry on, dad is not interested." And then in the end she gets bored like all children do. And then she comes up to me and says "why won't you talk to me when I was paddying?" "because you were paddying and daddy doesn't want to talk to you when you are paddying. Daddy wants to talk to you when you are sensible when you are not paddying."*
P3. *He has got an iPad and so he gets threatened with that. He loses the hour and then will lose the hour for a week. If he loses the hour for a week then he will lose his iPad for a month. After that I will bin the iPad. He was like "but it cost money." "I don't care if it cost me money. Your behaviour does not warrant you having it." So I have told child A "if you lose your iPad for a whole month and after that you are still kicking off it goes in the bin." My wife is a bit like "would you really bin it?" "Yeah I would."*

4.2.1 iii. Sub-theme: Emotion coaching

All of the fathers recognised that young children need adult assistance occasionally in being

shown how to deal with overwhelming emotions. Some, aided by their partners, talked

about strategies commonly used within schools for emotion regulation. Others recognised

the importance of environmental factors and a need to 'model' target behaviour. The

majority suggested good-practice strategies for dealing with emotion 'overload', but also

encouraged raising meta-emotion (Gottman, 1997). Moreover, fathers spoke about the

importance of ensuring the child was calm before they would be ready to assimilate

instructions.

Evidence in the data to support the 'emotion coaching' sub-theme.
P2. *That is where we do come in that as they get older and go up to bigger school and then when they are at bigger school, hopefully they will be able to control their anger or at least they should be able to by then. So it is between now and going up to secondary school that is where we as parents we should help them to control their anger. At home if the boys know that they are getting upset or irate or anxious we have a calm down corner. It has a bean bag and it has a squishy ball to squeeze, it has some photos of the family, grandad's and nanna's. So they can go, sit down, it is kind of a reflection corner, like a calm down corner.*
P4. *We get down to her level and I look her in the eye and because what you have to remember is her level of concentration isn't as good as what it should be, so trying to get her to actually concentrate, when she is calm. So what I have to do is I normally have to say in simple terms not long sentences, just little sentences so she understands it quicker.*
P1. *In a calmer voice just make sure she understood what she was doing you know, that it's not good. If you carry on, there will be some sort of punishment at the end of the day. Why don't we just talk about why you are doing this? Get her out of that environment and maybe into her bedroom or the living room or somewhere because she is in the kitchen, throwing stuff around and try and coax her out of that environment where she was angry into a different room. A different environment maybe it might just calm her down enough just to stop throwing a tantrum and then just sort of talk about thoughts and feelings "How do you feel?" "Why are you doing this?" "How do you feel at the minute?" "What is making you do this?" and then try and address and talk about what she was feeling.*

4.2.1 iv. Sub-theme: Distraction techniques

Nearly all of the fathers recognised the power of distraction to halt moments of emotional crisis. Often, a first response was some form of bribery or persuasion to cease the negative expression. Some employed multiple techniques, demonstrating an awareness or attunement to their child's needs. In all cases, the fathers had an awareness that a proactive use of distraction would likely impact upon their child's mind-set, thus decreasing the negative expression.

Evidence in the data to support the 'distraction techniques' sub-theme.
P3. *"Did you do any drawing today?" "How was your phonics lesson" or "can you remember that book we read last night?" Or maybe talk about something that we had just done that was nice just to kind of snap him out of it a little bit. Just anything being in that position - you have got to try and use everything possible.*
P2. *I'd have assessed him and made sure and if there was say he had a big cut on his hand or something then one of the best ways with child A but I think with small children anyway, is just a bit of distraction technique. Just a "oh yeah can, we will go home, we will get an ice lolly, we will look at*

this, maybe put the TV on while mummy comes home etc." . . . it is just about taking the anxiety away just a little bit by distracting and talking about different things, because obviously it is going to hurt, it is going to be sore, it is going to be in his mind so there is no use in talking about that because that is only going, it is like a snowball effect, it is only going to make it worse.

P1. *Well obviously initially you have got to pick them up and try and comfort them that way or sit them down . . . trying to sort of take away what has happened as in some positive reinforcement and then another, you sort of divert their attention to something else. You know, because even though kids can fall over and scream they are not necessarily hurt, it is sort of shock and you know a bit unaware of what has just happened because it all happened so quickly and obviously the initial reaction especially for a child is just to scream. You know I am not happy; this is me sort of saying "what is going on". Sort of just comforting, back to explaining "You know we all fall over, I have done it" and then obviously trying to redirect her focus of attention to something else.*

4.2.1 v. Sub-theme: Normalising/rationalising specific scenarios

The fathers gave some excellent examples of normalising/rationalising when their children

were angry or sad. It was also clear that in the main this was being done on a regular basis in

order for their children to cope with adversity or set-backs. Specific phrases show that

fathers wanted to connect with their children on a deeper, emotional level in order to

highlight that they understood what if felt like. Some fathers used techniques to specifically

encourage deeper reflection in their children.

Evidence in the data to support the 'normalising/rationalising' sub-theme.
P5. *This would probably come from me as well. With him being poorly, we both would explain but I would explain he wouldn't want to go to a party and make all the other children and adults poorly and then spoil everyone's day or week or whatever. I would just really make sure that he understood that by going he could make other people poorly from whatever he had got. And just explain, he has got lots of friends, plenty of parties to come looking forward to and when he was better I would probably say you know, it is a bit of bribery, but "why don't me and you go out for the day and go to the cinema and have a boys day out?"*
P2. *It is a very pertinent question actually because we have had this in the last few weeks. So obviously he was speaking to parent B about this, so I can give first-hand experience, there were two or three boys that he really likes to play football with and they weren't letting him play. He seemed a bit down so parent B was just like "you have got lots of friend's child A, so you know everybody likes you. Just find another group of friends that you want to play with or if it is football or gym equipment, in the sand pit wherever you want to play. Just find some other boys that want to play with you or some girls. It doesn't matter, you can play with anyone you want. Everyone likes you."*

P3. *Yeah but child A also knows that he won't get everything he wants. It's like I use kids in Africa a lot with my children. You see child A has a tablet and I limit him to an hour a day. He is like that "this is not fair, this is not fair. I want to go on YouTube." "Daddy will put you on the video you want but at the end of the day. Child A, do you know there are children out there who do not have a roof over their head. They have no food; they have dirty water." And he goes, see child A is very intellectual so he likes to listen to about all that stuff and I showed him a video about the children in Africa and he was like "well why can't they come and live here?" I went "because it is not that easy. But this is how lucky you are. You have things in life that they have not." He went "Oh right. So only one hour then?" "Yes only one hour." He was like "okay then dad."*

P3. *So he comes home "what is the matter?" "I didn't get star of the day today." "Okay, you are not going to get star of the day every day. There are things that you have to understand in everyday life you are not going to get everything you want. Maybe it was someone else's turn for star of the day. Well did you do everything you normally you do at school?" He went "yeah." and I asked "What did you do?" "I tidied up, I helped." "But did someone out do you?" He was like that "well yeah another kid was tidying up better than me and helping better than me." So I said "okay, go to school tomorrow and do better."*

4.2.1 vi. Main theme: Shaping child behaviour analysis

4.2.1 i. Sub-theme: Persuasion/reinforcement

P1 talks about the value of instilling a work ethic in his daughter. Not only does he view this as a lifelong philosophy, in this instance it is a stepping stone towards child autonomy. The underlying message to his daughter is that if you independently apply yourself, you will be rewarded. Such a philosophy is likely to aid school readiness. Ursache et al. (2012) state that such children experience several advantages compared to those with less effective self-regulation skills. Those children who understand the work-reward philosophy are likely to be more receptive to learning (Zeman et al., 2006).

In general, fathers were attuned to their children's emotions, and demonstrated a deeper understanding of the power of persuasion. For example, P3 could have simply said "ride your bike to the shops and I'll get you a toy." However, he recognised that his son needed coaxing back onto the bike in stages, hence the offer of sweets for merely sitting on the bike. By raising the rewards he ascertained he had a better chance of a successful outcome, in terms of shaping target behaviour. The point of paternal attunement to child emotions is aligned with Gottman et al's. (1997) theory of meta-emotion. They postulate that those fathers who are aware of their own NE expression are more likely to use empathic support strategies. This is likely to involve advice related to how they learned to cope in similar scenarios.

A common default persuasion strategy was the offer of sweets, which from the child's perspective may reinforce the notion of dad as the 'fun figure' (Hawkins et al., 2006). Perhaps because mothers generally organise the household shopping, there could be an element of them being more health conscious, so sweets are unlikely to be used as a reward. Although sweets appeared to be a default strategy to halt negative emotions, none of the

fathers elaborated on the notion that children may be adept at using specific behaviours as a means of manipulation (Keenan, 2002).

Reflection box:

When P1 was telling me about his attempts to instil a work ethic in his child I didn't view that as a particularly harsh approach. I felt he had a sense of preparing his child for the realities of school life, particularly as reward systems are frequently used to shape target behaviour with younger children. I was impressed by the level of attunement demonstrated by fathers in response to their child's NE. I reflected that it was both clever and thoughtful to use stages to coax an upset child back into doing something. Moreover, it was insightful that all fathers recognised that missing out on a party would be upsetting, therefore substitutes were offered as appeasement.

When it came to the use of sweets as a form of bribery I reflected upon my own behaviours as a parent. I was able to identify with participants as I had done the same, either as a distraction technique or to 'save face' when out and about in public. During the interviews fathers were also telling me about their behaviour management approaches and I could 'hear' myself already categorising where I felt their strategies were aligned, such as EC.

4.2.1 ii. Sub-theme: Enforcing rules/boundaries

P3 explicitly refers to the problems that may arise when a child receives mixed parenting styles. When his son visits his Grandma's it is apparent from his perspective that his son experiences more of a 'laissez-faire' approach. This then causes difficulties for the parents when the child has to re-adjust upon returning home. This is perhaps a common difficulty experienced by parents, where Grandparents may not view rule enforcement as within their remit. In these circumstances parents may face ongoing challenges in trying to manage their child's behaviour. Children who receive mixed parenting styles may find ER difficult, as they may be confused how to express themselves (Herbert et al., 2013). In this instance P3 is trying to adhere to an authoritative approach, but his mother relaxes behavioural boundaries with more permissive parenting. Children who experience the 'laissez-faire' approach may find focus and a drive to achieve at school challenging (Spera, 2005).

Although fathers were generally responsive to their child's emotional outbursts, there was also recognition that to extinguish negative emotions, sanctions had to be followed through in order to reinforce 'house rules'. P1 is trying to instill the concept that actions have consequences. This is a good example of specific paternal 'scaffolding' that can be linked to key ES theory. For example, Brand and Klimes-Dougan (2010) state that ES is shaped by direct and indirect methods. In this instance the father is reinforcing the 'rules' for family expressivity, whilst also explicitly teaching appropriate age-related behaviours.P4 employs a behavioural management strategy that is commonly used in schools – 'tactical ignoring' of negative behaviour (Westwood, 2015). He also recognises that children can use behaviour for attention-seeking. However, he has clearly set his own 'ground rules', by stating he is happy to communicate with his daughter once she has adopted the appropriate behaviour. There are elements of emotion coaching underpinning this approach, in that the father is trying to teach his daughter that if you learn to self-regulate, then there can be a civilised discussion. In another extract P3 recognises that particular reinforcers can be used as a motivator to help modify his son's negative behaviour. Moreover, he recognises the importance of following through with consequences, and appears committed to that. An important aspect of this behaviour modification approach is that his sanctions have stages, so the iPad does not go "straight into the bin". By doing this he is offering his son opportunities to change the negative behaviour before the sanctions become too severe. A significant aspect of this approach is the child knowing his father is serious about the ultimate sanction. There must have been other instances in their relationship, perhaps with a less valuable item, when the father demonstrated his intent.

