



REPORT

International Conference

Fatherhood in 21st Century Asia: Research, Interventions and Policies

17-18 June 2010

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON FATHERHOOD IN 21ST CENTURY ASIA: RESEARCH, INTERVENTIONS AND POLICIES

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Jointly organized by:

- Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore.
- Family Research Network, Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports
- Dads For Life, An Initiative of the National Family Council
- Gender Studies Minor Programme, Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences, National University of Singapore

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INTRODUCTION

International Conference on Fatherhood in 21st Century Asia: Research, Interventions, and Policies

Profound demographic and socioeconomic transformations in the second half of the 20th century have significantly altered men's roles in the family. Today, there is a heightened expectation of men's family involvement as the gender ideologies become more egalitarian, labor market attachment among women with young children strengthens, marital dissolution rates rise, and geographic mobility increases as the globalization forces unfold.

Despite findings of a considerably lower level of physical involvement by fathers in the child rearing activities than mothers, recent studies have demonstrated that father's involvement, both in absolute and relative terms, has increased in many western industrialized countries. A burgeoned body of literature documents the positive associations between fathers' involvement and children's well-being, marital relationship, and father's own development. Research has shown that variability in men's transitions to fatherhood predicts different trajectories and outcomes regarding father involvement and family well-being.

Much of such research has been conducted in the western industrialized countries. Scant systematic work has been conducted on fatherhood in Asia where family research has traditionally focused on mother's roles. There is a need to understand whether and how men's family roles has changed, how they differ from those in the western societies, and what consequences such changes have on the well-being of family members. Families in Asia are experiencing rapid transitions under diverse cultural, demographic, socioeconomic, and policy contexts. For example, in many societies, patriarchy remains a dominant family ideology despite an impressive increase in women's education and labor force participation. Many men retain the main disciplinary figure in the family and refrain from showing emotional support to children. In China, the one-child policy has had a significant impact on gender roles, and on parent-child relationships. In countries such as the Philippines or Sri Lanka, a large number of women leave their families for a long stretch of time to work in other countries, leaving children with their fathers. In Singapore, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and HK, the "ultra-low" fertility rates have altered family dynamics and changed expectations to men's roles. Other trends such as an increase in interracial or transnational marriages and the wide range of work-family policies in different Asian countries are likely to have varied impacted on men's family roles in these countries.

The National University of Singapore's (NUS) Asia Research Institute (ARI) in collaboration with the national Dads for Life movement, an initiative of the National Family Council, supported by the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports, and with the NUS Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, hosted the first international conference on Asian fatherhood on 17-18 June 2010. This conference provided a platform for researchers, policy makers, and practitioners to discuss the diverse roles and challenges Asian fathers encounter when involved in their children's lives; and to address a range of policies and practice-based interventions related to fatherhood in Asian countries. This conference was convened by Professor Jean Yeung of ARI and the NUS Department of Sociology. The conference aims to gain a better understanding about the Asian man's diverse roles and challenges as father and to raise awareness about positive father involvement.

Dr Mohamad Maliki Bin Osman, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of National Development, delivered the opening address as Guest-of-Honour of the event. Dr Gavin Jones delivered welcome remarks as the cluster leader of the Changing Family in Asia cluster in the Asia Research Institute. The keynote speaker, Professor William Marsiglio from the Department of Sociology and Criminology and Law at the University of Florida, set the stage by outlining the vision and opportunities to engage fathers in diverse settings.

The one-and-a-half day event featured five panel discussions—Father Involvement In Changing Asia; Fathering Across Diversity; Father-Child Relationship and Fathering Styles; Fatherhood Ideology, Aspirations And Motivations; and Fatherhood In The Context Of Migration—to promote research and exchanges on fatherhood in Asia and to raise awareness about positive fathering (see conference Programme in Appendix).

Presenters shared the latest research findings on fathers in the US and nine Asian countries, including Singapore, Malaysia, India, China and Vietnam, with about 180 academics, policy makers, and practitioners from government and community agencies. A roundtable discussion group for practitioners with three speakers was held on the second day of the conference.

Of the 17 papers presented, Singapore researchers shared their research on fathers in Singapore, including experiences of first-time fathers with fathering, marriage, family and work-life issues; interaction of fathers and their teenage children in Singapore; issues relating to being a father in Malay societies; and roles of fatherhood in Chinese and Malay communities in Singapore.

This report provides a background for the conference, a summary of the presentations, and a reflection and next steps after the conference.

SUMMARY OF THE WELCOME REMARKS BY DR MOHAMAD MALIKI OSMAN



A conference dedicated to the subject of fatherhood is testimony that fathers matter deeply to the wellbeing of children and families – but also that fathers can do more towards that end. We know from international research that when fathers are involved, children, mothers, and fathers themselves benefit.

Yet, our own local research shows that fathers are still less involved than mothers. A 2009 survey on fatherhood conducted by the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports found that fathers still spend less time with their children than mothers. On average, during the weekend, a father typically spends about 8.4 hours a day with his children as compared to 10.5 hours spent by a mother. When asked about the roles and responsibilities of a father, 46 per cent of respondents still point to being the breadwinner as a man's key role in the family.

These statistics comparing fathers' and mothers' involvement notwithstanding, what is important is to study the trend of fathers' involvement over time to assess the progress we have made as a society. Indeed, in a context where societal and familial needs are constantly evolving, and where familial and gender roles are constantly changing, this conference is timely. The value of research and conferences like today's, then, is to understand these trends and shifts in context and to inform our policies and programmes impacting fatherhood.

In the next one and a half days, you will hear eminent international experts speak on cutting-edge research and best policy and programme practices to frame our understanding of fatherhood in Asia. They will delve into issues relating to culture, migration, parenting and life transitions amongst others. Their presentations would illuminate the diverse experiences of fatherhood across Asia and the key challenges and opportunities for all of us involved and interested in supporting fatherhood.

I thought it useful at this juncture to offer four principles or operating parameters for us to consider as we work to synthesise the myriad of views and comments we will hear in the next one and a half days. The first, as I have alluded to earlier, is that **fatherhood is diverse** as it operates within the cultural norms of each society. Across countries, communities and individual fathers, no one story is alike. It is in acknowledging and celebrating this diversity that we open our hearts and minds to new learning and new opportunities for growth.

The second principle is that even in diversity, we are **unified by this singular experience of fatherhood**. It would be for all of us to develop as comprehensive a picture of the issues affecting the fathers that we work with, and other fathers in various communities, so as to better understand what is unique and, more importantly, what is similar, with a view to designing the best strategies for intervention.

The third principle is acknowledging **fatherhood as a dynamic process**, involving constant interaction of societal norms and value systems, evolving expectations of individuals and families within an ever changing socioeconomic landscape. The constant engagement with fathers within this context will enable us to respond better to this process and enhance the role of fathers more effectively.

The final, and perhaps most important, principle, is that **fatherhood is ultimately about our children**. While the work that we do following from this conference is largely directed at fathers, the ultimate beneficiaries must be our children for they represent our hope and future. If we calibrate our programmes and policies for fathers right, we are in a better position to have children who do better in school, are more emotionally and socially resilient and who will be the best that they can be, no matter their circumstances.

Ultimately, the real impact that we will all make will be determined by the actions that we take beyond this conference. As researchers, policy makers and practitioners from the private, public and people sectors, we all have a role to play in building on our multi-disciplinary perspectives and a wide range of experience related to fatherhood to supporting fathers in their roles. From the seemingly mundane issue of diaper changing facilities in men's public toilets to paternity leave policies, the range of topics is large, reflecting the importance of this area of fatherhood deserving our attention and certainly a conference of this stature as we have today.



I hope that today and tomorrow will offer numerous opportunities for you to leverage on and multiply this collaboration towards successful fatherhood. It leaves me to thank the two key organisations who have worked tirelessly to make this event a reality – The Asia Research Institute of the National University of Singapore and the Dads for Life movement. I wish all of you an enriching conference and certainly to all the fathers present – A Very Happy Father's Day in advance.

SUMMARY OF THE PRESENTATIONS

Keynote Speech

Expanding the Frame of Fathering: Visions and Opportunities to Engage Fathers in Diverse Settings

Professor William Marsiglio emphasises that fatherhood research and programmes that promote fathering should expand beyond fathers' direct involvement and define fatherhood broadly to think about fathering across the life course from preconception to postconception so as to gain a more comprehensive understanding of men's interrelated experiences with conception, pregnancy, children, and romantic partnerships. He highlights the intersection of social psychological and life course perspectives of fathering that implicate men's procreative consciousness and sense of responsibility, fatherhood readiness, and three interconnected paths to experiencing fathering—*self-as-father*, *father-child*, and *coparental*. Professor Marsiglio explains how the interplay between cultural representations of fatherhood, gender ideologies, family demographics, and public policies and programmes can enable or constrain men's fathering. He also argues that we need to study how fathers think and act while accounting for the diverse cultural and physical contexts of fathering.



Professor Marsiglio suggests some creative ways to think about and study fathering. In his view, key research questions for Asian fathers are: (1) What is it about Asian fathers' procreative identities, trajectories as fathers, and their situated fathering experiences that affect how they construct their identities as fathers, interact with their children, and influence their children's lives over the life course?, and (2) What conditions matter?



PANEL I: FATHER INVOLVEMENT IN CHANGING ASIA

The following papers on fathers in Vietnam, India, Taiwan, and Malaysia distill relevant points for discussion and reflection in shaping more involved fatherhood in these countries. While fathers' involvement with children in these countries remains lower relative to that of mothers, all studies provide some evidence of an increased level of fathers' involvement over time in various aspects of children's lives, particularly among men with higher education. Family circumstances such as the age of the child, fathers' marital satisfaction, and relationship with their own fathers also influence fathers' involvement levels. These studies underscore the familial, cultural, and policy contexts that are important when considering fathers' changing roles.



