

Fatherhood in Contemporary Discourse

Fatherhood in Contemporary Discourse:

Focus on Fathers

Edited by

Anna Pilińska

Cambridge
Scholars
Publishing



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This book first published 2017

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

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ISBN (10): 1-4438-7323-3

ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-7323-9

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FOREWORD

A WORD ON FOCUS ON FATHERS

ANNA PILIŃSKA

Male parenting has gradually come to mark its presence in contemporary discourse, be it in art, media, or social and cultural studies. Literary examples of such endeavours would include Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* (2006) or Junot Diaz's *The Brief and Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (2007), and many others. Even game developers decide to incorporate father figures into their interactive narratives, as it can be observed in titles such as *The Banner Saga* (2012) or *The Last of Us* (2013). The popularity of Dan Pearce's blog *Single Dad Laughing* no longer surprises, as more and more fathers speak up and share their experiences. The founding and popularity of "The Faces Of Our Fathers" Film Festival in the USA demonstrates a growing need for a more thorough study and increased visibility of fatherhood as a social and cultural phenomenon. As men's studies unveil and examine the plurality of masculinities, various categories of fatherhood and father figures come to be represented in contemporary culture – from very strict and conservative, through the "traditional," often sitcom-like model, to the more troubled males for whom parenting is yet one more issue to tackle.

This monograph offers an interdisciplinary overview of the current status of fatherhood in various academic disciplines such as social studies, psychology, literature studies, film and media studies. From global overviews of fatherhood-related issues to very particular, local contexts in which these issues become materialized and emphasized, the volume includes chapters on Western perspectives as well as Central and East European, Asian, and Middle-Eastern contexts.

The opening section of the volume focuses on male parenthood as realized, enacted, and analyzed by social scientists. In a chapter titled "Confronting of Confirming Westernization? Masculinity and Fatherhood in Indonesian Lifestyle Magazines," Desi Dwi Prianti elaborates on the meaning of fatherhood and its various renditions, as she examines the

emergence and influence of men's lifestyle magazines in the specifically local context of Indonesia. Through the lens of the very specific and targeted discourse of those publications, the author sheds light on the attempts to achieve a new coherent and cohesive definition of fatherhood which would fit the everyday reality of contemporary Indonesian men. A similarly local environment is described in the chapter "Father Managers (Un)doing Traditional Masculinity" by Emilia Kangas, Anna-Maija Lämsä, and Suvi Heikkinen. The authors describe a study conducted on a group of Finnish men holding managerial positions and their attitudes towards fatherhood, with the ultimate result of the research being the emergence of four distinct fatherhood discourses, labelled in the article as "breadwinner fatherhood," "uncommitted fatherhood," "best bits of fatherhood," and "hands-on fatherhood."

In "Visions of Fatherhood of Young Homosexual and Bisexual Men in Lithuania," the author Lina Sumskaite discusses the situation of non-heteronormative Lithuanian men and their stance on becoming parents, with their more or less vocal opinions on the issue of parenting being strictly connected with the level of acceptance in their respective environments, and with their decisions to "come out" or to remain "closeted."

Agnieszka Jarosz focuses on the question of same-sex parenting as depicted in recent American children's publications in her chapter titled "Portrayal of Homosexual Fathers in American Children's Literature since the 1990s." The author carefully selects a handful of controversial yet pivotal works of fiction targeted at parents of young children (and the children themselves), and analyzes various strategies to which writers resort in order to convey the very idea of same-sex parenting in a way which would be comprehensible to children and, at the same time, palatable to parents.

In "Fatherhood from Fathers' Own Perspective," Aleksandra Jacukowicz and Agata Węzyk share the results of a Polish-Norwegian study, with a special focus on male interviewees and their personal interpretations of, approaches to, and realizations of parental and gender roles as observed in their own families.

Finally, in "'I Want Daddy.' A Father as a Caregiver of a Hospitalized Child in the Eyes of the Hospital Staff," Małgorzata Pietras-Mrozicka introduces a very interesting perspective on fatherhood as experienced within the context of caring for a sick child who needs to remain in hospital. Special emphasis is placed on the question of communication between the parent and the hospital staff, and the potential consequences it may have for the father-child relationship as well as for hospital workers

who should be prepared to facilitate and encourage situations in which it is the male parent who remains by the child's hospital bed.

The second section of the volume is dedicated to literary renditions of fathers and children, opening with Tomasz Gadzina's article titled "Fatherhood, Masculinity and Complex Father-Child Relationships in Tim Winton's Fiction." In this chapter, the author demonstrates how Winton's protagonists rarely inscribe themselves into the paradigm of hegemonic masculinity and depart from the traditional "type" represented within the context of Australian masculinity. As Gadzina notices, Winton's female characters do not conform to the norms of traditionally conceived femininity, which is not to say, nonetheless, that the writer's technique while creating his characters is a simple reversal of gender roles. The dynamics between men and women in Winton's fiction, as the author argues, are far more complex and nuanced.