4.2.1 iii. Sub-theme: Emotion coaching

P2 recognises the important role fathers have in helping to shape child emotional management. Root and Rubin (2010) suggest that the parent-child relationship is the key factor in the ES process. It is also evident that in conjunction with his wife, considerable thought has gone into providing behavioural support strategies, such as offering a 'chill-out' space. This approach draws upon stress-reduction strategies which are being used regularly in schools, such as calming techniques to reduce emotional arousal (Felver et al., 2013).

P4 recognises that when his daughter is in a heightened state of arousal language 'load' has to be reduced, in order for her to process information (Gottman et al., 1997). He recognises that in a calm state she is more likely to understand what he is saying, and this is aided by his use of short, simple words. By getting down to her eye level there is also an attempt to connect with her emotionally, which from her perspective may reinforce the view that her father has recognised how she is feeling.

P1 recognises a need to change his approach and perhaps also alter environmental factors to bring about a successful resolution to a conflict scenario. Although the threat of a sanction is mooted, he does not default to this. Rather, there is the offer of open dialogue to consider his daughter's perspective. His approach in trying to connect with her is underpinned by key EC principles, in that he is trying to encourage the 'labelling' of emotions. Moreover, he wants to know what has fuelled the emotion, therefore he is not being dismissive. Research

suggests that parents who adopt an EC approach have children with good levels of emotional self-regulation (Cunningham et al., 2009). The actions demonstrated by P1 show how children receive considerable parental 'scaffolding', regarding how to cope with emotions, and that ER is heavily socialised (Denham et al., 2007).

4.2.1 iv. Sub-theme: Distraction techniques

Fathers recognised a need to divert their child's attention away from the thing that had made them unsettled. One had tried and tested techniques, such as sweets, whereas another tried invoking happy feelings by encouraging self-reflection, or re-visiting a happier experience. Others recognised the impact of offering choices, in that children may respond when feeling empowered, and not dictated to. Self-calming techniques for child emotional management are commonly used in schools. One of these is Mindfulness-based stress reduction (Kabat-Zinn, 1990), which has drawn empirical support as an effective behavioural management intervention (Burke, 2010).

4.2.1 v. Sub-theme: Normalising/rationalising

In the scenario when a child is angry because they cannot attend a party due to illness, P5 employs sound rationalising/normalising strategies. Furthermore, feelings of sadness/anger are dampened down by reinforcing the idea there would be plenty of other opportunities for parties. There were also elements of EC employed, by empathising that the illness was not their fault, therefore validating their emotions (Gottman et al., 1997). P5 also recognises that following a disappointment it was important to give his child something to look forward to, hence the offer of arranging 'special days'.

In the example extract when a child is sad because his peers have marginalised him, both parents employ a positive approach. P2's words are interesting, "so obviously he was

speaking to parent B (his wife) about this." This seemingly innocuous statement is quite powerful in terms of his view of gender parenting 'norms', in that it may be perceived that children automatically approach mothers for nurture (Biblarz and Stacey, 2010). In this instance, this father's self-view perpetuates the idea that certain aspects of parenting are gender-specific (Ritchie and Buchanan, 2010). This 'arrangement' may be more acceptable in households where the father adopts a more traditional role. However, those who are open to an egalitarian approach (Gregory and Millner, 2011) may see opportunities to develop PSE restricted, if parental stereotypes are perpetuated.

P3 draws upon a real-life example to reinforce to his son how fortunate he is to have basic comforts, compared to other children. Because he knows his son is responsive to such an approach he was confident it would help shape target behaviour. This strategy also encourages self-reflection for the child through the use of a hard-hitting message about those living in poverty. This is an educational approach, as the father is encouraging empathy development via the use of comparison to less fortunate children. Denham (2007) proposes that young children with high levels of ER display good empathy development. Not only does this help to make them 'school ready' (Ursache et al., 2012), such children find it easier to form and maintain friendships. P3 also uses an approach to reinforce the notion that things will not always go to plan, and that this is a reality of life. He promotes the idea that sometimes other skills are necessary, in conjunction with hard work, such as patience. His normalising approach also encourages a shift from ego-centric child thinking, by acknowledging that other children also try to give their best at school. P3 is encouraging resilience-building to cope with disappointment. Denham et al. (2007) view this as part of the parental 'scaffolding' role, in terms of emotional development being heavily socialised.

4.2.2 Main theme: Paternal responsiveness

4.2.2 i. Sub-theme: Warm/re-assuring

Many of the comments were in direct response to the resource measure scenarios, depicting

the negative expression of emotions. In general, the fathers' responses suggest they would

not be dismissive or seek to minimise their child's negative emotions. Indeed, one father felt

that he would speak with a class teacher if it meant his children having a happier school

experience. One father felt that calming words were not always enough, and needed to be in

conjunction with physical contact.

Evidence in the data to support the 'warm/re-assuring paternal response' sub-theme.
P2. *Yeah I would go and look for it with him. Failing that I would say to him "right maybe someone has picked it up by accident child A and taken it home, so we will ask a teacher if they can do a letter and send it out to the children and if someone has got it they will bring it back. " Failing that if it was an accident and you lost it we will go get another one."*
P5. *Pick him up and move him definitely. Put him out of harm's way and if that is putting him on his bed. See I have done it before when child A is kicking off and I have picked him up and he was kicking off that much I just laid and cuddled him, whilst singing softly. He was throwing a tantrum screaming. I still laid there and cuddled him. He kept doing it and you see him slowly stopping and he stopped.*
P3. *I probably would have laughed a little bit. But I would have also checked he was alright. But the main thing is to keep going with them, keep reassuring them that everything is going to be fine. You fall off once. It was like, we tried it with child A and he peddled backwards and he constantly peddled backwards and we were saying to him "keep peddling forwards" and he wouldn't do it. "No I can't do it" and he got off and walked off. "Alright come on, you can't give up. You have to keep going" so we got him back on it and he kept peddling backwards and he was like "Dad I can't do it" and I was like "alright, I tell you what, daddy will show you how to do it." I sat on his little bike and I peddled it.*

4.2.2 ii. Sub-theme: Harsh/penalising

Not all fathers reacted in the same way to the child-bike film clip, even though the child was

obviously hurt. One father's first thought was more associated with ill-discipline. Similarly,

in relating real-life incidents, rather than adopt an EC approach, one father felt that their

first response would be to punish their child in order for them to learn the error of their

ways. This was a non-negotiable exercise, and the child would remain under punishment

until a suitable time had passed, as deemed by parents.

Evidence in the data to support the 'harsh/penalising paternal response' sub-theme.
P1. *I definitely ranted. I remember ranting, I remember saying "this is unacceptable, we cannot behave like this, we are on a nice holiday, we have got your Nanny here. We have got aunty and everyone else here and you are not making it a fun experience for them. This isn't fair." Having a rant, explain why I am cross and then explain she is now missing out on a drink and an ice cream which is what her cousin is having . . . which is what everyone else was having she is now not having that.*
P5. *The other way I will go if I am not in the mood to back down is I will take things off her and say "right go to your room or I am going to take this away as well and I am going to take this away." And sometimes that works and sometimes it doesn't.*
P4. *Okay I think I would probably be a bit disappointed that she had run off mainly down the street on her own. You know obviously close to home; I suppose so not so much of an issue, but I would be disappointed that she had done that. I would explain to her, I guess why running off was . . . why I was upset that she was running off. I use a lot of the naughty step with child A . . . She sits there, and then we have a discussion.*

4.2.2 iii. Sub-theme: Perspective taking

These extracts reflect fathers taking both their own and their child's perspective. They are

extremely insightful in that everyone recognised that children think differently, and assign

higher importance to things that have little meaning to an adult. Comments from fathers'

also show an awareness of the challenges posed by child development, and it is through

their words one senses a deeper understanding of what it is like to be five years old.

Evidence in the data to support the 'perspective-taking' sub-theme.
P5. *To sort of say you know, "okay you can't do this, but we can look at doing something else when you are feeling better." I think you pick your battles; you can't win all battles because you have got to see it from her point of view. You have to think like her sometimes . . . because a party is a big deal.*
P3. *It could definitely have an impact and I know that for a fact because child A is scared of spiders, petrified of spiders. You learn from your mistakes they say. But when he first saw a spider, he screamed. I laughed and a year down the line from me laughing, it has made it worse . . . and if I hadn't had laughed at that time, it would have been easier to get him out of that fear he has now. It is a drawn out process now, it is a longer process because of <u>my</u> actions of when he first saw it.*
P1. *I mean a toy to a kid is a massive thing, you know, it really is. That is all they think about when they are at school, they come home and they are looking for it. You know it is there, they wake up thinking about it or they have wanted it for that long and they have gone to the shops and they are in hysterics buying it . . . to us, it is just a toy but to them it is massive.*
P2. *A child may feel isolated and like I said, they are going to have all these mixed emotions going through their head wondering why. It could probably have an effect on them long term. If they can't . . . if they feel like they are not going to fit in with kids at school, they are probably going to give up from that point and don't try and interact with anyone again.*
P4. *Especially if I was laughing at her falling over, then later on in life "well you are nasty to me so I would rather go to mum, if you are going to just stand there laughing when I fall over, then who is to say you won't do it later on in life, or just not be there for me later on in life."*

4.2.2 iv. Main theme: Paternal responsiveness analysis

4.2.2 i. Sub-theme: Warm/reassuring

P2 was responsive in the scenario when their child lost a favourite toy. Furthermore, reassurance was given through the suggestion of several positive strategies to try and resolve the situation. In this regard, the child would have likely drawn comfort from the knowledge that something was being done. In the example extract, the warm response of offering to replace the toy also demonstrates an awareness of how children can place significance and meaning to their belongings. This attunement to a child's sadness is aligned with a key EC principle of validating feelings (Gottman et al. 1997). Parker et al. (2012) state an important element to emotion validation is to re-assure the child that negative emotions can be expressed too.

In the extract where P5's response goes beyond simple verbal re-assurance, he utilises a common behavioural modification technique used in schools, 'team teach' (Westwood, 2015). The father uses physical restraint until the anger subsides. Use of the singing was a useful strategy, where distraction may help in shifting focus to something more pleasant (Felver et al., 2013). Perhaps the next step for this father in promoting emotion regulation in his child could be the use of music as a calming strategy without any physical restraint.

Although P3 admitted he may have found the bike incident initially amusing, he was quick to point out that by offering high levels of reassurance he was reinforcing the idea of a positive outcome. This father had a superb strategy for counter-acting his son's negative mind-set by riding the bike himself. Not only is this a good example of adult 'modelling' of how to progress, by riding the bike he also helped shape a potentially negative child memory into a positive, memorable one. This father was prepared to do anything to help his son succeed.