Fathers' Role and Social Changes in Vietnam

Jayakody and Pham discuss the extent to which traditional Confucian roles underpinning the Vietnamese family have changed over time and the social and economic forces linked to these changes.

Their quantitative study leveraged on data from three waves of the Vietnam Household Living Standards Survey, the Vietnam Demographic Health Survey, and three cohorts of the Vietnam Family Survey corresponding to the Vietnam-US war, the post-reunification period, and the "Renovation" period characterised by economic reforms and growing global influence.

The authors first provide a historical context for changes in cultural and economic development in Vietnam. They find no significant differences across historical periods in attitudes towards men making the important decisions in family life or sharing housework equally with women when both spouses work. However, there appear to be significant differences in men's fathering behaviour by historical period. Men in more recent cohorts were more likely to report looking after, bathing, and feeding their children. This was particularly true for men in the north, in urban areas, and those with higher education. Finally, there was sustained low participation by men in childcare. While 28 per cent of mothers in recent cohorts said they spent at least three hours daily caring for children aged 15 and under, 30 per cent of fathers reported spending less than an hour daily with their children. As such, the researchers call for the introduction of more programmes to increase fathers' daily participation in housework and childcare, with some suggestive evidence from experimental research that men's attitudes and behaviour can be altered.

Proactive Role of Fathers in Children's Lives: The Indian Scenario

Sriram and Sandhu explore educated middle class fathers' notions of their children's success and achievement in India, their involvement with children in activities related to their success, and their motivations for getting involved.

The study involved: (1) a qualitative approach using in-depth interviews with 12 educated middle-class fathers with children aged 6-21 years; and (2) a quantitative approach involving interviews with 120 educated middle-class fathers with at least one child aged 8-14 years. Respondents were from Baroda, a city in Western India.

In terms of fathering goals and notions of children's success, fathers interpreted success as good grades leading to a good career, possessing good human values, and being happy and satisfied. Indian fathers are concerned about their children's success and are highly involved in ensuring their children's success. Top activities fathers were involved in include planning and providing for their children's future, guiding and mentoring children, and providing practical and emotional support to reduce stress and promote their children's learning. Mothers' involvement scores were higher than that of fathers in all domains, except in planning and providing for children. The researchers also found a positive correlation between fathers' and mothers' involvement. Although mothers continued to be highly involved, involvement was a family characteristic. Fathers' traditional roles of provider, protector, teacher and moral guide continued to be important but new dimensions of availability of fathers and open communication with them also prevailed. The data show that these highly educated Indian fathers were actively involved in their children's lives and displayed this commitment in cognitive, behavioural, and affective levels.

Father Involvement in the Lives of Young Children in Taiwan

Ho et al. study government policies that promote father involvement, fatherhood roles in Taiwanese society, and comparisons between fathers and mothers in child activity engagement and parental role beliefs.

The study involved: (1) collecting qualitative and quantitative data through a survey of 26 pairs of parents of second-grade students in a local elementary school in Taipei; and (2) content analysis of parenting magazines.

Ho et al. describe that government policy legislating parent involvement in schools and father involvement was enabled by policy allowing all employees (both mothers and fathers) up to two years of unpaid parental leave for each child until the child reaches three; parental leave subsidies; local parent education centres; and community programmes. However, public support for such policies was still limited. Mothers remained more engaged than fathers in childcare, but both parents were equally involved in many other activities. Parenting magazines had been proactive in carrying progressive messages promoting the enlarged role of "new age" fathers and critiquing men who did not help out at home. However, fathers appeared to experience substantial stress in balancing their new roles and carving out successful careers while simultaneously participating in the raising of children. The majority of these Taiwanese fathers felt they had few male role models of "balanced fathers". The study also shows that their views of father involvement and engagement with children are beginning to shift from traditional beliefs associated with a patriarchal society to more egalitarian beliefs with respect to gender roles and responsibilities. Contemporary Taiwanese fathers play multiple roles in their children's socialisation and development.

Contributions of Self, Contextual and Child Characteristics on Father Involvement among Muslims in Malaysia

In this study of 1,019 Malay-Muslim fathers of children aged 10 to 16 from intact families in the state of Selangor, Juhari et al. explore how contexts, and the characteristics of the father and the child predict father involvement among Malay-Muslims in Malaysia.

Fathers who perceived high involvement of their own fathers, who were more educated and more satisfied with their marriage and with their own fathers' involvement were found to be more involved with their children. Data also suggest that having fewer children, younger children, a higher level of education, a working wife, and higher family income predicted greater father involvement.

Fathers of younger children reported a higher degree of involvement, and the gender of the child was not a significant predictor of father involvement. Thus, Juhari et al. recommend that education may encourage fathers to become more "open" and willing to be involved, and that future research may need to examine the "meaning" of fathering, and the roles of religion and gender roles.

PANEL II: FATHERING ACROSS DIVERSITY

Three studies conducted in India, Singapore, and Taiwan document how traditional cultural norms intersect with the changing socioeconomic circumstances in shaping the gradual changes in father's family roles. Saraff finds that fathers in India were getting more involved in childcare but experiencing conflict and confusion regarding their roles. Singapore Malay fathers in Suratman's study were very involved in various aspects of childcare and played an important part in their children's lives beginning at childbirth, and single Taiwanese fathers in Wang et al.'s study encountered various familial and emotional barriers when faced with financial difficulties.

Culture and Conduct of Fatherhood in India: Are They in Synchrony?

Anjula Saraff interviewed 350 Indian fathers in Mumbai to shed light on the question of culture-conduct synchrony-asynchrony in the aspects of (1) the beliefs surrounding men's role in family life (culture), (2) men's participation in parenting—their involvement in childcare and housework (conduct), and (3) whether men's behaviour is in accordance with their beliefs.

The median age of fathers in this study was 35 years and most (60 per cent) had been married for four to 10 years. A majority of the respondents were educated up to high school or above (76 per cent) and had monthly income of between Rs.3000 to Rs.7000. The findings show that traditional cultural expectations of fathers were changing, but still very influential in urban India. Some of the traditional images of the ideal father (that of surety, economic provider, role model and family head) were retained by fathers in actual practice. However, the author notes some real transformation, as some fathers were taking on roles of "new father" and participating in childcare activities culturally not expected of them. For instance, slightly more than half of fathers were their child's playmate and friend.

The data show a low level of congruence between Indian fathers' perception and actual conduct. Those who were better educated, had a better living standard, lived in nuclear families, had working wives, and were Hindus were more likely to practise what they believed ideal fathers did. The author notes that these Indian fathers were confused about their fathering role as they were caught between old and new values. The author suggests there is an urgent need to educate men and their significant others so as to bring a change in their mindsets regarding men's role in the family.



Being a Father in Malay Societies

In her research on 10 young Malay dual income couples' management of childcare, Suriani Suratman studied daily task allocation of bathing, dressing, changing diapers, meal preparation, feeding, ferrying children, playing, reading, supervising homework and putting children to bed. The findings show that no matter how minimally, all the fathers were involved in one way or another in a wide range of daily childcare tasks. Most men ferried children to school and shared responsibility of a range of other tasks with wives, live-in helpers or mothers and mothers-in-law. Fathers also played an important role in attending to unpredictable childcare demands and special requirements during school holidays. Some couples declared that childcare tasks were assigned to the partner who was available. The author notes that traditional Malay households were not organised based on gendered division of labour. The distinction between men as the breadwinner and women as the caregiver is a relatively new phenomenon after industrialisation. The data also show that Malay women play a critical gate keeping role in a man's involvement with their children. Women were managers of childcare and household tasks who allocated tasks to others and supervised them. Malay women's household "manager" role was an important factor for men's involvement.

Suratman calls for work practices that enable flexible work arrangements for both male and female employees so that fathers and mothers are available in the home and fathers are encouraged to participate in household-related work. She notes that the current official discourses on family roles in Singapore serve to reproduce women's role as mothers. As an example, she cites the large imbalance between the four-month maternity leave and the three-day paternity leave provision that reflects the government's view that childcare is predominantly women's responsibility. She urges the Singapore government to support a family-friendly work environment more actively to ensure good work-life balance for parents.

A Comparative Study of Seeking Help Behaviour of Single Parents in Taiwan

Wang Shu-Yung, Cheng C.H. and Hsieh Y.L. use survey data, in-depth interviews with 32 single parents (18 single mothers and 14 single fathers), and focus group with service providers and teachers to study whether there are gender differences between single mothers and single fathers in Taiwan in terms of help-seeking behaviour. They also reflect on the limitations of current social services for single parents, particularly single fathers. They find that single fathers' actual level of involvement with children was no less than that of single mothers. However, poor single fathers were less likely than poor single mothers to receive public assistance. Poor single fathers had more difficulty in balancing work and family since they were less likely to be in jobs with flexible hours. In addition, poor single fathers were often isolated from their family of origin because their family members were afraid that financial trouble would result in long-term economic dependence of the single fathers on family members. Most single mothers, in contrast, were close to their family of origin and received childcare help from their own parents.

Single fathers who could not maintain a stable job were seen as failures by ex-wives, friends, and social workers, even though they were very close to their children and performed caring roles. Single mothers who went out to work or had new boyfriends were not seen as good mothers. While single mothers confided in friends, single fathers preferred the company of other single fathers or preferred confiding in strangers via telephone hotlines to talking to social workers. They preferred engaging in outdoor activities with other single father families to getting in line for means-tested cash benefits, or food items. They also did not know how to get help or did not want to ask for assistance as this represented a threat to their masculinity. These characteristics of single fathers were barriers to help-seeking.