The approach here is broadly linked to Belsky's (1984) foundation factors for paternal

childcare involvement. More precisely, Cabrera et al. (2000) would categorise such

responses within their involvement framework as 'paternal engagement'.

4.2.2 ii. Sub-theme: Harsh/penalising

P1 talks about "ranting" in response to his child's angry behaviour, and she is removed from

the family group, and receives a sanction. This was perhaps a missed opportunity for some

ES using EC, such as 'connect before correct' (Golding, 2015). In this scenario, the father's

response is more aligned with emotion dismissing (ED), and by not validating her feelings he

displays an unwillingness to explore the emotion any further. Fabes et al. (2001) found that

if parents reinforced minimising and punitive responses, children had less effective problem-

solving strategies. Moreover, Thompson and Meyer (2007) propose ED parents have children

who mask NE, with high levels of NE arousal.

P5 talks about "not backing down", and his response is more related to his own meta-

emotion (Gottman, 1997), in that he hasn't realised that his daughter has provoked such a

response in him, and consequently a litany of sanctions follow. At this point, both appear to

be in a heightened state of arousal, so there is a lack of co-regulation for the target

behaviour to be achieved. Fogel (1993) defines co-regulation as a social process in which

people adjust their responses in relation to the anticipated actions of others. In essence, the

person who wants to shape target behaviour (usually an adult) must 'model' calm language

and behaviours if de-escalation of emotional arousal is to be achieved.

It is interesting that P4's response to the scenario of his child falling off the bike is more

about the child's disregard for his feelings of disappointment that she has ran off. Even

though she is likely to be injured in some way, the father was unhappy she had transgressed

his rule about running off on her own. As with P1, there is lack of validation for the child's emotions. This is more aligned with an ED approach in that there has been little attempt to understand how the child is feeling. Cassano et al. (2007) point out that some parents seek to control and extinguish their child's NE. A potential maladaptive outcome is that the daughter may feel that her father is unreceptive, or that certain emotions cannot be openly displayed (Lunkenheimer et al., 2007).

4.2.2 iii. Sub-theme: Perspective-taking

Often, these fathers demonstrated good levels of empathic thinking, such as "you have to think like her sometimes" or "we understand you are upset you can't go to the party." P5 recognises that a party invitation for a child is "a big deal", and this approach draws upon EC principles, such as 'connect before you correct' (Golding, 2015). There is an attempt to understand the child's emotions, and the underlying reasons. Moreover, there is an offer of a 'way out' from their sadness, by proposing future 'play dates'.

P3 talks about the spider incident and recognises the impact of negative reinforcement upon behavioural responses. He demonstrates perspective-taking from both his, and his son's view. His reflections also highlight his regret for making his son's fears worse. He recognises that his son has made a connection that displays of fear/worry may not always meet with a comforting response. In this example, the father has not validated his son's emotions and dismissed it. Furthermore, his reaction has compounded the child's NE. This father's response supports Gottman et al.'s (1997) view that fathers are more likely to use EC in response to anger, than fear or sadness. Furthermore, in Western culture it is often frowned upon for boys to display fear and anxiety (Garside and Klimes-Dougan, 2002).

A good example of perspective-taking is P2 who articulates what may happen if a child experiences sadness at school, through being marginalised. He assumes their perspective to explore the likely thoughts, feelings and behaviours, also recognising that peer acceptance equates to 'fitting in'. Several authors (e.g. Morris et al. (2007); Herbert et al., 2013; Ursache et al., 2012) highlight the importance of children being emotionally resilient from an early age. In this way they are seen as being equipped to deal with the challenges that impact upon their lives. P4 takes his daughter's perspective in terms of the possible long-term impact if he continues to be emotionally dismissive. It is also insightful that he recognises that his actions when his daughter is young may possibly impact upon their relationship over the life span. This may also serve to perpetuate the stereotype that children invariably seek nurture from their mother (Biblarz and Stacey, 2010). Children may learn through the ED behaviour of parents that they are unavailable for emotional support (Nelson et al., 2009; Wong et al., 2009).

P1 recognises how young children can be ego-centric about toys and other important things in their sphere of understanding. Although not mentioned here, how the father responds to his child's feelings of deep sadness at the loss of the toy could be crucial for later scenarios when the child has to cope with more significant loss. It will be important to reinforce the idea that all feelings, even negative ones are valid and natural (Parker et al., 2012; Stelter and Halberstadt, 2011). Teaching children to find ways to express all emotions appropriately is a key part of the significant role fathers have in 'scaffolding' children's ER (McDowell and Parke, 2005; McElwain et al., 2007).

Reflection box:

P2 was not the only father to recognise that young children can attach high significance to their favourite toys. I thought this was insightful, because as adults we are frequently faced with challenges that have greater repercussions than simply losing a toy. However, understanding how a child feels about their loss requires 'stepping out' of oneself to enter their world. Indeed, this ability to see events from a child's perspective was evident quite often. I wondered how much of this insight was shaped by their own childhood experiences. P3 is a tall man, therefore his story about riding his son's bike in an act of encouragement is a mental image that will always remain with me. I was impressed by his determination in helping his son succeed. It was interesting that both P1 and P5 had not had close relationships with their own fathers and I wondered how much this had impacted upon their own meta-emotion philosophy. It appeared that during episodes of parent-child conflict they were inclined to 'dig their heels in', in order to 'win' a confrontation. I reflected upon my own parenting behaviours in the past and how easy it can be to miss opportunities to validate a child's emotion by dismissing them at the time as somewhat trivial.

4.2.3 Main theme: Paternal schema

4.2.3 i. Sub-theme: Fathers' views on parenting

A schema is a mental representation of how we structure our knowledge about situations, therefore it guides how we think and respond (Keenan, 2002). During the interviews the fathers were frank about how they viewed parenting, and were quick to acknowledge their own perceived deficiencies. In terms of child development they raised several issues, such as social conformity, self-regulation and resilience, if children were to achieve healthy emotion regulation. The sub-themes offer insights into how fathers believe ES should be achieved.

Evidence in the data to support the 'fathers' views on parenting' sub-theme.
P4. *They do if they want stuff. If they are upset, they go to mum. But they do come to me but they do go to mum because mum is mum. Mum is there to give them cuddles, dad is there to give them sweets. When I was a child, I always went to mum when I hurt myself or if I was upset and so would my sisters and my brothers so I don't think my two would be, I have no qualms about it. It is a mother's instinct isn't it?*
P5. *I am one of them, no matter where you are, your behaviour should be consistent. If you are in the street, at home, in a friend's house, I think it's about respect. I don't believe there should be laws saying "you should behave like this here; you should behave like that elsewhere". For instance, for myself, I can go anywhere, I am still polite and well-mannered. I have respect for whoever you are. The person that I am speaking to could be a complete and utter twat, I would still speak to him with respect. For society to say you need to behave like this . . . no, don't agree with it. If you bring your children up right, society won't have anything to do with it. It is how you bring your children up at home that counts.*

> **P3.** *Well it is to the point where he was screaming for an ice lolly, I just point blank said "no" and then ignored him. She was like "DON'T YOU START SCREAMING" and I was just like "wow" and then he was crying more, she was like "GO TO YOUR ROOM" and he disappeared and I was like "that was a bit harsh wasn't it?" "I have had a bad day" "and that is his fault? You went about that completely wrong." She was like "yeah, I am sorry" so then she called him down and she apologised to him, "mummy went over the top and has had a really bad day."*

> **P3.** *No the only time he sees me angry is when I am angry with him. But then with my wife no. I will never let my kids see me and my wife angry. Me and my wife will never go to bed on an argument either. And we will always wake up happy. The way I see it is I haven't succeeded yet. I have succeeded in what I want child A to be, in shaping him. I will succeed when he is older and he goes down the right path. If he goes down the wrong path, to be fair even when they are older you never give up as a parent . . .*

4.2.3 ii. Sub-theme: Recognising parenting limitations

One father spoke candidly about their own perceived deficiencies in parenting skills. Others

were happy to learn new skills from their partner. One father spoke about the mistakes he

feels he has made, whereas another reflected upon the difficulties of balancing the

paternal/'bread-winner' role. One father acknowledged that their partner might have better

skills when it came to de-escalating an emotional crisis.

Evidence in the data to support the 'recognising parenting limitations' sub-theme.
P2. *Then I would be getting out of my comfort zone and I would be becoming a little anxious because I could see him getting a little bit wound up and I would be starting to worry then because things are starting to get a little bit out of my comfort zone. When I met parent B I didn't have children, some of it has been picked up from parent B and what she does because she is a really good mum. So I know that if I am shadowing her or just copying what she does I know that I can't go far wrong. So I would imagine there are bits of what my mum did with me, there is bits of what parent B does with the boys and then there is probably a little bit of my own input as well.*
P3. *I don't know whose fault it is . . . you know because when he was first born, he was constantly attached and I'm thinking, "got my own little boy and I am going to give to him what I didn't" . . . I think I might have over mollycoddled him. Realising that and looking back on it, it might have been my own problem.*
P4. *And I understand where they are coming from, I really do. You know I must admit I do, I am, I am too soft on them. I will admit that. I think I do need to be tougher but . . . I suppose I am just, I am just soft and I think I just give in too easy. I really do. Sometimes yeah, especially with child A. Because child A can be hard work and sometimes I just think well for a quiet life. And I know that is probably wrong in some respects. And my wife will come in and go "I see you have given in then?" Whereas my wife wouldn't give in. But you know it is hard . . .*

4.2.3 iii. Sub-theme: Children need to accept adult decisions

Most fathers spoke about the importance of children understanding that in life there is a

hierarchy, with adults at the top. One spoke in a manner that demonstrated that he was

prepared to go to any lengths to enforce his views, and that this was non-negotiable. One

spoke in a way that suggested he was helping his child become 'school-ready', and in

essence, listening to knowledgeable people was a life skill.

Evidence in the data to support the 'children accepting adult decisions' sub-theme.
P1. *There are times when I will try and out stubborn her because you know and I will go "no you are sitting on the naughty step" and we will go round and round in circles. And then it might take me, hands up it, it probably takes me sometimes just to turn around and go actually "do you know what" and I will say "do you want a cuddle?" and she will go "yes." . . . But what I notice myself is sometimes it is amazing how you forget, you get too caught up in a circle of naughty step, "you need to stay there, right you have come off, you go back on it, you come off, you go back on it". And you know, I am quite happy to do it, it works and I think it is important that she knows that I am going to be someone who, If I think she has done wrong and I want her to think about it, I will go for it. Because she is four you need to win because you are the parent and you are the adult and she needs to listen.*
P5. *Yeah they, it is a skill that they need to develop isn't it because it is not that easy. You are not going to be told yes all the time and when they got older and they are told no, you know in school or whatever setting that is, this setting or in a secondary school you know, you are going to get told no a lot aren't you. "Stop talking", or" you can't do this today", you can't just have a massive paddy . . .*
P4. *It is simple, you either listen to your parents and you learn or you grow up and you are not going to be respected, you are not going to have respect for anyone else. You are not going to get very far in life. You listen to your parents, they are there to teach you and help you become an adult. And I think you would warrant from listening to your parents.*

4.2.3 iv. Sub-theme: Conforming to social 'norms' and expectations

One father spoke about social expectations in specific public places, whereas another did not

want to be judged as somehow lacking in parenting skills, because of their child's actions.

There was the acknowledgement that children experience incidental learning from others

and this also helps to shape behaviour. In relation to changes in society, one father

hypothesised that it may be more difficult for children to benefit from incidental behavioural

learning, in comparison to past eras.

Evidence in the data to support the 'conforming to social norms/expectations' sub-theme.
P2. *I think I would be more in that situation I would be more anxious than child A would because "oh look there is a scene here, let's get out". I also think as well; on the scenarios I think it all depends on where you are. Say you were in say Brewers Fayre and it happened, I wouldn't be as embarrassed as I would be say in the Royale in Newlands, in the nicer, in a really nice upmarket restaurant or cafe bistro compared to a pub chain.*
P1. *No, I would because of my position in school and as you know, I have been here a long time and parents are very aware, I don't think I would want my daughter kicking . . . you know, in that situation, do you know what I mean? Because you know I am also pastoral leader in the school as well as being part of the senior leadership team. Every 4-year-old has a tantrum, every 4-year-old runs around Asda or does something. She has done it in Asda to me before and I have left my shopping and walked out with her. I have walked out with her, legs there, head there and have gone "we are going because I am not willing to have you behave like this." And not necessarily, I don't know, not to save face. I am not you know; I am confident enough in my abilities in my job that I am not bothered what parents think in terms of that but there is a little bit in me that I don't want people to see my daughter playing up.*
P5. *Like, because when you are out in public places, depending on where you are, it's uniformed isn't it? You go out . . . everyone is doing the same thing if you like. Don't get me wrong I know kids play up and none of them are ever perfect but I think they will learn it themselves . . . about fitting in. It is the same as anything really it is just something that is learnt and especially if they are playing up and they think "oh they are not happy with me or I didn't get that" or stuff like that it is something maybe not directly. But psychologically it sinks in but they have to learn the way you should behave but the restrictions have changed and I think it is more difficult for them to learn now.*

4.2.3 v. Sub-theme: Children need to self-regulate their emotions

Most fathers recognised that their children need adult assistance from time-to-time, and that this was a 'stepping stone' to independent self-regulation. One spoke of the need to reinforce the notion that actions lead to consequences, and that such an experience can be a learning opportunity for the child. Another father viewed the promotion of emotional self-regulation as a foundation for both academic and empathic development.

Evidence in the data to support the 'children need to self-regulate their emotions' sub-theme.
P5. *I also think in certain situations they also need a bit of help to manage their anger and that is good, and once they can do it on their own, it is a very good reflective skill to have. Yeah they have got to learn some self-control haven't they? And to learn to recognise when they are getting angry and what triggers it and learning then, the next step is learning how to step back from that.*
P3. *"You try harder . . . because now you are at the level where you are tidying up and you are helping people, go that step higher. Help them a bit more. If someone is struggling to read a book, help them*

> *read a book. Now that is the step above." and he went "But that is hard dad." "Yeah you have done the hard work of getting to the level you are at. Now you want to keep getting star of the day you need to go up and up and up, you keep achieving higher." and he was like "okay." And he went to school and he said "I helped someone read their book dad and I got star of the day," and he came home happy. "Well there you go it worked."*

> **P4.** *She was mardi but I expected her to be stamping her feet but she stayed on the step and after 6 minutes she came off and I said calmly "right what were you on the step for?" "Because mummy said no and I came to you and you said yes after you had asked me did mum say yes and I said yes" and she goes, "that was naughty" and I said "okay now you can go play."*

4.2.3 vi. Sub-theme: Children need to be resilient

Fathers spoke of a need to prepare their children for the rigours of life, in that there was a

need to be able to cope independently. They spoke about reinforcing the understanding that

there will be set-backs in life, and that things do not always go to plan. These fathers wanted

their children to understand that this was a normal experience, therefore it was important

to know how to adapt appropriately.

> **Evidence in the data to support the 'children need to be resilient' sub-theme**.

> **P5.** *It has to be or you are not doing your job properly I think. Because there is no point in setting them up for a fall is there? You have to set them up to go to the next stage, move on because they are not going to be with us forever but they have to have the basic knowledge to maybe do it themselves one day. Not only that but they have got to live in a world where there are rules.*

> **P1.** *But that is it, how are they going to learn in life? You are going to lose things. It is going to happen and you are going to lose things that are dear to you. And it is building them ready for that so that when they are older sitting there thinking "when I lost that, I remember when I lost my toy at school and daddy did this . . . these are the steps I need to follow."*

> **P4.** *Yeah because it helps them later on in life, like with them not getting the right job or not getting the right qualifications etc. or failing your driving test. I mean it is like my two at the moment if they are naughty at school they get put down on the board. We have a board and they get put down or up and child A gets upset when she gets moved down. She just needs to be able to deal with it. When things are difficult and things are hard you have got to keep trying, you don't sort of you know, sort of give up because things are hard.*

4.2.3 vii. Main theme: Paternal schema analysis

4.2.3 i. Sub-theme: Fathers' views on parenting

The way P5 spoke, it was evident that he was not constrained or shaped by socially-constructed 'norms'. His rhetoric inferred a latent understanding of socially-acceptable behaviour. He talks about the importance of getting behaviour management basics right at home. Using the 'tripartite model' of family functioning (Morris et al., 2007) children may assimilate the social 'norms' for socially acceptable behaviour. A child may learn ER through 'observation', 'parenting practices' and the 'emotional climate' of the family.

In a powerful extract P3 feels compelled to question the actions of his partner when she had lost emotional self-control. This example highlights the potential 'snowball' effect of parental stress upon child emotional regulation, when it is brought into the home. Indeed, Barth (2009) proposes mental health as a key risk factor for maladaptive parenting, and stress can be a significant component. Children may experience elevated levels of hostility if their parents are finding it difficult managing their responses (Perlman et al., 2012).

P3 who talks about never letting his child see him angry understands the importance of 'modelling' prosocial behaviour. He uses the word 'shaping' in a way that promotes ES as an active process, and in his view, support for emotional self-management may even extend beyond the school years. Moreover, there is reference to promoting a positive home environment, because parental disagreements are resolved privately, without any residual impact upon the child. Such an approach to parenting also draws upon Morris et al.'s (2007) 'tripartite' model. The 'emotional climate' of the household in this instance is consciously being managed to minimise the impact upon his son. The balanced ER may lead to greater social competence and fewer internalising/externalising behaviours (Denham, 2007).

Some spoke about the socially-constructed views of parent identity, such as mothers are for the 'hands-on' parenting and nurture. This is highlighted with P4 stating that nurturing is a "mother's instinct." Under socially-constructed 'norms' popular beliefs imply that parents have gender-specific capabilities, for example, mothers provide 'hands-on' parenting and fathers provide structure in the home, acting as role models for both gender children (Biblarz and Stacey, 2010).

4.2.3 ii. Sub-theme: Recognising parenting limitations

P2 who refers to "being out of my comfort zone" perhaps alludes to self-awareness that he doesn't have enough strategies to cope with his son's emotions, and this may be derived from a lack of practice. PSE is thought to be a significant element of healthy child development (Sevigny and Loutzenhiser, 2010). McGill (2014) suggests fathers need more practice with 'hands on' parenting to develop PSE. P2 demonstrates good reflection about elements that have shaped his parenting practice. Use of the word "shadowing" is interesting, and demonstrates he has actively used his partner as a role model to glean good practice parenting tips from. McHale (2007) suggests that parents working cohesively is more important than exploring what individuals are doing. Goldberg (2015) proposes that the quality of the inter-parental relationship is critical for the level of commitment men make to their father identity.

P3 is candid when through self-reflection he acknowledges he may have created some behavioural difficulties in his child, difficulties more commonly associated with attachment theory. Ainsworth and Bell (1970) propose that if an infant perceives a parent to be insensitive or emotionally unavailable during episodes of distress, this may lead to development of the insecure-avoidant attachment style.

P4 demonstrates good self-reflection of how he may have made life difficult for himself. His words are extremely insightful, such as "well for a quiet life" and "but you know it's hard after work and that." There is the potential for inter-parental tension if someone feels undermined by the actions of the other, for example, minimising behavioural boundaries. Gregory and Milner (2011) propose that a tension may exist for fathers to fulfil the dual role of involved parent and financial provider. O' Hara (2009) states it is important that parents work together and that perceived or actual support may influence personal well-being, and positive parenting practices.

Reflection box:

I felt it was brave for P2 to 'go on record' and state he knew he had deficiencies in his parenting skills. I wondered if many fathers would be prepared to admit that they could learn a great deal more if they simply observed their partner. Similarly, I was impressed by P3's self-analytical skills in acknowledging that he was the source of some developmental difficulties in his child. It made me reflect upon my own parenting behaviours when perhaps I had been dismissive of my young children's emotions. I strongly identified with P4's response when coming home after work, and children immediately put demands upon you. It made me reflect about my own parenting strategies when I all too often had given in, simply to have some peace and quiet. P4's experience made me reflect how easy it can be for children to manipulate parents to achieve their goals, but how this could easily be a source of inter-parental conflict.

4.2.3 iii. Sub-theme: Children accepting adult decisions

P1 has an interesting choice of words reflecting that decision-making is not a discussion, but a set process – a hierarchy of 'rules'. Use of the phrase "you need to win" perhaps alludes to ongoing difficulties in their relationship, regarding behavioural boundary transgressions that the father is not prepared to accept. Parents who feel they have to reinforce their authority may display controlling behaviours that can be both physical and psychological (McEwan and

Flouri, 2009). Such parenting behaviours are more aligned with the authoritarian style, where children are expected to be compliant.

P5 reflected about the importance of children developing ER early. He refers to ER as a "skill", particularly as children need to be prepared for not getting their own way, and having to accept an adult's decisions. Sanders et al. (2013) propose there are many benefits to early ER development, and this in turn has a positive impact upon psychological functioning. In contrast, children who habitually suppress NE may come to believe such emotions cannot be freely discussed or expressed (Lunkenheimer et al., 2007).

P4 acknowledges the role parents play as early 'teachers' in a child's life. His choice of words demonstrates he feels that lessons learned from parents form the framework or foundation for child development beyond the school-age years. His rhetoric and beliefs are clear, parents help prepare you for life. This view highlights the significance of the 'ecological systems model' (Bronfenbrenner, 1992). This theory recognises that child development is a dynamic process, shaped through various interactions. Those in the 'microsystem', such as parents, provide the structure for healthy child development (Cullen, 2011).

4.2.3 iv. Sub-theme: Children conforming to social 'norms'/expectations
It is interesting how P2 talks about levels of acceptability regarding his child's behaviour, depending upon environmental factors. In comparing two popular restaurants he refers to social 'norms' based on the clientele that might frequent each one. It is a powerful social statement, as it is implicit that in his opinion 'Brewers Fayre' would attract families where poor child behaviour would generally not be an issue. By analysing his words he is inferring that the "upmarket restaurant" attracts clientele with different behavioural standards, and that he would be aware of those people making judgements about his parenting skills.