PANEL III: FATHER-CHILD RELATIONSHIP AND FATHERING STYLES

The papers in this panel focus on fathers' relationship with teenagers. Ho et al. and Shum-Cheung Hoi Shan find that Singapore fathers did not have as intimate a relationship with their teenage children as mothers did and many of them perceived financial provisioning as their primary family role and saw work as a significant barrier to spending as much time with their children as they desired. Feng Xiaotian finds that the relationship between single children in China and their fathers was not significantly different from that between children with siblings and their fathers. Kuan Ping-Yin and Wang Chihsan find that father's educational involvement in Taiwan had a positive impact on children's academic achievement but involvement on the part of fathers was generally lacking. Shan's paper suggests that the traditional role differentiation between husbands and wives is very much prevalent in Singapore. Despite the increase in female labour force participation since 1980, mothers were still considered to be chiefly responsible for childcare, and they perceived themselves to be so as well. Even grandmothers and paid workers figured more prominently than fathers as main caregivers for children.



Subjective Wellbeing and Attitudes Related to the Family: Interaction of Fathers and their Teenage Children in Singapore

Ho Kong Weng, Ong Qiyang and Ho Kong Chong conducted a study on 400 parent-youth pairs to explore the role of fathers in Singaporean households, father-youth relations in terms of life satisfaction and the strength of mutual influence in life satisfaction between father and youth, and the importance of family support, interaction and harmony to father, mother and youth's life satisfaction. The youths were aged 15-19 years, and 222 father-youth pairs and 178 mother-youth pairs were interviewed.

The proportion of youths from employed mother-youth pairs who confided in their mothers was higher than the proportion of youths from employed father-youth pairs who confided in their fathers. Compared to mothers, fathers played a less active role in providing emotional support to their youths. Fathers' life satisfaction did not have a significant influence on youths' life satisfaction but mothers' life satisfaction had a positive influence on that of youth. Weaker father-to-youth influence in life satisfaction could be due to fathers being less involved in their youth's upbringing. Employed fathers reported higher life satisfaction than unemployed fathers, and the more home interfered with work, the lower the life satisfaction of employed fathers.

However, a large proportion (approximately 60 per cent) of fathers agreed that work kept them from spending the amount of time they would like to spend with their family. Ho et al. conclude that although there is a shift in the culture of fatherhood, the conduct of fathers has yet to catch up. The breadwinner role is still the dominant role for Singaporean fathers despite their desire to spend more time with their family. To strengthen the bond between father and youth, greater involvement in youth's upbringing and more communicative efforts are needed on the part of fathers.

The Analysis of Father-Child Relations of Only-Child Youths

Examining parent-child relationship in a survey of 2,357 working youths in 12 cities in China in 2007, Feng Xiaotian compares only-child youths' relationship with their parents with the relationship between children with siblings and their parents. He found that there were no significant differences between the two groups. The data show that fathers did not have as intimate a relationship with children as mothers did. The father-child relationship of the only-child youths manifested significantly different characteristics from mother-child relationship in daily conversations between parents and offspring, and in terms of mutual psychological support. Only-children preferred to talk to their fathers about work issues, social news, and their own future. Only-children were more inclined to talk to their mothers about personal feelings, marriage, and family affairs. Mothers also provided more psychological support than fathers. Feng found that child's gender and living style had no effect on father-child relationship. He did find, however, that the father-child relationship involving a married offspring was more intimate than that which involved an unmarried offspring.

Fathers sought emotional support from their children less frequently than mothers did. 70 per cent of Chinese fathers did not confide in their children and about 60 per cent of only-child youths did not seek psychological support from their fathers. 44.2 per cent of youth chose to tell a friend, 20.5 per cent chose to keep worries to themselves, and 18.9 per cent chose to tell spouses or lovers. Only 3.9 per cent chose to tell their fathers. Thus, for the only-children, parents' families were no longer the main spaces to conduct social activities. The interaction between father and child decreased during adolescent period, while peer groups, spouses and lovers became major psychological supporters for the only-child youth. Feng recommends that the measurement of father-child relationship could be improved, for parent-child relation is a two-way interaction of objective behaviours and subjective perceptions and feelings. He suggests that measurement of father-child relationship should include the dimensions of understanding, communication, trust, interaction, conflict, and mutual evaluation.

The Impact of Father's and Mother's Parenting Styles on Children's High-School Academic Achievement in Taiwan

Using a nationally representative sample of 9,269 junior high students in Taiwan in 2001 and 2003, this research by Kuan Ping-Yin and Wang Chihsan reveals three dimensions of paternal and maternal parenting styles that were similar to those found in past research. Considering paternal and maternal parenting concurrently in the analysis, fathers' and mothers' parenting were found to have independent impact on children's academic achievement. Secondly, paternal parenting had a negative relationship with maternal educational involvement but not vice versa. Thirdly, father's educational involvement (but not mother's) had a positive impact on children's academic achievement.

These findings underscore the importance of fatherhood and the need to consider its impact simultaneously with mother's parenting behaviours. Moreover, the findings show that the role of parental educational involvement needs to be considered within the context of parental styles in general. Previous findings about the positive effect of parental involvement may have overstated the role of this parental role. Parental concern over children's education is only one facet of general parenting and what is more important is how

parents treat their children in general. This research also raises a question: if Taiwanese fathers are generally less involved in parenting than mothers, why does their limited involvement have such an important and direct impact on their children's academic achievement?

Child Care and Parenting Practices in Singapore: A Focus on Fathers

This study by Shum-Cheung Hoi Shan, on 530 parents (248 fathers and 282 mothers) and one of their children (261 boys and 269 girls) between the age of 10 and 12, shows that mothers were the main caregivers to children in most cases despite the fact that more than half of the mothers in the sample were working women. Only a very small percentage of fathers were main caregivers to children across all age groups. Notably, even grandmothers and paid workers figured more prominently than fathers as main caregivers for children at any age. Even though females' participation in the labour force had increased since 1980, mothers were still considered to be chiefly responsible for childcare duties, and they perceived themselves to be so as well.

Few fathers nominated themselves as the preferred main caregivers of children at any age, probably because they perceived themselves as provider of financial support for the family, at least partially if not fully, instead of being responsible for childcare. Many parents and children reasoned that mothers were preferred over fathers as main caregivers because mothers understood children best, and could therefore provide better care. Interestingly, parents and children also tended to prefer grandmothers over fathers as main caregivers, as the former were thought to be better at childcare. Contrary to conventional belief, fathers used physical punishment less frequently than mothers did, and mothers were considered to be more controlling than fathers. However, fathers were considered to be less warm and accepting than mothers.

Shum-Cheung highlights that it will probably take a substantial shift in ideology to increase fathers' participation to be on par with that of mothers, given that the traditional role differentiation between husbands and wives seems to be very much prevalent in Singapore, even among the younger generation of parents. She urges future studies to consider in-depth analysis of fathers' interest in childcare, and to identify factors which could boost fathers' involvement.

PANEL IV: FATHERHOOD IDEOLOGY, ASPIRATIONS AND MOTIVATIONS

Presentations in this panel focus on how men make the transition to fatherhood and how they view their roles as father. Utomo et al. investigate young fathers' life situations after fatherhood in Greater Jakarta. Lim Peng Ann explores the transitional stages of a father before and after the arrival of the firstborn, and Tan Wen Yang examines how structural and cultural contexts shape men's construction of fatherhood in two ethnic communities in Singapore.

Moving Towards Independent Living: Young Fathers' Family Responsibilities in Greater Jakarta

Utomo et al. base their research on data collected in the 2009/2010 Indonesian Transition into Adulthood Survey of about 3,000 young fathers aged 20-34. They first point out that fatherhood lacks scholarly attention, and they seek to understand young fathers' life situations in Greater Jakarta in relation to their employment, their financial and emotional relationships with their own parents, their health and well being, and gender roles and attitudes towards children.

This study shows that these young fathers had a high level of employment and satisfaction with job prospects while young mothers had a relatively low employment rate. These Indonesian fathers worked for long hours and were happy with their breadwinner roles. The data show that traditional gender roles remain strong in Jakarta.

The authors find that, compared with mothers, these young fathers had more traditional gender roles, which was in line with Indonesian social norms that see the husband as an authority figure who regulates and dominates the household. Non-fathers appeared to be more egalitarian than fathers, and the authors feel that there could be something about becoming a father that makes a man become less egalitarian. The authors find that Muslim men were less egalitarian – congruent with the statement from the Islamic religion that *"The husband is the head of the household and a wife must worship and serve her husband"*. Mothers believed that they were mostly responsible for children's growth. Nevertheless, they also wanted a role in the public domain. This was particularly true with highly educated mothers. Young fathers wanted a role in the domestic domain too but were often rejected by the mothers. Both seemed to want a role in each other's primary sphere but faced certain resistance from their significant other. The data also show that fathers were more likely than non-fathers to agree that "a life without children is not fully complete", and non-fathers agreed that there was social pressure to have children.



Men's Transition to Fatherhood: Experiences of First-Time Fathers with Fathering, Marriage, Family and Work-Life Issues

Lim highlights the inadequacy of father-focused services and fatherhood preparation in Singapore despite the fact that the transition to fatherhood is a meaningful yet challenging life-changing experience for men in their life cycle. In his study, he looks at men's experiences before and after the birth of their firstborn, and investigates strengths and barriers in men's preparation to be father. With seven participants in the pilot study and 20 interviewees, he explores and compares their perceptions, expectations, plans, preparations and personal adjustment before and after the birth of their firstborn.