However, Ritchie and Buchanan (2010) found little evidence to support a view that social status equated to less positive parenting practices, compared to middle-class parents.

Those with prominent community positions, such as P1 did not want other parents to judge them against societal expectations of child behaviour in public. This was particularly salient for P1 as his job is related to improving pupil behaviour. He did not want other parents thinking that he could not control his own daughter. There are socially-constructed roles for fathers, such as being the family disciplinarian. According to gender-role theory (Pleck, 1995) when fathers do not fulfil socially-constructed expectations there may be negative repercussions in terms of psychological well-being for them.

P5 talks about how social expectations are propagated such as "It's uniformed." So in a way, society sets and 'polices' its own standards of what is acceptable public behaviour. He recognises that at times incidental learning of positive behaviours from others may have become more difficult for children in modern society, where perhaps the demarcation of behavioural standards/expectations have become blurred. Such a point might be valid in so-called 'risky neighbourhoods' and Wilson (1987) proposes aspirational parents displaying positive parenting practices may extricate themselves from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, resulting in fewer community role models.

Reflection box:

P2's views about child behaviour in different environments was both insightful and thought-provoking. I reflected upon my own views about child behaviour in public places, where I had generally been keen to have my children behave appropriately. This view also appeared to align with P1. I felt that perhaps with young children I would do the same as P2 in a 'posh' restaurant. I wondered if it could lead to a particular mindset in parents who have more disposable income. Would they assume that they were 'better' parents than those who live a more 'hand-to-mouth' existence.

4.2.3 v. Sub-theme: Children need to self-regulate their emotions

P5 recognises that children often need guidance in managing their emotions, perhaps reflecting the role of parents as early teachers (Cabrera et al., 2000). There was also acknowledgement that children needed to have an awareness of physiological responses, what situations provoke overwhelming emotions, and how to employ appropriate management strategies. This links in with children being taught stress-reduction techniques in order to manage their physiological reactions (Felver et al., 2013). P5's words "the next step is learning to step back from that" is aligned with the EC stages, particularly in terms of employing strategies that will aid coping in the future (Gottman et al., 1997).

P3 assisted his son to combat sadness by helping him shift from ego-centric thinking to being more empathic towards others. He is trying to teach his son that selfless acts of kindness can also bring about recognition and reward, rather than just hard work. In essence, he wants his son to understand that if you solely rely on hard work for recognition you might become disappointed, and that employing a range of other approaches might be more beneficial in the long run. This approach helps to perpetuate the 'school readiness' theory, by encouraging his son to develop other personal attributes, such as resilience. Zeman et al. (2006) state that those children with good levels of empathy/resilience tend to have a more positive school experience.

P4 employs EC principles following a sanction, after his daughter has been angry. Rather than simply punishing her, he recognises the importance of explaining his actions, so that she may learn from the experience. In a calm manner he connects with her, encouraging her to reflect, and in doing so, she admits she was wrong. His daughter is more likely to be truthful in the future because this father recognised her honesty, and did not prolong the

sanction. This is a good example where the father follows up his actions with a teaching opportunity. The steps he has used, and the manner in which he speaks, will likely assist child ER through co-regulation (Fogel, 1993). This father recognises that in a calm state his daughter is more likely to process information.

4.2.3 vi. Sub-theme: Children need to be resilient

P5 talks about the important role parents have in preparing children for the challenges in life, such as living within societal 'rules'. Use of the word "job" in reference to parenting is interesting in that this father envisages child development not solely as incidental learning, but one where parents are actively doing something to shape behaviour. This father also speaks in a way that demonstrates attunement to his child's zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1987). Use of the phrase "no point in setting them up for a fall" shows an awareness that children should not be expected to progress if the next level of development is beyond their current capability. In the example extract P1 refers to the loss of a favourite toy as helping to prepare children for the deep and meaningful losses they may encounter in life. He reflects that by giving his child strategies they may learn to generalise skills. Much of this approach draws upon the use of EC 'scripts', where after validating the child's emotion a 'template' may be offered regarding how to cope, drawing upon previous knowledge and experience. These scripts will include the steps of EC as proposed by Gottman et al. (1996), such as validation, labelling of emotions, limit-setting and joint problem-solving.

P4 talks about the importance of emotional resilience as a lifelong skill because there will be obstacles and set-backs to overcome. He is trying to promote a philosophy of perseverance. Use of a behavioural chart at home helps his children in terms of school-home consistency of behavioural standards. He speaks of a need for one of his children to get used to the

disappointments in life. During the interviews, most fathers recognised the importance of instilling the message that life can be hard and challenging, and that it is important for children to persevere, when facing their first difficulty. The point being made is that by being emotionally resilient you are better equipped to cope when life presents challenges. Fathers spoke about the need for emotional resilience to be established from an early age.

Resilience is seen as a key aspect of school readiness (Ursache et al., 2012). Those children with good levels of emotional resilience/regulation are more likely to have stable vagal tone, because emotional expressivity has been encouraged within the home. Vagal tone is a function of the vagus nerve, a key component of the parasympathetic nervous system, regulating heart rate during periods of arousal (Kok et al., 2013). Moreover, children display resilience by employing strategies given by parents. Invariably, these parents will have utilised key EC principles, such as validating feelings and encouraging the expression of NE (Parker et al., 2012; Stelter and Halberstadt, 2011).

4.2.4 Main theme: Self-reflections on being parented

4.2.4 i. Sub-theme: Emotional/physical availability of their parents

Often, participant comments related to the lack of availability of their own fathers. One

recognised that this was through financial necessity, whilst others acknowledged it reflected

the social 'norms' from a different generation. Two fathers reflected that generational

differences translated as an emotional and physical void in the father-son relationship.

Evidence in the data to support the 'emotional/physical availability of parents' sub-theme.
P1. *I think it was probably a generational thing but I think looking back I don't think my dad had any sort of maybe not knowledge or skill, I don't think he had the ability to deal with two boys. There were me and my brother and he was always working and he held back as well. I don't think there was much input . . . but there could have been . . . but I don't think there was.*
P2. *Looking back on my experience and my perception of how I was brought up, it was good, I will take my lad to the park a lot more, go to the cinema or play games, ride bikes or go swimming. You know just everything . . . I don't think I really sort of like, got that much. Because you know my mum was really good but obviously from doing boy things, she just, there were certain things that mum's can't do so.*
P5. *I feel like I missed out on my dad, as a relationship. I didn't have one it was non-existent. He was at work and that is just how it was. You know he had to work and he would finish one job and do another just to make ends meet. We were definitely a family of very little physical contact I would say. I am quite lucky that I can pick and choose my own hours and stuff like that but at the end of the day, I feel like . . . not that putting bread on the table isn't important . . . but I know I can get by on not a lot if I need to and still have good relationships and still get by and everyone be happy. Yeah like I say, we do have quite a good relationship and they know I'm there for them. There is nothing nicer than sitting down and having a bit of a cuddle and some closeness and watching some telly or having a chat about your day or reading a book.*

4.2.4 ii. Sub-theme: Examples of parental warmth/harshness

Two father recollections clearly show that fostering warmth and nurture within families can

have a cyclical impact, in terms of parenting style. Other comments, relating to punishments,

perhaps also reflect a generational difference in parenting, in that actions were consistent

with social 'norms' of that time. All except one father, appeared to accept their own

developmental experience as being part of the 'norm', in that their own parents didn't know

any different.

Evidence in the data to support the 'examples of parental warmth/harshness' sub-theme.
P3. *If I had lost a toy, and I was behaving like that . . . but if I was crying like that I would have got a slapped arse. Excuse my French and then I would have been sent to my room and I probably would have lost all my toys, they would have all gone in the bin. My mum just told me to 'man-up' and get on with it. I just thought, a little bit of love wouldn't have gone amiss.*
P4. *Because that is what I have been taught even when I was a child. My mum and dad used to say to me "do it in your time, not when we want you to do it." Because my dad was a teacher so he was always like "do it in your time, not in our time" and that is what I say to my two "do it in your own time not everybody else's time". Even now they can't ride bikes properly but they will see children their age riding a bike and it is like you have got to do it in your time sweetheart not when we want you to do it, when you are ready.*
P5. *I mean I didn't get into many fights when I was at school. I mean to me, I am a boy, I suppose fighting was . . . I suppose I had help controlling my anger . . . it did help because he knew (his father) how to talk to me regarding other kids and how to count to ten and stuff like that, and that is what I do with my lad.*

4.2.4 iii. Sub-theme: Examples of parental rules and boundaries

The majority of fathers recognised that the behavioural framework imposed by their parents

not only served a purpose, but it also taught them lessons. One comment shows that

although the father, due to his status, was often feared in the home; in reality it was the

mother who dispensed discipline on a daily basis. Such comments perhaps reflect a different

era when due to social expectations and/or necessity, fathers were less involved in 'hands-

on' parenting.

Evidence in the data to support the 'examples of parental rules and boundaries' sub-theme.
P2. *Like I said dad was the one that if it was something sort of major then dad would be the . . . you'd get the point and the glare of the face and that was pretty much enough to weaken the knees of us to be honest. But yeah definitely mum sort of ruled the roost. She did most, she did it all really. I am not saying my dad didn't . . . but he spent most of his time at work.*
P5. *You know if you pushed the line, you knew about it. Whether you had your stuff took off you or you was grounded . . . and when you got grounded you got grounded. Or "Well you are not going out" and my mum and dad were avid gardeners and it was "right, well you are going to dig the borders with us" and it was like "oh . . . right, ok" so you know stuff like that and it worked. So like I say it, don't get me wrong, back in the day I did have a few clouts, me not so much, my sisters maybe a bit more.*
P1. *You know my mum and dad, we were brought up the proper way, I say the old fashioned way. You know where there were, you were brought up with manners, taught to respect your elders and so on and so on. And that is what I try and instill in child A regarding her emotions, exactly the same. And I think I have done alright, but I know I can do better as well.*

> **P4.** *That is what my parents used to say to me. They did. If you don't go to school, you are not allowed out. And they would say to me, "if you don't go to school you can't go out but you will be allowed out tomorrow night" and I used to say "why" and they would say "well because you are not at school. If you go to school tomorrow, you can go out and play tomorrow night" and that is what I say to child A and child B. If you are not at school, you are ill and you stay at home and you will chill out on the sofa or you chill out in bed and watch TV whatever and that is what I always say, you know it is not one rule for one and one for another.*

4.2.4 iv. Sub-theme: Lasting impact of being parented

One father spoke about how his developmental experience is still affecting his relationship

with his mother. Because of their experiences, two other fathers were consciously applying

alternative parenting skills, in order for their children to experience a more positive home

environment. It was clear that one father was applying best practice tips gleaned from his

own childhood, thus highlighting the cyclical impact of fostering warmth and nurture within

families.