His study reveals that the first-time fathers' preparedness was influenced by their own father's influence and alternative father models, personal characteristics, prior childcare experience, marital well-being before birth, childcare plan, practical preparations and work-life arrangements. Lim notes that practical support and alternative modeling were particularly important for those who did not have a good role model in their fathers. In addition, he finds that the overall marital quality of the couple deteriorated after the birth, especially during the initial months after birth. Last but not least, the fatherhood transitional adjustment outcome was influenced by father-child involvement, father's own coping, work-life adaptation, marital well-being after birth, and the living and childcare support arrangements. Lim stresses the need for support and guidance for men when they start as new fathers who could provide a satisfying home environment for the whole family.

Explaining Variance within Constructions of Fatherhood between the Chinese and Malay Communities of Singapore

Tan emphasises the changing nature of "fatherhood" within the multi-cultural milieu of contemporary Singapore in his comparative study of variance in constructions of "fatherhood" between the Chinese and Malays. The author conducted secondary analysis of official data to show the socioeconomic characteristics of these ethnic groups and then interviewed 20 respondents in five households. The interviews reveal cross-ethnic differences arising from the interaction between structural (i.e. occupational-stratification) and cultural factors (i.e. religious beliefs) within the site of ethnicity. The religious beliefs of the two ethnic groups that shape gender ideologies lead to very different understanding and expression of father's involvement with children. The differences in their socioeconomic characteristics also influence the involvement of fathers of different ethnic groups. Both Chinese and Malays communities exhibited a cultural lag or "asynchrony" in term of their adoption and relation to the general view of "a universal, new father".

Given the diversity and differing needs of fathers within specific communities, Tan calls for more research into the correlation among the disparities in education levels, average ages at first marriage and the stages of fatherhood. These findings may be helpful in tailoring family policies in Singapore. He argues that the analysis of significant ethnic-based divergences within the constructions of fatherhood would serve as a useful basis for the revision of policies which often assume a homogenous developmental pathway for modern paternity in the household.

PANEL V: FATHERHOOD IN THE CONTEXT OF MIGRATION

Globalisation has provided various economic opportunities for transnational migratory labour and this has influenced the division of domestic labour and how families function as a unit. Scott Harper discusses the impact of transnational migratory labour on children's behaviour and parent-child relationships in Filipino families. Le Thi Hoai Phuong explores fatherhood in rural Vietnam where there is widespread emigration of wives to the cities for work, and Kang Yoonhee investigates how Korean fathers in Singapore negotiate their fatherhood.

Transnational Migratory Labour and its Effects on Filipino Families

Emphasising that transnational migration remains crucial for the economic survival of Filipinos, Harper estimates that roughly 2 million individuals become Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) per year. This study is one of the few which addresses the role of OFW fathers in the family. He raises two key questions in his study. First, do children of OFW families, compared to those of non-OFW families, encounter different issues of parent-child relationship and problematic outcomes? Second, what are the factors that may help buffer any negative effects of father absence? Harper conducted a comparative analysis of 116 OFW families and 99 non-OFW families in measures of family outcomes, and the interrelation of OFW father behaviour, mother behaviour, parent-child attachment, and child outcomes.

Harper finds that increased paternal warmth during visits predicted increased marital and father-child relationship quality, and he also speculated that such paternal warmth was indirectly associated with the quality of mother-child relationship and problem behaviours among children. In addition, he points out that mother's negativity to father's contact is associated with a decline in marital quality and father-child relationship. He argues that this negativity in turn affected mother-child relationship quality and child's behaviour. Last but not least, a high quality of mother-child relationship was found to be associated with fewer child behaviour problems. Harper concludes that as transnational migration for work in the Philippines will remain in the foreseeable future, it is important to further investigate potential ways in which some of the negative effects on children may be mitigated in families that live apart for work.

Fatherhood in Today Rural Vietnam

Phuong starts with an introduction of how Confucian philosophy cultivates the idea of fatherhood in traditional Vietnamese culture. She observes that although the Vietnamese family is experiencing "westernisation", the urban population is more westernised than the rural population. In view of the trend of transnational migratory labour among Vietnamese women, Phuong investigates the phenomenon as well as its problems and challenges by conducting in-depth interviews and group discussions with 47 men and 49 women from 17 different provinces in the northern part of Vietnam.

Phuong finds that fatherhood in the rural areas of Vietnam is most fragile as work migration has provided wives with the opportunity to earn more than husbands. She also notes that no special attention has been accorded to fatherhood in Vietnamese culture. She urges for policy support for Vietnamese "manhood" and "fatherhood" among the rural men. She suggests that these Vietnamese fathers should be provided with the means to develop their role as the "master of the family", the "pillar of the family", and the main labour force in the society, as this would ensure the sustainable development of Vietnamese families.



“Any One Parent Will Do”: Negotiations of Fatherhood among South Korean “Wild Geese” Fathers in Singapore

With the growing number of Korean students migrating for education in Singapore, many variations in Korean transnational family arrangements and practices could be seen. One exceptional family arrangement involves fathers accompanying their children to study in Singapore. Through ethnographic study with five such South Korean fathers in Singapore, Kang explores how gendered notions of care work interplay with the conceptualisation of fatherhood through transnational migration. She documents these Korean fathers’ experiences of migration, their daily routines, and their values and attitudes toward their children’s education.

Her case study reveals that Korean fathers negotiated their fatherhood in the context of migration by challenging the dominant gender ideology and retaining their close associations with conventional “masculine” domains. She also argues that the plurality and ambivalence of these fathers’ experiences clearly show that fatherhood does not comprise static gender attributes but rather is a social construct with multiple, shifting and contextually contingent meanings, embedded in specific social conditions and transnational practices in a rapidly globalising world. The fathers experienced self transformation and reconfiguration of the gender division of labour, in which they had to perform both mother and father roles.

Summary

This first international conference on Asian fatherhood provides a glimpse of contemporary Asian fathers’ involvement in their children’s lives and how they perceive their roles. The fathers in the nine countries represent men of diverse cultural background and socioeconomic statuses. While existing data do not allow us to compare fathers’ involvement with children across these countries or with the western countries, all studies provide some evidence that men in more recent cohorts, particularly men with higher education, are more involved with their children in a wide range of activities than their own fathers were. That said, these papers also show that Asian fathers’ level of involvement remains considerably lower relative to that of mothers. Changes in men’s behaviour also generally lag behind changes in gender ideologies and are often accompanied with considerable ambivalence from both men and women about their respective family roles. Findings from these presentations, coupled with a paucity of international time use research, suggest that we have probably seen slower changes in Asian men’s fathering behaviour than men in western societies despite Asian women’s increasing role in the labour market.

These presentations underscore some unique Asian contexts that are crucial in shaping fatherhood in Asia.

- (1) The deep-seated traditional gender norms and values remain strong, prevalent in moral teachings in some countries and in religious decrees in others. For example, Confucian teachings about patriarchy and intergenerational hierarchies in family structure are among the clearest principles of social organisation in societies such as Taiwan, Vietnam, Korea, and to some extent, China for generations. The traditional values such as “strict father, kind mother”, the “three obediences and four virtues¹” for women, and “son preference” clearly still exert prevalent influence on men’s perceptions of their family roles and behaviour and women’s attitudes about how men should behave. Religious decrees that have been in existence for thousands of years, in Islam, Hinduism, and Christianity, also still play a strong role in shaping fatherhood ideology and behaviour. Teachings such as “Husbands are head of the household, a religious teacher, and a disciplinarian”, and “A wife must worship and serve her husband”, lead to confusion among Indian men about their roles in a rapidly changing socioeconomic circumstances and among the significantly less egalitarian Muslim males compared to Muslim females reported in several presentations.
- (2) Asian men lack male role models as fathers. Men tend to feel unprepared and inadequate as fathers as a consequence of the moral and religious traditions about the primacy of men in families mentioned above. However, several studies suggest that a man’s own father’s involvement has a significant influence on his own involvement with his children. Mother’s gate keeping behaviour is also a significant factor that needs to be kept in mind when attempting to understand or influence fathers’ behaviour. Several presentations noted that Asian men need considerable support and guidance in their new roles and called for more attention to relevant policies and programmes.
- (3) Several studies, however, also illustrate that policies in Asian countries such as Malaysia, Vietnam, and Singapore are often gender-biased and lag in taking family-work balance issues seriously. There appears to be a diverse and uneven development of policies and programmes that promote and support fatherhood among Asian countries. Taiwan’s relatively new initiative of parent education centres and the two-year parental leave policy, Singapore’s Dads-for-Life movement, and programmes in India and Malaysia are good examples of such efforts to encourage and help fathers nurture psycho-social bonds with their children. More work is warranted to learn about the impact of such policies and programmes in different countries. There are also structural barriers at the work place and in other social units that hinder fathers’ positive involvement. More work is needed for a better understanding of these structural barriers and explore how policy and programmes can help address these challenges.
- (4) Migration is and will remain a fact of life for countless Asian fathers and their families. These experiences present unique socio-psychological and structural challenges for Asian men that need to be further investigated.
- (5) Grandparents and domestic helpers play much greater roles in childcare in Asian families. The involvement of these members can have varying effects on father-mother and father-child relationships for families of different socioeconomic and cultural background, and more work is needed to gain better understanding of these dynamics.

¹ The three obediences and four virtues are the traditional Confucian teachings of wifely submission and virtues prescribed to women. A woman is to obey her father as a daughter, obey her husband as a wife, and obey her sons in widowhood. The four virtues for women are morality, proper speech, modest manner, and diligent work.

It is clear that Asian fathers are negotiating, challenging, and creating new meanings of fatherhood. There is often an interaction between cultural and structural factors that shape how fatherhood evolves in all societies. The “new fathers” we see in Asia are likely to be different from those in America or European countries given the unique contexts noted above. For example, Asian fathers seem to be significantly more involved in the academic achievement of their children than fathers in western countries, as highlighted in papers on fathers in Taiwan and India, and migrant fathers in Asia are exploring uncharted territories to fulfill their responsibility as fathers. Much more work is needed to understand how fatherhood evolves in different cultural and socioeconomic contexts in Asia.

Reflections and Next Steps

This first international fatherhood conference in Asia went well. It was well organised, presentations were of good quality, and the papers offered much food for thought for policies, practice, and future research. The participants were enthusiastic and provided much positive informal feedback. The conference received some media attention in both local radio and newspapers, as well as in NUS research notes and ARI newsletter. I believe that the conference achieved the purposes of advancing knowledge about Asian fathers, raising public awareness about fatherhood in Singapore and Asia in general, and highlighting areas for future research.

The papers were of varying quality and used different research methodologies. Several studies on China, Indonesia, Taiwan, and Vietnam were based on data from large probability surveys. A few studies were based on medium-sized samples—India, Malaysia, and Singapore—and other studies were based on focus groups or in-depth studies collected from small and/or selective samples. Some of the papers were more polished, and others were still quite preliminary in their analysis. There is room for improvement for most papers in methodology and analysis. Regarding the contents, most papers were limited to examining paternal involvement, in particular, direct engagement of fathers in two-parent families with their children. The keynote speech offered much insight into how fatherhood research could be expanded beyond direct engagement of fathers to explore stages before a man becomes a father, the socio-psychological aspects of fathering, and how the roles of fathers change as they move through different life stages and in different family circumstances or cultural contexts.

It will be useful to consider future conferences that build on what this conference has accomplished. One potential conference, for example, could focus on specific policies and programmes that are relevant to fathers’ roles. This will dovetail well with this first conference. Other conferences could focus on transition to fatherhood, non-residential fathers, low-income fathers, stepfathers, social fathers, or the impact of father’s involvement on children’s development or marital relationships.

A website for Asian fatherhood research network could be established to provide information about researchers working on fatherhood research in different areas, and working papers, publications, and conferences on Asian fatherhood.

Another possibility is to build on the network that we have forged in this conference and extend it to form a fatherhood network for practitioners. Dads for Life could follow up with authors to secure contacts of practitioners in respective countries and create a network for practitioners to share strategies of increasing awareness of fatherhood and father involvement. A page on the Asian fatherhood website can be created specifically for practitioners with information about programmes and practitioners in different countries. Such a network can also be useful for convening special conferences for practitioners.

Authors of a subset of papers will revise their papers to be published in a peer-reviewed special journal issue or a book on Asian fatherhood. This collection will add to the fatherhood literature in a significant way.

PROGRAMME

WELCOME REMARKS

Prof Gavin W. Jones, *Research Leader of the Changing Family in Asia Cluster, Asia Research Institute and Department of Sociology, National University of Singapore*

GUEST-OF-HONOR

Dr Mohamad Maliki Bin Osman, *Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of National Development*

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Chairperson: **W. Jean Yeung**, *Asia Research Institute and Dept of Sociology, National University of Singapore*

EXPANDING THE FRAME OF FATHERING: VISIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES TO ENGAGE FATHERS IN DIVERSE SETTINGS

Prof William Marsiglio, *Sociology and Criminology & Law, University of Florida*

PANEL 1: FATHER INVOLVEMENT IN CHANGING ASIA

Chairperson: **Michelle Lazar**, *Dept of English Language and Literature, National University of Singapore*

FATHERS' ROLE AND SOCIAL CHANGES IN VIETNAM

Rukmalie Jayakody & Pham Thi Thu Phuong, *Pennsylvania State University*

PROACTIVE ROLE OF FATHERS IN CHILDREN'S LIVES: THE INDIAN SCENARIO

Rajalakshmi Sriram, *University of Baroda*

Gurpreet Sandhu, *Australian Catholic University*

FATHER INVOLVEMENT IN THE LIVES OF YOUNG CHILDREN IN TAIWAN

Ho Hsiu-Zu, Jessica Phillips & Connie Tran, *University of California*

Ko Chu-Ting, *Taipei Municipal University of Education*

Chen Wei-Wen, *National Taiwan University*

CONTRIBUTIONS OF SELF, CONTEXTUAL AND CHILD CHARACTERISTICS ON FATHER INVOLVEMENT AMONG MUSLIMS IN MALAYSIA

Rumaya Juhari, Siti Nor Yaacob & Mansor Abu Talib, *University Putra Malaysia*

PANEL 2: FATHERING ACROSS DIVERSITY

Chairperson: **Mohd Rafiz Mohyi Hapipi**, *Resource Development Analyst, Yayasan Mendaki*

CULTURE AND CONDUCT OF FATHERHOOD IN INDIA: ARE THEY IN SYNCHRONY?

Anjula Saraff, *Stanford University*

BEING A FATHER IN MALAY SOCIETIES

Suriani Suratman, *Dept of Malay Studies, National University of Singapore*

ARE SINGLE FATHERS DIFFERENT FROM SINGLE MOTHERS?
THE COMPARATIVE STUDY ON SEEKING HELP BEHAVIOR OF SINGLE PARENTS IN TAIWAN
Wang Shu Yung & Cheng C.H., *National Chung-Cheng University*
Hsieh Y.L., *Asia University*

PANEL 3: FATHER-CHILD RELATIONSHIP & FATHERING STYLES

Chairperson: Vivienne Ng, Deputy Director (Clinical and Forensic Psychology Branch), Rehabilitation, Protection and Residential Services Division (RPRSD), Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports

SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING AND ATTITUDES RELATED TO THE FAMILY:
INTERACTION OF FATHERS AND THEIR TEENAGE CHILDREN IN SINGAPORE
Ho Kong Weng & Ong Qiyan, *Nanyang Technological University*
Ho Kong Chong, *Department of Sociology, National University of Singapore*

THE ANALYSIS OF FATHER-CHILD RELATIONS OF ONLY-CHILD YOUTHS
Feng Xiaotian, *Nanjing University*

THE IMPACT OF FATHER'S AND MOTHER'S PARENTING STYLES ON CHILDREN'S HIGH-SCHOOL ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN TAIWAN
Kuan Ping-Yin & Wang Chihtsan, *National Chengchi University*

CHILD CARE AND PARENTING PRACTICES IN SINGAPORE: A FOCUS ON FATHERS
Shum-Cheung Hoi Shan, *Singapore Children's Society*

PANEL 4: FATHERHOOD IDEOLOGY, ASPIRATIONS AND MOTIVATIONS

Chairperson: Eric Thompson, Dept of Sociology, National University of Singapore

MOVING TOWARDS INDEPENDENT LIVING: YOUNG FATHERS' FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES IN GREATER JAKARTA
Iwu Dwisetyani Utomo, Peter Mcdonald, Terry Hull & Ariane Utomo, *Australian National University*
Gavin W. Jones, *Asia Research Institute & Dept of Sociology, National University of Singapore*
Budi Utomo, Heru Suparno & Dadun Dadun, *University of Indonesia*

MEN'S TRANSITION TO FATHERHOOD: EXPERIENCES OF FIRST-TIME FATHERS WITH FATHERING, MARRIAGE, FAMILY AND WORK-LIFE ISSUES
Adrian Lim Peng Ann, *Dept of Social Work, National University of Singapore & Centre for Fathering Singapore*

EXPLAINING VARIANCE WITHIN CONSTRUCTIONS OF FATHERHOOD BETWEEN THE CHINESE AND MALAY COMMUNITIES OF SINGAPORE
Shawn Tan Wen Yang, *Dept of Sociology, National University of Singapore*

PANEL 5: FATHERHOOD IN THE CONTEXT OF MIGRATION

Chairperson: Shirlena Huang, Dept of Geography, National University of Singapore

TRANSNATIONAL MIGRATORY LABOR AND ITS EFFECTS ON FILIPINO FAMILIES

Scott Harper, *Oklahoma Christian University*

FATHERHOOD IN TODAY RURAL VIETNAM

Le Thi Hoai Phuong, *Vietnam Institute of Culture and Arts Studies*

“ANY ONE PARENT WILL DO”: NEGOTIATIONS OF FATHERHOOD AMONG SOUTH KOREAN ‘WILD GEESE’
FATHERS IN SINGAPORE

Kang Yoonhee, *Nanyang Technological University*

CLOSING REMARKS

W. Jean Yeung, *Fathers Action Network, Asia Research Institute and Dept of Sociology, National University of Singapore*

ABSTRACTS

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Expanding the Frame of Fathering: Visions and Opportunities to Engage Fathers in Diverse Settings

William Marsiglio

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Efforts to advance fatherhood research and inform public/private initiatives that promote fathering should be anchored in a broad understanding of men's varied and interrelated experiences with conception, pregnancy, children, and romantic partnerships. Thus, I emphasize the value of defining fatherhood broadly while highlighting creative ways to think about and study fathering. My comments speak to how initiatives can benefit children, fathers, and mothers alike. I explore the interplay between cultural representations of fatherhood, gender ideologies, family demographics, and public policies and programs. My insights are framed by my qualitative interviews with men in the United States and several conceptual frameworks I've generated: *procreative identity framework*, *trajectory model of fathering*, and *situated fathering*. With an eye towards providing an overarching vision that can be applied to fathering across the life course in diverse Asian contexts, I specifically: a) highlight the intersection of social psychological and life course perspectives of fathering that implicate men's procreative consciousness and sense of responsibility, fatherhood readiness, and three interconnected paths to experiencing fathering—self-as-father, father-child, and coparental; b) discuss the context of fathering that emphasizes the physical and symbolic dimensions to places, masculinity discourses, family-community connections, and men as youth workers; c) identify promising new research agendas, with an emphasis on connections between fathers' and children's approach to and experiences with health, and d) propose critical lessons that can guide public/private initiatives to foster more engaged, nurturing fathering.