Evidence in the data to support the 'lasting impact from being parented' sub-theme.
P1. *I know looking back I got shouted at a bit when I was younger, I don't think it necessarily did me any harm. It brought up a, there is that level of, I don't want to be shouted at by my mum so I am going to behave in a certain way . . . but then I also . . . I don't want child A to be like . . . "I don't want to be shouted at by dad", I don't want her to be, not fear factor is the wrong word but you know . . . afraid.*
P3. *She keeps asking me questions about my childhood and that is something I can't talk about. I have never been able to talk about. Not like I am with you, I can just give her bits. I won't ever go into depth, never. It affects me and my wife now . . . I am not going to lie, I don't . . . I smoke. That ain't really an excuse but . . . there are times when I just let it, I am like a bottle, screw it up, once it blows, it blows. And my poor wife, 9 times out of 10 I blow at her and it could be for the slightest thing.*
P4. *I think I was allowed to let off steam in my own way I guess. That little bit of space sometimes and I think I guess at times I am quite happy to give child A some space. So perhaps that is something that has stuck.*
P5. *My dad worked a lot. My mum was always the go to. Dad was the figure of "I have done something wrong so we are dealing with dad now". But no, mum was always firm but fair without a doubt. But comfort wise more just, pretty much just like what I am like and that is probably where I have got it from, it's just that talking down, bringing you down a little bit if you are worked up, you know, trying to stop a bit of hysterics . . . because you get worked up as a child, a little cuddle and you know just sort of "come on let's move on and do this".*

4.2.4 v. Main theme: Self-reflections on being parented analysis

4.2.4 i. Sub-theme: Emotional/physical availability of their parents

During the interviews there was an acknowledgment that parenting practices, particular in relation to the paternal role has undergone dramatic changes in the past 50 years (Cooklin et al., 2016). Recalling their own fathers parenting skills deficit perhaps links in with the view that historically men were less involved in the active parenting role. Parke (2002) states that women have more opportunities to socialise with young children, so it may be difficult for men to gain self-efficacy in their skillset.

Often the way participants spoke about the lack of physical availability of their own fathers it was clear that this has shaped their own parenting style, by doing things differently and engaging more with their own children. It is insightful that P2 felt he missed out on some activities, due to some 'limits' to his mother's gender-related play interests. Perhaps this also reflects his view of parenting 'norms' from a different era. Goldberg (2015) postulates that today there is increased social expectation that fathers will adopt a more 'hands on' approach, and fathers are viewed as having a unique role in child development, even if this often adheres to stereotyped behaviours, such as engaging in 'rough and tumble' play, or being the 'fun' parent figure (Hawkins et al., 2006).

In thinking about the lack of emotional/physical responsiveness from his own father, P5 reflected upon the adjustment of being a parent himself. He is reflective enough to recognise he missed out on some father-son nurturing opportunities, but is not bitter, because he acknowledges the financial pressures his own father faced. He may have reflected that something was lacking in his own upbringing as he spoke about the enjoyment he derives from being with his children. His outlook on being this type of parent is aligned

with the concept of 'new fatherhood' (Gregory and Millner, 2011), where fathers are willing to make adjustments to their working hours if it means they can have more quality family time. Barnett and Gareis (2007) found that the more interest fathers took in their children's lives, the more likely children would make personal disclosures. From a child's perspective this would likely reinforce a view that their father was available, and could be relied upon. However, Cooklin et al. (2016) state that men face pressures created by the 'work-family' conflict, and Haney and March (2003); Wall and Arnold (2007) suggest the burden of income provider is generally put upon fathers. Whilst many may wish to assume a more egalitarian role, others (e.g. Bianchi and Milkie, 2010; Todd and Binns, 2013) state that fathers may face gender inequalities in the workplace compared to mothers, such as flexible working.

4.2.4 ii. Sub-theme: Examples of parental warmth/harshness

P3's experience of his mother's lack of warmth taught him he was expected to be more emotionally robust, perhaps with the knowledge that crying would not invoke a comforting response. His mother was not only being emotionally dismissive, she also applied sanctions. So, in effect, he received a 'double-whammy' of negative emotions, without options for managing them. Lunkenheimer et al. (2007) propose that children who are denied an outlet for negative feelings may be at risk of developing maladaptive behaviours. Furthermore, Engle and McElwain (2010) propose that boys are susceptible to emotion-dismissing practices, as they generally receive less emotion-based talk, compared to girls.

In contrast, P4 spoke fondly about how he was given time and space to develop his emotion regulation, because his own father utilised positive parenting practices. This brief extract also serves to highlight how parenting style can be cyclical, in that this father now employs similar techniques in his own parenting. Morris et al. (2007) emphasise the importance of

the family unit for healthy ER development, as shown in their 'tripartite model'. The model shows a bi-directional process where children and parents have the capacity to impact upon one another. The 'emotional climate' of the family is seen as significant, and maintenance of positive mental health should be evident through parenting style (Silk et al., 2006).

P5 received parenting that today could be linked to stress-reduction techniques. Deep breathing strategies and counting is regularly used in schools Felver et al. (2013), and must have had some impact, as P5 is using it in his own parenting practice. A key point is that through their own developmental experience, four fathers learned strategies for how to cope when they were feeling emotionally overwhelmed, and these were being utilised with their own children. Showing children how to 'label' and recognise their emotions is linked to enhanced ER, social competence and lower levels of internalising behaviours (Castrol et al., 2015). The cycle of positive parenting supports the view of Gottman et al. (1997) in the theory of 'meta-emotion', in that parental emotions are conceptualised based upon their own upbringing.

4.2.4 iii. Sub-theme: Examples of parental rules/boundaries

Fathers spoke about the socially-constructed 'norms' applied when they were young, such as P2's "wait till your father gets home" philosophy. There is also reference to the fact that even though the father figure was constructed as a disciplinarian, in reality, it was usually the mother who oversaw most aspects of home life. This practical element to parenting supports Buchanan's (2010) view that parenting is a gendered occupation, where women adjust and commit themselves accordingly. Moreover, Leeks and Burney (2007) postulate that women make more changes to their identity than men, as the role of mother is more 'value-laden'. Such values may include fulfilling the socially-constructed role as nurture-

giver. Morris et al. (2007) state that historically, research has focused on what mothers are doing to shape their children's emotional development.

P5 acknowledges that his parents used a sanction that would likely extinguish poor behaviour. He also references some parenting practices from a past era that are no longer socially acceptable, such as physical punishment. However, some parenting practices may still be subject to contextual factors, particularly if living in a so-called 'risky neighbourhood'. In these circumstances a sub-culture may exist that normalises behaviours such as violence and intimidation (Sampson and Groves, 1989). Although it is worth noting that Ritchie and Buchanan (2010) found that privately-educated adolescents with professional parents reported higher incidents of parental discord, family violence and feelings of isolation than those growing up in low SES households.

The behavioural framework experienced by four fathers during their upbringing has helped to shape their own parenting style. P4 talks about his parents using a rationalising approach as to why he could not get what he wanted. However, they also gave him something to look forward to, by using a 'carrot-reward' strategy. This likely taught him he was more inclined to get what he wanted if he did what was expected of him, thereby reinforcing the notion of self-control. This father is applying the same approach in his own parenting practice, reflecting the concept of meta-emotion (Gottman et al., 1997), in that this parent's behaviour shaping has been influenced by his own upbringing.

4.2.4 iv. Sub-theme: Lasting impact of being parented
Although P1 feels that being shouted at did not necessarily do him any harm, he appears reluctant to perpetuate this parenting approach. He talks of being aware not to induce a fear factor in his daughter. He perhaps recognises that shouting at your child no longer fits in

with socially-constructed 'norms' of parenting, and that it is better to connect emotionally with children in order to shape target behaviour. This approach is more aligned with the authoritative style (Baumrind, 1971), and is characterised by structure and warmth. Heaven and Ciarrochi (2008) state that children of authoritative parents generally have high levels of self-esteem and self-efficacy.

P3 spoke about the deep emotional impact that has remained with him following a largely negative childhood experience. This is potentially significant, if a cycle of negative parenting should continue. In such circumstances, Perlman et al. (2012) state that children are less emotionally robust, as they feel that they cannot rely on adults for emotional support. Children who have not had adult 'scaffolded' support developing their ER may have lasting behavioural difficulties (NICHD, 2004).

Two fathers spoke about acquiring nurturing strategies from their own upbringing that would today equate to the principles of EC. This perhaps underlines the importance of inter-generational positive parenting (Morris et al., 2007). In one extract P5's mother employed strategies such as the use of calming techniques and physical re-assurance (Snyder et al., 2003). Similarly, P4 was parented in a way where his arousal levels were allowed to dissipate naturally, a strategy commonly used in schools today, through the use of calm areas. These are linked to key EC principles of arousal reduction, to reduce the 'fight/flight' response (Gottman et al., 1997). P4 must recognise the value of using these strategies for emotion management, as he is employing them himself.

> **Reflection box:**
>
> Out of all the fathers it was P3 with whom I identified the most, in terms of his childhood development trajectory. His experience of an emotionally unreceptive mother has had a profound impact upon his life. Also, like me, he has made conscious decisions to break a maladaptive parenting cycle through his own interactions with his child. Out of all the fathers it was P3 who I admired the most, because not only did he have to contend with an emotionally abusive parent, he also spent several years as a looked after child. I surmised that his positive parenting skills were even more impressive as they appeared largely generated from within, in the absence of any key role models in his life.

4.3 Summary

Through the use of Thematic Analysis (TA) I have been able to identify a range of factors that my participants use as part of their ES practice. The TA process has been invaluable, in that the 'back and forth' inductive approach has led to the development of four 'illuminating' themes. These main themes and their pertinent sub-themes have served to categorise how and why my participants have used specific ES approaches. In the following concluding chapter I will discuss how my findings from this chapter address my research question. Following this, I will discuss implications of my findings (including my contribution to the ES knowledge-base and reflections about EP practice), strengths/limitations of my research, and suggestions for areas of further development.

> **Reflection box:**
>
> During the interviews it was evident that I was capturing some extremely 'rich' data from my participants. This was a huge relief, as the worst case scenario would have been hours of data containing largely closed responses. I managed to get a great deal more, so I was excited about the prospect of presenting the data extracts. Following the interviews and analysis process I felt a significant sense of achievement. In essence, I had followed a methodological 'recipe', and felt I had made good choices regarding the appropriate 'tools' to use. To borrow a culinary phrase I felt that the 'proof was in the pudding'. I was convinced that readers would be able to access these first-hand accounts and understand how I had arrived at this end product. In short, I felt that readers, fathers at least, would be able to identify with many of the ES approaches used by my participants.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

In this concluding chapter I discuss how I believe my main research question has been addressed. My summary of findings are linked to the existing literature but extend beyond this by shedding new light on what fathers are actually doing with their children to promote ES. Moreover, an insightful table is offered that shows a rationale that underpins key decision-making. As with any research there are strengths and limitations and these are discussed. I offer my own insight into implications for EP practice as well as suggested proposals for further areas of research. The chapter concludes with some final reflections about the research, and a summary.

5.2 Addressing my research question

The aim of this study was to address my research question: "what approaches do fathers use to promote emotion socialisation in their children?" The methods employed to collect and analyse interview data allowed me to do this. The process of analysis facilitated the construction of themes through which the various ES strategies were revealed. Although small-scale, my research addresses a significant gap in the paternal literature. Furthermore, I am unaware of any other UK study that has focused exclusively on fathers and their ES approaches. I believe therefore that I have made a contribution to the parental literature, particularly as this 'story' has been uniquely told from the fathers (including mine) perspective.