William Marsiglio is a Professor of Sociology at the University of Florida (USA) and a Fellow of the National Council on Family Relations. He has written extensively on the social psychology of fathering and men's sexuality, fertility, reproductive health, and mentoring of children. His current collaborative book project with Kevin Roy, anchored in seven qualitative data sets, seeks to inform public/private initiatives to promote a more engaged, nurturing style of fathering in the United States.

Change and Continuity in Fathers' Roles in Vietnamese Families: The Impacts of Social Changes

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Vietnam, like many traditional Confucian societies, places a high value on the fatherhood role and existing family research continues to discuss fatherhood in these largely traditional terms. However, dramatic social changes may result in alterations to this Confucian view. As early as the 1930s, Ho Chi Minh emphasized women's equal role in the family. Decades of war may have altered the father role as fathers were often away from their children. Recent economic renovation policies, with its resulting global influences, may have further altered the fathering role. We seek to document changes in fathering in Vietnam and explore the role that social and economic forces may have played in those changes using two survey data sources: 1) The Vietnam Survey of Family Change, and 2) The Vietnam Demographic and Health Survey.

Rukmalie Jayakody is an Associate Professor of Human Development and Family Studies, Sociology, and Demography at Pennsylvania State University. She is also the Associate Director of the Population Research Institute. Her research focuses on families and social change. She has been working in Vietnam since 2001, when she was the recipient of a Fulbright Scholars Award.

Pham Thi Thu Phuong is a Doctoral Student in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies at Pennsylvania State University. Her research interests focus on women's changing roles in society and family life. She is a previous recipient of a Fulbright Student Award, supporting her Masters work at Pennsylvania State University.

Proactive Role of Fathers in Children's Lives: The Indian Scenario

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In globalised India, parents are extremely anxious about ensuring their child succeeds in a competitive world and has a secure future. Thus they are highly involved in their children's lives and men articulate a desire to provide a better environment than what was available to them. In this context, the present paper draws from responses of 120 fathers and mothers of middle class families in Baroda (a city in Western India) to present an overview of the nature and extent of fathers' involvement to support child's success and their reasons for the same. Father's construction of academic success and achievement as well as the reasons was captured using open ended questions, and their involvement was measured using a structured instrument. Fathers explained success and achievement as good marks and grades leading to a good career, developing good human values and being happy and satisfied. 65 per cent fathers were moderately involved in various parenting activities, with about 18 per cent displaying high involvement. They were maximally involved in planning- providing to meet child's needs, guiding-mentoring to make him a good human being, and practical and emotional support to reduce stress and promote learning of the child. Many of them wished to increase communications with children, be more supportive in educational and extracurricular activities and be more available. Mothers' involvement scores are a little higher than fathers on all domains, except planning and providing for children.

Rajalakshmi Sriram is a Professor in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS), which is a Centre for Advanced Studies in the discipline and one of India's pioneering departments in this field. Her latest research interest has been in "understanding fatherhood and fathering in India" beginning from the year 2000. She has published several chapters in books, written journal articles, research monographs and developed many communication materials on themes related to changing family in India, childcare and women's empowerment, domestic violence, effective parenting and involved fathering.

Gurpreet Sandhu has completed her master in Human Development and Family Studies, from M.S. University of Baroda in June 2008. She is presently a Graduate Scholar in Education at the Australian Catholic University, Sydney, Australia.

Father Involvement in the Lives of Young Children in Taiwan

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The proposed paper will provide a review of father involvement in historical and contemporary contexts in Taiwan, review government and corporate policies that promote father involvement, and examine the portrayal of father roles in modern society. The paper will present findings from three data sources: quantitative surveys; qualitative interviews; and a content and discourse analysis of a parenting magazine. This tertiary analysis will address father roles in Taiwanese society, ways that fathers are involved in the lives of their young children, and father-mother associations in activity engagement as well as parental role beliefs. Implications of our research findings for practice in Taiwanese society will be discussed.

Ho Hsiu-Zu is Full Professor of Education and Psychology at the Gevirtz Graduate School of Education, University of California, Santa Barbara. Her research in the area of cross-cultural psychology and education has in recent years focused on cultural variations in parental involvement, particularly as it relates to students' academic achievement.

Jessica M. Phillips is a doctoral student in Education at the University of California-Santa Barbara. She is completing her PhD with a joint emphasis in Human Development and Cultural Perspectives & Comparative Education. Her research interests span gender, culture, and human development.

Connie Tran is a doctoral student in the Cultural Perspectives and Comparative Education program at the Gevirtz Graduate School of Education at the University of California-Santa Barbara. Her research interests include ethnic identity, acculturation, gender, and academic achievement of Southeast Asian American students.

Ko Chu-Ting is Associate Professor in the Department of Special Education at Taipei Municipal University of Education, Taipei, Taiwan. Her research interests include autism and family involvement with students with special needs.

Chen Wei-Wen is a recent graduate of the PhD program at the Gevirtz Graduate School of Education, University of California-Santa Barbara with an emphasis in child development. Dr Chen is currently a postdoctoral fellow at the Center for Teacher Education, National Taiwan University. Her research interests focus on cultural influences on teaching and learning, including parental involvement, students' motivation, and academic achievement in East-Asian countries.

Contributions of Self, Contextual & Child Characteristics on Father Involvement among Muslims in Malaysia

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This paper presents findings from a correlational study on 1019 fathers of school-going children aged ten through sixteen from intact families. The study purports to explore the contributions of self, contextual, and child characteristics on father involvement among Malay-Muslims in Malaysia. The mean age of the respondents is 44.8 years old, with an average of 12.5 years of education or equivalent to certificate or diploma or pre-university level. The respondents earned an average of RM 3,152.55 monthly (about USD 955.00). They had been married for an average of eighteen years with average number of children of 4.3 per family. Findings indicate, among other, that respondents' age, education, income, job satisfaction, self confidence, stress level, marital satisfaction and involvement by own father are significantly related with father involvement. In addition, number of children, age of first child, wife's education, wife's income, family income, and marital duration are also significant correlates of father involvement.

Rumaya Juhari is an Associate Professor at the Department of Human Development & Family Studies, Faculty of Human Ecology, University Putra Malaysia, Serdang, Selangor, where she is also Head of Department. Graduated from Michigan State University, East Lansing, USA, her area of specializations are family and child ecology, marital relations and parenting. Her current research is on ICT, Marital Communication and Marital Quality; and Fathering: Issues and Challenges and Run-away Adolescents.

Siti Nor Yaacob is a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Human Development and Family Studies, Faculty of Human Ecology, Universiti Putra Malaysia. As an active Social Science researcher, Siti Nor has been working on adolescent psychosocial development and parent-child interaction in various family structure. Her current research project is on run-away teenagers, depression amongst school-going adolescents, and adolescent sexuality. She has published widely in issues related to socio-emotional vulnerabilities and antisocial behaviour amongst adolescents.

Mansor Abu Talib is a senior lecturer in guidance and counselling at the Department of Human Development and Family Studies, Faculty of Human Ecology, Universiti Putra Malaysia. His research interests focus on psychosocial development of young adult and counseling interventions. This includes stress and mental health, career development, referral counseling, and behavioral outcomes of family processes. He is currently Deputy Dean (Research and Inovation) at Faculty Of Human Ecology, UPM.

Culture and Conduct of Fatherhood in India: Are They in Synchrony?

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The specific objectives of the research are: (1) to explore the beliefs surrounding men's role in family life (culture), (2) to study men's participation in parenting – their involvement in childcare and housework (conduct), and (3) to examine whether men's behaviour is in accordance with the beliefs. The study utilizes primary data gathered through semi-structured interviews with 350 fathers of children aged zero to 10 in Mumbai, India. The measures used to assess the element of culture are: men's perception of an ideal father, gender ideology, wife's attitude towards the male role, attitude of peer group, and perception of fathering received as youngster. Results indicate that although the notion of fatherhood is changing, a sizeable proportion of men still see 'ideal' fathers in the traditional role of surety, economic provider and/or role model. About half or more of the respondents depict nontraditional gender ideology, state that their wives do not believe in traditional domestic division of labour and perceive that their peers see men's role in childcare and housework positively. The paper concludes by examining the gap between fatherhood ideology and men's behaviour with respect to parenting in actual practice.

Anjula Saraff is a Visiting Scholar at the Centre for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity at Stanford University. She has published articles on ageing and men's role in parenting. She has co-authored a book chapter on American Indian and Alaska Native Children which is forthcoming. One of her current research projects uses American Time Use Survey data to investigate class differences in parents' time use. Her other project focuses on men's role in women and child health in Asia.

Are Single Fathers Different from Single Mothers?

The Comparative Study on Seeking Help Behavior of Single Parents in Taiwan

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This study intends to bridge the literature gap by using three combination of research methods to answer the following questions: First, by analyzing the Taiwan annual [survey of family income and expenditure], this study will show the change in the composition, trend, and characteristics of single families, specifically in terms of gender differences, in Taiwan during the past two decades. Second, by depth interviews with thirty single mothers and single fathers, this study will compare the gender differences in terms of living condition, the conflict between work and caring role, welfare needs, the strategies they used to deal with the conflict, social support system, and seeking help behavior. Finally, by focus group with service providers and teachers in primary schools who have experiences working with solo parents, this study aims to understand the usage and limitation of current social services and related social policies for sole parent families, specifically for solo fathers.

Wang Shu-Yung is Assistant Professor in Department of Social Welfare, National Chung-Cheng University in Taiwan. Her research interest focuses on childcare policies, gender and care policies, as well as family policies. She published a book on fatherhood in dual-earner families in Taiwan in 2003, and conducted a research on “Gender differences on welfare needs and seeking help behavior of single parents in Taiwan” with Dr C.H. Cheng and Dr Y.L. Hsieh.

Cheng C. H. is an Associate Professor in Department of Social Welfare in National Chung-Cheng University whose research interest is on finance of social welfare, and long-term care policy.

Hsieh Y. L. is an Assistant Professor in Department of Social Work in Asia University in Taiwan.

Being a Father in Malay Societies

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Not unlike other societies, men's role as fathers in Malay societies in Singapore and Malaysia revolves around providing for their children. Yet, studies that claim this also point out Malay father's part in the socialization of their children as well as the importance for Malay fathers to play a role in their children's lives such that they will be taken care of at old age (e.g. Djamour 1959, Firth 1966, Li 1989, Carsten 1991, Rudie 1994). What does it mean to be a father in the Malay context? I answer this question in this paper by revisiting studies on Malay families and households as well as my own research on Malay dual income couples with young children and how they work out child-caring arrangements and child-caring tasks (Suriani 2009). I will then compare findings from these empirical studies with an analysis of images of Malay fathers in Malay newspapers and parental magazines. Here, I discuss whether or not there is an emergence of "the new father" in Malay societies similar to that raised in studies on men's role in families in England, Canada and America (e.g. Wheelock 1990, Coltrane 1996, Doucet 2006).

Suriani Suratman is Senior Lecturer and Deputy Head at the Department of Malay Studies. She is trained as a social anthropologist. Her teaching areas include of Malay culture and society, social change and development of Malays in Singapore and Malay families and households. She has conducted research in Singapore, Malaysia and the Philippines. Her current research areas of interest include gender relations in Malay households looking at the issue of gender (in)equalities in Malay dual income households as well as Malay women's identity; focusing on embodiment of Malay women through the veil and women's expressions of their selfhood.

Subjective Wellbeing and Attitudes Related to the Family: Interaction of Fathers and their Teenage Children in Singapore

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Using a unique and recent survey on 400 pairs of parents and their teenage children in Singapore, we want to examine and compare the intergenerational relationship between father and youth versus mother and youth in terms of their subjective wellbeing, familial determinants of their happiness and life satisfaction, their attitudes towards family formation, and their social ties to extended family members, colleagues, friends, and teachers. Furthermore, we will investigate whether challenges to work-life balance, especially for the fathers who are traditionally the main bread winners, could have an influence on the satisfaction on family life, both of the youth as well as of the father. Focus group analysis will shed light on the family dynamics underlying the quantitative results based on the survey.

Ho Kong Weng is Assistant Professor in the Division of Economics at the Nanyang Technological University. He obtained his PhD from the University of Chicago and has published in the areas of social mobility, international outsourcing, wage inequality, technopreneurship, and unemployment, including both theoretical investigations and empirical studies using Singapore data. His current research topics include natural rate of unemployment of a small open economy in a world of ideas, diffusion of advanced ideas and inequality, non-monotonic relationship between human capital and unemployment, intergenerational transmission of happiness and life satisfaction, and workfare and wellbeing of low-income families.

Ong Qiyen is a PhD student with Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. Her current research topics are in the areas of economics of happiness, intergenerational transmission of happiness and life satisfaction, and behavioral economics.

Ho Kong Chong (Chicago, 1986) is co-author of *Youth.sg: State of Youth in Singapore* and *City-States in the Global Economy: Industrial Restructuring in Hong Kong and Singapore*. He is co-editor of *Culture and the City in East Asia* and *Globalization, the City and Civil Society in Pacific Asia Cities*. Kong Chong teaches sociology at the National University of Singapore and currently works on global-local tensions at different scales, especially on issues related to international student migration, neighboring and residential integration.

The Analysis of Father-Child Relations of Only-Child Youths

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Using the survey data of 1786 working young adults in 12 cities all over the country, the paper discusses the relationship of the young adults of only child and their parents. Differ from the cognize that the parent-child relationship in only child family is closer than in non-only child family because of only child having no siblings; the results show that there is no significant difference between the young adults of only child and the non-only child in parent-child relationships. This result suggests that whether they have siblings or not, it does not affect the relationship between young adults and their parents.

The research also discussed the relationship between father or mother and their son or daughter. The results show that the role of father is different from the role of mother. Fathers have more occupational, social and external roles, while mothers have more everyday life, familial and internal roles. The results also show that the relationship between young adults and their mothers is closer than the relationship between young adults and their fathers. At the same time, in relation with parents, married young adults is closer than unmarried, and young adults who lives together with their parents is closer than those who lives separated with their parents.

Feng Xiaotian is a Professor and Head of the Sociology Department, Nanjing University, China. He has published several books such as *The Only-Child in China: Their Family, Education and Future* (1992), *Family Life Quality of Citizens in China* (1997), *Methods of Social Research* (2001, 2005, 2009). *Survey Research Methods* (1996, 2001, 2005, 2009), *The Only-Child: from "little Emperor" to New Citizens* (2005) and many papers. His research interests include Sociology of Family, Chinese Only-child, and Sociology of Youth.

The Impact of Father's and Mother's Parenting Styles on Children's High-School Academic Achievement in Taiwan

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A great majority of children in Taiwan live with both biological parents. Our research uses the data gathered by Taiwan Education Panel Survey (TEPS) in 2001 and 2003 to explore how fathers' and mothers' parenting styles and educational involvements would influence their children's high-school academic achievement. We use structural equation modeling to uncover the latent dimensions of Taiwanese fathers' and mothers' parenting styles. Our analysis shows that paternal and maternal parenting styles have the same three dimensions: behavioral control, inhibitive control, and acceptance. Our research further finds that if we consider simultaneously paternal and maternal parenting, the impact of fatherhood on adolescent children's academic achievement is rather complicated. We found that if fathers were actively engaged in parenting, they would lessen mothers' involvement in children's education. Moreover, the effect of paternal behavioral control on children's achievement is contradictory. On the one hand, it has a significant negative impact on children's achievement. On the other hand, it is positively related to paternal educational involvement, which in turn, contributes positively to children's achievement.

Kuan Ping-Yin is Associate Professor of Sociology at National Chengchi University in Taiwan. Currently, he is also the Principal Investigator of Taiwan Education Panel Survey and Beyond (TEPS-B). His recent research focuses on the effect of cram schooling on math performance.

Wang Chihtsan is currently a postdoctoral Research Fellow at National Chengchi University in Taiwan. His dissertation research uses fixed-effect regression models and latent growth curve modeling to explore the impacts of change in family structure on high-school students' academic achievement.

Child Care and Parenting Practices in Singapore: A Focus on Fathers

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The findings presented in this paper are part of a larger study conducted by the Singapore Children's Society to examine local child care and parenting practices, and children's views on these practices. Participants were 530 parents (248 fathers; 282 mothers) and one of their children (261 boys; 269 girls), involving a total of 1060 participants. Children were between the age of 10 and 12. Participants were recruited through stratified sampling by ethnicity and average monthly household income. Face-to-face interviews were conducted, with parents and children completing the questionnaires independently and concurrently in separate rooms.

The results showed, among others, that mothers were much more likely than fathers to be main caregivers to children, and most children preferred mothers to fathers in this respect. Interestingly, most fathers nominated mothers as preferred caregivers regardless of the children's age. Fathers also tended to use less physical punishment than mothers, with fathers also judging physical punishment to be less effective. These results were in conflict with the stereotype many hold about Asian fathers as being more likely to endorse and use power assertive discipline.

Shum-Cheung Hoi Shan was a Senior Research Officer with the Singapore Children's Society when this study was conducted. She is now pursuing her graduate studies in the Department of Psychology, NUS, with a research interest in children's attachment to mothers and how it may influence peer relationships in preschool.

Moving Towards Independent Living: Young Fathers' Family Responsibilities in Greater Jakarta

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This paper is based on the 2009/2010 Indonesian Transition into Adulthood Survey of 3000 respondents based on random household listing in Jakarta, Bekasi and Tangerang. In this paper transition of young fathers' pathways to fatherhood is investigated starting from entry into relationship, financial arrangement for wedding celebrations, marital union, work and employment, economic stability, living arrangement and home ownership, fatherhood, emotional and economic attachment to parents and concepts of gender equity in both domestic and public spheres. It is assumed that Indonesian young fathers are travelling a very different pathway to fatherhood compared to their fathers and grandfathers. Young fathers of today may want economic independence and security before deciding to enter a marital union, some would want to own a property before tying the knot. For the young fathers, education and work aspirations are very significant and competition in getting a good job is something they expect to face. Young fathers also face conflicting roles in juggling between work and family involvement in the 24 hours economy. Some have to spend 3 to 5 hours in travelling to and from work, thus placing their marriage and family involvement at risk.

Iwu Dwisetyani Utomo is a Fellow at the Australian Demographic and Social Research Institute, Australian National University. Currently she is working on three important studies: Transition to Adulthood in Greater Jakarta (funded by the Australian Research Council, WHO, and NUS); Gender and Reproductive Health in the Indonesian National Curriculum (funded by the Australian Development Research Award-AusAID) and the Demographic Youth Bulge and Gender Equality (funded by the Ford Foundation). Her research interests are on transition to adulthood, reproductive health issues, sexuality and Gender.

Peter McDonald is Professor of Demography and Director of the Australian Demographic and Social Research Institute at the Australian National University. He is President of the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population for the years, 2010-2013. Previously, he was head of research at the Australian Institute of Family Studies for a period of 11 years.

Gavin W. Jones is Professor and Leader of the Research Cluster on the Changing Family in Asia in ARI, and has a joint appointment in the Department of Sociology. His earlier appointments were at the Australian National University for 28 years, including eight years heading the Demography Program, and prior to that, almost 10 years with the Population Council, a New York-based foundation, including advisory postings in Thailand and Indonesia. His main research interests are in demography and development in Southeast Asia, and in marriage and fertility trends and determinants in East and Southeast Asia. He is founding editor of the journal *Asian Population Studies*.