5.3 Summary of findings

My findings demonstrate that many factors impact upon how my participants are promoting ES in their children. Moreover, the majority of factors are positive and show, certainly with

this cohort, that there is a willingness to adopt a more 'hands-on' approach to parenting. Previous literature (e.g. Brand and Klimes-Dougan, 2010) has suggested that fathers are likely to engage in socially-constructed stereotypical 'norms', such as discussing sadness with girls, and anger with boys. I was not able to find evidence in my research to further substantiate this theory. My participants were consistent in either coaching or dismissing NE, irrespective of child gender. What may be deduced therefore is that these fathers had ES strategies that they felt comfortable with using. The fathers who were occasionally dismissive were likely shaped by their meta-emotion philosophy. A key point being that historically they had at least one parent who was authoritarian or unsupportive emotionally.

Previous research (e.g. Nelson et al., 2009; Wong et al., 2009) has found that fathers are generally less emotionally supportive compared to mothers and more likely to punish boys rather than girls for displays of NE. Furthermore, Engle and McElwain, (2010) state that in general, boys receive less emotion-based talk than girls, making them more vulnerable to maladaptive outcomes. Again, I was unable to find evidence to support these gender-bias theories.

There are many examples in the data extracts that demonstrate that these fathers are attuned to their child's ER development by being empathic and responsive. In this respect, they felt they knew what to do when their child was in an emotional crisis. Moreover, there was a rationale underpinning their decision-making, and Table 12 shows factors contributing to this process. What is encouraging is that these fathers are employing a range of ES strategies that Goodall (2013) would consider as 'good practice'. This perhaps reflects the views of McGill (2014) that paternal practices have undergone seismic changes, with more willingness to display 'new fatherhood' behaviours (Gregory and Millner, 2011).

Table 12. Factors influencing the use of specific ES approaches.
Use of humour, for example, riding the child's bike.
Employing strategies learned from their own parents.
Use of physical restraint as a means of co-regulation through being soothing.
Moving away from gender parenting stereotypes.
Deliberately employing parenting strategies that was opposite to their own upbringing experience.
Consistent use of an authoritative parenting style.
Use of self-reflection and perspective-taking.
Understanding the importance of 'modelling' pro-social behaviours.
Use of Mindfulness techniques, for example, having a calm area or use of breathing exercises.
An awareness of environmental factors that may contribute to children's ER development.
The creation of behavioural structure, for example, 'house rules'.
Offering choices instead of being dictatorial.
Seeking advice from their partner.
Attunement to the current stage of their child's ER development.

There were several examples where fathers were using ES strategies that were promoting 'school readiness'. School readiness is conceptualised as children having good executive functions whilst also employing emotional self-regulation, or 'effortful control' (Ursache et al., 2012). Furthermore, Denham (2007) and Zeman et al. (2006) state school ready children display less internalising/externalising behaviours compared to those with poor ER development.

Fathers recognised the role they had in helping their children cope with NE, thus they used co-regulation, which is crucial for 'modelling' target behaviour (Fogel, 1993). Furthermore, strategies were offered that could be drawn upon in future crisis scenarios. This links with Gottman et. al's. (1997) EC steps, in that following validation and correction a child may learn from adult teaching opportunities, regarding coping in the future. A resilience-building attitude was also evident, notably in response to the bike scenario. These fathers acknowledged this as a significant milestone in child development, and in one instance, were willing to do anything to ensure success. Individual fathers were attuned to their children,

recognising what it would involve to enable task perseverance. Furthermore, although responsive, these fathers were transparent in instilling the message that life presents obstacles and disappointments.

Social skills were also developed in children through encouragement of self-reflection and empathy-building. These approaches would likely help young children move away from ego-centric thinking. Furthermore, there was an attempt by some fathers to promote a work ethic philosophy, in that if you apply yourself and work hard, you will get rewarded. All of these factors contribute in preparing children for school. Herbert et al. (2013) state that such children have good ER, are more resilient and robust, can accept adult decisions and interact effectively with a large group of peers and are able to establish and maintain friendships.

Reflection box:

My personal reflexivity about this research is that I have helped shape the unfolding 'story' alongside my participants. A key part of this was during the interview phase where in order to elicit the 'rich' data I had to establish the necessary rapport with each father. Moreover, my questions, probes and responses helped to co-construct the unfolding narrative. I am convinced that being a father myself was a significant advantage, particularly through the use of pertinent disclosures about my own paternal experiences, or where it was clear that a mutual understanding had been reached.

5.4 Strengths and limitations of this study

The main strength of this study is that I have been able to speak directly with fathers of very young children, and ascertain their views. Whilst use of the research resources and semi-structured interview format offered some cohesiveness, all of the participants offered their own real-life examples of child ER. In at least one instance, I was able to elicit very personal reflections, regarding their own emotional development. In all instances I feel that my

position of being a father helped facilitate the interview process. Indeed, I made pertinent disclosures during the interviews, and I believe this also helped to 'scaffold' the rapport-building process. The depth of participant responses afforded me 'rich' information that allowed me to comprehensively address my research question. Furthemore, through this research I have been able to explore paternal responses to NE, an area much under-studied in the ES literature Cassano et al. (2014).

Robson (2011) states use of a semi-structured interview format allows the researcher to be responsive to participant feedback, by adjusting and modifying topic-related follow-up questions. Moreover, using a loose schedule of questions ensured that in the main participant responses were topic-related. Thomas (2013) notes, use of an interview schedule allows for the identification of possible follow-up questions, prompts and probes to ascertain deeper meaning.

In terms of data analysis, Braun and Clarke (2006) formulated a step-by-step approach to conducting TA consisting of a 15-point checklist which was followed, to ensure rigour and robustness. The APA (2012), in their handbook for conducting psychological research list a number of strengths in using TA. Indeed, Joffe (2012) proposes TA is now widely regarded as a valid method in its own right. Finally, to aid research rigour, my coded transcripts were read by two experienced educational psychologists, in order to improve inter-rater reliability.

There are several limitations to this research that must be acknowledged. Firstly, the participants were selected by the SENCos of the schools that I work in. I am aware that these fathers may have been selected for displaying pro-social skills and regular engagement with the school community. As such, it was likely that these fathers were going to reflect positive

parenting practices. This is a significant limitation in that my participants were not particularly diverse. They were all white British, employed, married and living at home, therefore only representing one perspective of fatherhood. The location that this research is based in is one of high social deprivation. I have not been able to capture the views of those fathers referred to in the early part of my literature review, for example, from so-called 'risky neighbourhoods', who may be enduring significant life stressors. Perhaps these are the fathers who Cassano et al. (2007) refer to, as parents "difficult to attract to research."

Secondly, a criticism of a qualitative exploratory design utilising a small cohort of participants is that findings are difficult to generalise to a wider audience (Coolican, 2009). Moreover, my participants were a homogenous group, which is a further limitation. As I employed face-to-face interviewing I must acknowledge my impact upon the process. For example, Thomas (2013) states that the 'Hawthorne Effect' is more likely to occur in case studies involving interviews. This is generally seen as a shift in someone's behaviour when another takes interest in them, and can include 'social desirability' behaviours, when participants feel they should provide specific responses. This is a serious point to consider given my 'status' as a trainee educational and child psychologist. Participants may have been wary of their responses for fear of being judged. Finally, with qualitative research there can be subjective selection of material, which is a significant criticism of this type of research (Bell, 2000). Rather than report material verbatim, the researcher may be biased in selecting extracts making the 'final cut'. Readers are unaware of narratives not aligned with the researcher's 'angle'.

5.5 Implications for EP practice

The process of conducting this research has made me extremely mindful of both my language and actions when working with families. For example, during consultation meetings I have become more vigilant about my information gathering, and I deliberately attempt to elicit information from fathers. I feel that EPs, as well as other professionals, may have become habitualised into always contacting mothers first, regarding the discussion of a child's needs. I can understand why this happens, however, does this make it good practice? Are EPs complicit in the unintentional marginalisation of fathers, when it comes to ascertaining their views about child development? It would be good practice to break free of a concept that parenting is a gendered occupation (Ritchie and Buchanan, 2010) and remember that children receive key nurture support from their fathers too (Cooklin et al., 2016).

5.6 Future research

Prior research suggests that boys and girls may experience differential ER trajectories, depending upon the gender of the parent (Brand and Klimes-Dougan, 2010), although no support for this was found in my research. Futures studies may wish to investigate if gender-biases persist, utilising large-scale research, and including a broad demographic of fathers. Root and Rubin (2010) state that the ES practices of those from low SES backgrounds has not been sufficiently explored – gauging PSE may be a valuable undertaking. Such studies could record the views of fathers, partners and their children regarding specific ES practices. Indeed, my research would have been more robust if I had elicited the views of both children and partners of the participants. However, as previously stated, caution is necessary when ascertaining paternal involvement in a child's life as this

can be influenced by the quality of the inter-parental relationship (Sano et al., 2008). Furthermore, child age is a consideration, regarding the reliability of their responses (Punch, 2002).

Future research may also try and narrow the significant gap in the literature regarding how the ES process, aided by parents, impacts upon neurological development in children. This is an area warranting further investigation, particularly given the significant role of the pre-frontal cortex in emotion management (Morris et al., 2007).

5.7 Reflections

It is clear that many factors influence how parents 'scaffold' child ER development. Parental responses to child emotions generates 'scripts' regarding outcomes of expression in a particular context, or with a specific parent. ER may be reinforced either positively or negatively depending upon parental response (Cassano et al., 2007). The cycle of parenting practices can also be seen through the concept of 'meta-emotion' Gottman et al. (1997). This is significant in terms of parental responses to child emotions, as such responses will be likely shaped by their own upbringing and developmental experiences. Therefore, meta-emotion will have a significant impact upon parental ES practices. Gottman et al. (1996) suggest the ideal environment is where children can freely express any emotion, whilst also learning how to manage and cope in socially acceptable ways. ES is vitally important in helping to shape children's ER, and is linked to several positive outcomes that have previously been discussed. Another key point is the bi-directional influence of ES approaches. Whilst it is true that children's emotions are heavily socialised, it is likely that those children with good ER will draw more effective ES practices from their parents (Eisenberg et al., 1998).

5.8 Summary

Attention to children's emotional well-being in schools has gained greater prominence in recent times (Layard, 2005). However, a critique of this approach has been offered by Ecclestone (2007). One of her primary concerns is the interest of successive governments in promoting child well-being through educational policy. She takes the view that making well-being a prominent educational goal may lead to a 'diminished self', one where the natural attributes of resilience may not have the chance to develop and thrive due to the automatic attribution of deficit labels. According to Ecclestone, educational policy makers see learning as being rooted in, or intrinsically linked to emotional intelligence, and that this has to be raised in order to maximise a child's learning potential. Ecclestone states that a pseudo-therapeutic culture has emerged where children can be automatically pathologised as weak and vulnerable. This has led to a 'cottage industry' of therapists offering interventions (commercially profitable endeavours) for those 'damaged' by the stress of life events. Ecclestone argues that if schools promote self-esteem as equally important as learning strategies then there may be a danger of children lacking the autonomy to take risks in their learning through fear of failure, and its inevitable consequences. Ecclestone is also concerned that some elements of society are viewed as being more emotionally vulnerable than others, therefore they require government-endorsed interventions in order to be 'fixed'. Therefore, there is the potential for demonisation of children from low income families that extends well beyond mere demographics to include their thoughts and feelings. In this view, some elements of society may be seen as being unable to cope emotionally on their own, with vulnerability as an inevitable bi-product of their environment. Ecclestone's argument is perhaps a cautionary tale, one where professionals should remember that

children are often naturally resilient to set-backs, and should be allowed to make mistakes in order to learn.