Men's Transition to Fatherhood: Experiences of First-Time Fathers with Fathering, Marriage, Family and Work-Life Issues

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This two-phased qualitative panel study looks at the transitional experiences of men before and after the birth of their firstborn with their wife. The areas examined personal, fathering, marital and work-life adjustments. The aim is to discover strengths and barriers in men's preparation to be a father. From an initial pool of 75 expectant fathers, 7 men participated in the pilot study and 20 men underwent the two-part individual semi-structured interviews over two time periods, the third trimester of pregnancy before birth, and 34 to 38 months after birth. Before birth, the first-time expectant fathers' perceptions, expectations, plans, preparation and personal adjustment needs were explored. After birth, the same 20 men were re-interviewed to review their transition in the first three years of fatherhood.

Adrian Lim Peng Ann is a Counselling Psychologist in private practice as well as Programme Manager with Dads for Life Secretariat, Ministry of Community Development Youth & Sports. He has 3 professions, being a Registered Psychologist (S'pore Psychological Society), a Registered Social Worker (S'pore Assoc of Social Workers - Life Member), and a Registered Counsellor (S'pore Assoc Counselling), with Degree in Social Work & Psychology (NUS) & Masters in Applied Psychology in Counselling (NIE-NTU). Adrian is a Lecturer and Clinical Supervisor for psychology and counseling postgraduate students from 6 Universities. He is passionate about marriage, parenting and fatherhood practices, training and research, as well as school social work and school counseling.

Explaining Variance within Constructions of Fatherhood between the Chinese and Malay Communities of Singapore

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This paper investigates the changing nature of “fatherhood” within the multi-cultural milieu of contemporary Singapore. This is achieved through a comparative study of variance in constructions of “fatherhood” between the nation-state’s two most populous ethnic groups: the Chinese and Malays. In this study, methods of secondary quantitative data analysis (Singapore Statistics, newspaper articles, websites) and semi-structured interviews are used complementarily. The former establishes the requisite social and historical context that locates gender and ethnic structural differences, facilitating the understanding of cultural-role designation and performance to be revealed through ethnographic testimony in the latter. For these interviews, a total of 20 respondents, across 8 households, were selected using snowball sampling. It is argued that inter-contradictions arise from the interaction between structural (i.e. occupational-stratification) and cultural (i.e. religious beliefs) factors within the ‘site’ of ethnicity. This leads to differentiated influences on both the “culture and conduct” of fatherhood *between* located communities.

Shawn Tan Wen Yang is a second year Graduate Student pursuing his Master degree in Sociology at the National University of Singapore (NUS). He is currently researching on the role of social enterprises in Singapore’s civil society. He obtained his Bachelors of Social Sciences (First Class Honours) also at NUS in 2008, where his thesis focused on vocational student migration in Singapore.

Transnational Migratory Labor and Its Effects on Filipino Families

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Transnational migratory labour has remained one of the primary methods that many Filipinos use in an effort to gain financial security for their families. As of 2008, approximately 2 million individuals were designated Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW). Based on data collected from an urban Visayan province during the Summer of 2007, the present research was split into two separate studies. First, I conducted a comparative analysis of 115 OFW families (father working abroad) and 99 non-OFW families (both parents in the home). Results revealed that children from OFW families exhibited increased problem behaviors, decreased mother-child relationship quality and decreased father-child relationship quality. These findings existed in spite of OFW families having substantially higher income levels. The second study addressed the various contributors to family and child success within the sample of 115 OFW families. Several findings emerged from regression analyses. First, increased paternal warmth during visits predicted increased marital quality, father-child relationship quality, and was indirectly associated with mother-child relationship quality and problem behaviors among children. Mother negativity concerning father contact and the amount of money being sent home had a direct effect on declines in marital quality and father-child relationship quality. This negativity indirectly effected mother-child relationship quality and child behavior problems.

Scott Harper, Associate Professor of Family Studies at Oklahoma Christian University, finished his PhD in Human Development and Family Studies from the University of Missouri in 2005. The majority of his research has focused on Filipino culture, with a special interest on fathers. In addition to his research interest, Dr Harper travels to the Philippines each summer to help with volunteer and community service work with children and families.

Fatherhood in Today Rural Vietnam

Le Thi Hoai Phuong

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Since the last decade of the 20th Century, Vietnam's cultural and social life in general, and Vietnam's family life in particular, have taken severe blows from the rapid growth of the economy and the fast pace of international integration. The segment of the population in today's Vietnam that is hardest hit are the fathers in the rural areas. They are the husbands, the fathers who have to take care of the children so that their wives can migrate to the cities, even to foreign countries, to take up whatever jobs available and send back the money for the family upkeep.

This paper will attempt to analyze this phenomenon, its problems and challenges that a considerable segment of Vietnam's fatherhood in the rural areas has to face, when centuries old traditions, culture, and way of thinking have been turned upside down. It's a warning bell of changing times and values, requiring appropriate government policies to protect all social groups.

Le Thi Hoai Phuong graduated from the Russian State University of Theatre, Music and Cinematography, in Leningrad, in 1987. From 1999 to the present Dr Phuong has been working for Vietnam Institute of Culture and Arts Studies (VICAS). Dr Phuong is the leader of many research projects at the National and Ministerial levels. Her research works relate to diverse issues of socio-cultural areas, such as Cultural Policy, Arts Management, Gender, and International Integration in the Globalization. Presently, Dr Phuong is the Head of the Department for Arts Studies and the Director of the Northeast Asia Research Center at VICAS.

“Any One Parent Will Do”: Negotiations of Fatherhood among South Korean ‘Wild Geese’ Fathers in Singapore

Kang Yoonhee

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In this paper, I explore how gendered notions of carework interplay with the conceptualization of fatherhood vis-à-vis transnational migration, by examining South Korean “Wild Geese” (*kirogi*) fathers in Singapore. The Korean “Wild Geese” family usually refers to a typical transnational split-household due to children’s early overseas education. In this transnational family arrangement, mothers usually accompany their children to go abroad, while fathers remain in Korea to work and financially support their family abroad. In contrast to this dominant image of fathers, however, there are in practice many variations and changes in fathers’ involvement in children’s education and development. Mainly drawing from my interviews with those “exceptional” Korean fathers who accompany their children in transnational migration, this paper examines how the fathers negotiate and redefine their roles in and through their transnational migration experiences.

Kang Yoonhee is an Assistant Professor at the Division of Sociology, Nanyang Technological University in Singapore. Currently, she has conducted an ethnographic field research among Korean educational migrants, who have moved to Singapore for their children’s early study abroad projects (2008-2010). By looking at both children’s and their accompanying parents’ discourses on their transnational migration experiences, this project aims to explore how the migrants make sense of their migrant trajectories and imagine their children’s future as global citizens through their early study abroad experiences in Singapore.

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Eric C. Thompson is Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology at the National University of Singapore. He teaches anthropology, gender studies, urban studies and research methods. His research interests include transnational networking, urbanism, culture theory, and ASEAN regionalism. His work has appeared in the journals *American Ethnologist*, *Urban Studies*, *Political Geography*, *Asian Studies Review*, *Contemporary Sociology*, and *Contemporary Southeast Asian Studies* among others. He is author of *Unsettling Absences: Urbanism in Rural Malaysia* (NUS Press, 2007).

Michelle Lazar is Associate Professor in the Department of English Language and Literature, Assistant Dean in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, and Academic Convenor of the Gender Studies Minor Programme at the National University of Singapore. Her research combines interests in critical discourse analysis with feminist, gender and media studies. She is widely published in this area; among her published research includes media representations of motherhood and fatherhood in Singapore.

Rafiz Mohyi Hapipi is presently a Resource Development Analyst with the Research and Policy Department Yayasan MENDAKI and Chief Editor of MENDAKI Policy Digest. He is concurrently heading the Community Leaders' Forum Forward Planning Exercise Secretariat. Rafiz has intently pursued an inquiry into dynamics of community development and issues of community-citizenry and its impact across generations. He served as an EXCO Member of Singapore Association for Continuing Education (SACE) (2007-2009), and is an alumnus of AMAN School of Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation.

Shirlena Huang is Associate Professor and Head at the Department of Geography, National University of Singapore and a Research Associate of NUS' Asia Research Institute. She is also currently the Director of the *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography* and Regional Editor (Asia) of *Women's Studies International Forum*. Her current research projects examine transnational mobilities in the contexts of healthcare worker migration (in Asia), transnational families and national identity (comparing PRC and American families in Singapore), as well as the internet and religion (comparing Singapore and Los Angeles).

Vivienne Ng is the Deputy Director of the Clinical and Forensic Psychology Branch, under the Rehabilitation, Protection, and Residential Services Division (RPRSD) of the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS). She works mainly with abused teenagers and children, juvenile offenders, and their parents. Before joining MCYS in 2000, Vivienne spent 9 years in the Department of Psychology at the Institute of Mental Health. Her interests are in trauma, disaster management, post traumatic stress disorder, sexual abuse, child-safe organizations, anxiety and mood disorders.

W. Jean Yeung is a Professor at the Department of Sociology and the Asia Research Institute in the National University of Singapore. Prior to NUS, She taught in University of Michigan and New York University. Professor Yeung is affiliated with the China Center for Economic Research in Peking University, the National Poverty Center of the School of Public Policy and the Institute for Social Research in the University of Michigan. Her current research and teaching focus on intergenerational studies, family and children's well-being and policies, fatherhood, social inequality, and China's socioeconomic and demographic transition.

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