Nonetheless, finding ways to help young children cope with their emotions takes on greater significance if one considers that in the UK there has reportedly been a sharp increase in mental health difficulties in young children (The Guardian, 2017). Moreover, with cuts to local authority mental health services, demand currently exceeds provision. It is my view that a more appropriate use of public expenditure would be to provide a community resource specifically promoted as assistance for parents in helping their children become 'school ready'. Furthermore, I believe it is the most disadvantaged in society who may benefit from this, particularly as in low SES areas there has been a reduction in community resources (JRF, 2003). I believe that educational psychologists are uniquely placed to deliver support to families. The depth of our training and provision of advice to schools means we already have regular contact with families. It would not take much to extend such support into the community, training parents in specific techniques, such as EC that could help their children become more robust and resilient for the rigours of life.

Reflection box:

This research has had an impact upon me both personally and professionally. I feel that I am more reflective about my practice with families, and this level of academic endeavour has improved my report writing. I also feel that my process of 'triangulating' information has improved through being a 'critical friend' – having the understanding that multiple realities exist in the social world. The research process has taught me that you have to be supremely organised, therefore devices to aid project management have a key role to play. I have also realised that undertaking research can be a lonely experience, and I made a number of personal sacrifices in order to complete this body of work. I have gained greater respect for those who embark on research in the social sciences and would argue passionately that the process is hard work, and certainly not a 'soft option'.

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Appendix A. Literature search strategy.

List of databases used for the search
Sage Full-Text Collection (Education and Psychology)
ASSIA (applied Social Sciences Index and Abstracts)
Elsevier
JSTOR
Social Science Research Network
EBSCO
Informaworld
Psychinfo
Springer
ERIC
Google Scholar

Key words and search terms using Boolean operators:
Emotional regulation
Emotional development
Emotional expressivity
Emotion socialisation
Emotion coaching
Home learning environment
Mental health (and associated terms, such as depression, anxiety)
Meta-emotion
New fatherhood
Parenting styles
Parenting skills
Parenting training
Parenting practices
Parenting behaviours
Parental self-efficacy
Parent support
Poverty
Paternal involvement
Socio-economic status
Social disadvantage

To take full advantage of the databases, Boolean operators were used with 'nested' search queries within parentheses. For example, ("parent* skills" OR "parent* style") AND mental health. Use of an asterisk ensured that the terms 'parent' and 'parenting' were addressed. Journals were then 'limited' to peer-reviewed, and full text.

Appendix B. Invitation to participate in research.

Invitation to participate in research

I am a student at the University of Birmingham where I am training to be an Educational Psychologist. I am currently on a two-year placement with the Local Authority. A significant aspect of my academic training is to complete an original research study.

The aim of my research is to explore the experiences of fathers in the field of emotion socialisation of their children. In essence, how are fathers helping their children to manage emotions in everyday life? Research in this field is dominated by the views of mothers, so fathers are significantly under represented. To this end I am hoping to recruit between 4 and 6 fathers as part of a qualitative case study. My research will specifically ask: "What approaches do fathers use to promote emotion socialisation in their children?" You will be shown a combination of short film clips and read scenarios about specific child behaviours, such as having a tantrum. Prior to each scenario you will be asked: "imagine this is your child", where your responses will be explored in an interview.

I would like to arrange a meeting for a time that is mutually convenient. This meeting could be at your child's school or, if it more convenient for your available time, at one of the rooms available to me at the Educational Psychology Service. The interview will last approximately one hour and will be digitally recorded to ensure accuracy of transcription into written format. The interviews will then be analysed using a technique called 'Thematic Analysis' – essentially a means of identifying patterns or themes within the interview.

I will not be sharing any personal information I receive from you with anyone. Your name will not be recorded in written material, to safeguard confidentiality. All data will be stored in a secure area and password-encrypted, complying fully with the research guidelines of my University. These guidelines are available by accessing the following web link:
http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/university/legal/research.pdf. In line with policy from the University of Birmingham, the data will be kept for 10 years after completion of the research. After this time, all electronic data will be erased, and printed transcripts shredded.

If you consent to take part in this research, would you please sign and print your name below? You have the right to withdraw consent at any time. Should you do so, any data you have contributed can, at your request, be destroyed immediately, provided that your request is made within a month of the interview.

It is important to highlight that you have been approached by your child's school for no other reason than that you are the father of a pupil in the age group 5-6 years, which is the focus of my research. You have <u>not</u> been 'selected' or approached because there are any concerns about your child's emotional development, or your parenting. Please return the following form to your child's school. If you agree to take part you will be provided with my contact details and that of my University Supervisor Dr Huw Williams, should you wish to discuss any aspects of your participation directly with him.

Kind regards,

Adrian Minks

Participants' agreement of consent

Signed: …………………………………………………………………………………………………   **Date:** …………………………

Print name: ………………………………………………………………………………………….

Appendix C. Follow-up letter to participants.

Agreement to participate in research

First of all, thank you for agreeing to participate in my study – you are making a valuable contribution to research in the field of children's emotional development, and fathers' distinctive contribution toward this. Detailed below are my contact details along with my first and second University Supervisors. They can be contacted directly should you wish to discuss aspects of my research with them. Also detailed below is a disclaimer outlining the boundaries of confidentiality in this research.

Researcher: Adrian R Minks

Supervisor[1]:   Dr Huw Williams

Supervisor[2]:   Dr Julia Howe

If you would value further information or explanation of the nature of your involvement in this research, please do not hesitate to contact me. I will seek to clarify any questions you may have before any interviews commence.

Confidentiality disclaimer:

All data gathered for this research will be anonymised and stored in a password-encrypted file. Furthermore, all data will be kept in a secure area under lock and key. Your data will not be shared with anyone else.

However, should a disclosure be made during the course of an interview that highlights safety risks to the interviewee, children in their care or other individuals not directly involved in the research, then the normal Local Authority protocols would be followed. These can be found by accessing the following weblink:

http://www.nelincs.gov.uk/resident/health-and-social-care/supporting-people-safeguarding-adults-children-you/

Kind regards,

Adrian Minks

Appendix D. Resource measures and initial questions.

Before participants accessed the resource measures they were given the pre-warning "Imagine that this is your child." In all cases, further prompts and probes beyond the initial question were guided by participant responses (See Appendix G for an example transcript).

Scenarios

1. A film clip shows a young boy being taught to ride his bike by his parents. The father holds the back of the boy's bike, whilst the mother films the episode. At some point the father relinquishes control of the bike. However, the boy soon topples over, hurting himself in the process. The parents both laugh, and the boy runs off back to his house.

Q. The participants' were then asked "How would you have handled that situation?"

2. The second scenario was spoken, involving a child being told that he/she could not go to a planned party, due to them being currently off school with sickness. The child is upset and angry at this decision.

Q. The participants' were then asked "How might you speak with your child, to get them to see your point of view?

3. A film clip shows a young girl who has lost her favourite toy at school. The girl is having an explosive tantrum that involves throwing, kicking and breaking items within her kitchen. In the background there is a running commentary from her mother who is filming the episode. The situation rapidly escalates, resulting in the young girl being sent to her room to reflect upon her behaviour.

Q. The participants' were then asked "If your child were behaving like this, how might you handle the situation?

4. The fourth scenario was spoken and centred on a child not being included in play activities with their peers, and finding it difficult to fit in.

Q. The participants' were then asked "What approaches might you use to reassure your child in this scenario?

Appendix E. Interview questions.

The following questions were put to every participant as a basis for eliciting initial responses. In all cases, further prompts and probes beyond the initial question were guided by participant responses (See Appendix G for an example transcript).

Initial questions relating to resource measures
Scenario 1 (child learning to ride)
Q1. How do you feel you would have handled this situation?
Q2. How do you think you would have calmed and soothed your child?
Q3. What approaches might you use to get your child back onto the bike?
Q4. What do you feel young children gain from learning to deal with sadness?
Q5. How important is it for young children to become independent in managing strong emotions, such as sadness?
Q6. Can you remember any experiences similar to the film clip when you were a child? How did your parents approach the situation?
Scenario 2 (child not allowed to go to a party)
Q1. How might you speak with your child, in order for them to see your point of view?
Q2. What approaches might you use if your child is still refusing to accept your decision?
Q3. What are your views about children accepting the decisions of their parents?
Q4. What do you feel young children gain from learning to cope with feelings of anger?
Q5. How do you think your parents helped you to cope with feelings of anger?
Scenario 3 (child having an explosive tantrum)
Q1. If your child was behaving like this how might you handle the situation?
Q2. The child in the film appears to be getting angrier, how might you diffuse the situation?
Q3. What is your view about children exhibiting such behaviours?
Q4. What are your views regarding children's behaviour in public places.
Q5. If your partner handles a similar situation in a way you disagree with, would you argue your viewpoint, or accept their decision?
Q6. Would you say you have an equal say in how your child is learning to cope emotionally?
Scenario 4 (child being marginalised at school by peers)
Q1. What approaches might you use to reassure your child in this scenario?
Q2. What are the benefits (if any) of children fitting in with their peers?
Q3. What are your thoughts about those children who find it difficult to fit in?
Q4. What steps might you take if your child continued to feel isolated by peers?
Q5. How would you describe your child's emotion management in general?

Appendix F. Ethical approval to conduct research.

Dear Dr Williams

Re: "Boys will be boys: A case study of the role of fathers in the emotion socialisation of their children"

Application for Ethical Review ERN_16-0425

Thank you for your application for ethical review for the above project, which was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Ethical Review Committee.

On behalf of the Committee, I confirm that this study now has full ethical approval.

I would like to remind you that any substantive changes to the nature of the study as described in the Application for Ethical Review, and/or any adverse events occurring during the study should be promptly bought to the Committee's attention by the Principal Investigator and may necessitate further ethical review.

Please also ensure that the relevant requirements within the University's Code of Practice for Research and the information and guidance provided on the University's ethics webpages (available at https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/finance/accounting/Research-Support-Group/Research-Ethics/Links-and-Resources.aspx) are adhered to and referred to in any future applications for ethical review. It is now a requirement on the revised application form (https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/finance/accounting/Research-Support-Group/Research-Ethics/Ethical-Review-Forms.aspx) to confirm that this guidance has been consulted and is understood, and that it has been taken into account when completing your application for ethical review.

Please be aware that whilst Health and Safety (H&S) issues may be considered during the ethical review process, you are still required to follow the University's guidance on H&S and to ensure that H&S risk assessments have been carried out as appropriate. For further information about this, please contact your School H&S representative or the University's H&S Unit at healthandsafety@contacts.bham.ac.uk.

Kind regards

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Research Support Group
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Aston Webb Building
University of Birmingham
Edgbaston B15 2TT
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Appendix G. Example interview transcript.

[The interview transcripts are removed in order to protect confidentiality.]