In "Ouroboros of the Man's World: Fatherhood and the Rite of Passage in Mario Vargas Llosa and James Joyce," Karina Sembe touches upon the notion of machismo, in an attempt to comprehend and clarify androcentric discourse. The author incorporates analyses of works by Vargas Llosa and Joyce, focusing on and comparing two models of dominance and submission, which are military experience and religious education.

Fathers and sons – or rather "fathers" and "sons" – are the focus of Zbigniew Głowala's chapter titled "Biological, Absent, Reluctant: Fathers and Father Figures in Nick Hornby's *Slam* and *About a Boy*." The author analyzes the protagonists of these two novels, pointing out to their roles as fathers and children, even though the actual fathers in Hornby's fiction tend to lack fatherly qualities, while the father figures instinctively chosen by children are either not father-materials, or are actually just a poster on the wall.

In "Patriarchal Fathers, Submissive Daughters in the Fiction of Margaret Atwood and Hanan Al-Shaykh," Sally Karmi speaks of women writers and their renditions of the subject of oppressive patriarchy in Margaret Atwood's *Cat's Eye* (1988) and Hanan Al-Shaykh's *The Story of Zahra* (1986). Approaching the issue of patriarchy as universal and not location-specific, the author purposely compares and contrasts literary texts from two different cultural contexts to demonstrate the common points between the female narrators of the two novels and their experiences as daughters of dominant and powerful fathers.

Taraneh Houshyar takes up the topic of masculinity and its components in the chapter "Displays of Father-Apparition in Contemporary Context of Iranian Young Adult Fictions." The author analyzes selected titles to

introduce and characterize specific types of fathers within the context of Iranian culture and mindset, labeling them as Advocate Fathers, Aggressive Fathers, and finally Abstruse Fathers.

The chapter is followed by Mateusz Świetlicki's "Rebels With(out) a Cause and Their Soviet Fathers in Serhiy Zhadan's *Depeche Mode*," which focuses on postcolonial generational awareness connected with the socio-cultural aspects of memory, forgetting and trauma (including post-memory and post-trauma), resentment and nostalgia, as well as subcultural identity, gender and linguistic awareness. On the example of Zhadan's novel *Depeche Mode*, Świetlicki demonstrates how the father-son relations are influenced by the post-totalitarian social trauma.

In "Fathers and Children in the Plays of Miro Gavran," Zdenka Đerd introduces the reader to the world of Gavran's dramas revolving around the themes of parenthood and gender, and approaches these themes from a variety of perspectives. In Gavran's plays, fatherhood is perceived both within the family, through father-daughter or father-son, mother-son relationships as well as from the point of view of a single parent.

The third section of the volume centers around on-screen depictions of fathers and father figures, opening with Katie Barnett's "'We're His Goddamn Kids, Too': Reflecting Fatherhood in Public Responses to the Death of Robin Williams," in which the author examines the reaction to Williams' death within the context of his star persona, exploring the extent to which this has been consistently constructed around the image of the flawed, but ultimately reliable, father on the Hollywood screen.

In "Masculinity and Fatherhood in Ang Lee's *Pushing Hands*," Yumin Zhang explores issues of gender and racial politics by examining the representation of the Chinese father figure (Mr. Chu) in Ang Lee's 1992 debut feature film. By performing a textual analysis and a close reading of the application of film techniques, this chapter first discusses the ways in which the Chinese father is represented with respect to the traditional understanding of normative Chinese masculinity and fatherhood, and then explores how these notions are destabilized in the father-son relationship. Kam Louie's *wen-wu* analytic model of Chinese masculinity and the Confucian notion of filial piety in Chinese fatherhood are applied to analyze the masculinity of the father.

The chapters comprising the final section of the book focus on representations of fatherhood in popular culture. Grzegorz Małecki's "Different Notions of Fatherhood in Anime Series *Naruto* and in the First Part of Karl Ove Knausgård's Autobiographical Novel *My Struggle*" presents a comparative analysis of fatherhood depictions in two different genres and media: literature and Japanese animation, confronting two

different models of fatherhood – one in which the father is physically absent and his role is played by mentors and teachers (*Naruto*), and one in which the father is a strong, even domineering figure (*My Struggle*).

In “My Son Has Reached That Age When He Wants To Do the Driving – On Fathers and Cars,” Łukasz Salski selects and analyzes both prose and films to demonstrate how the recurring motif of vehicles may become the focal point of a crisis in relations between fathers and children. The author points to a number of works of literature and movies in which motor vehicles amplify relations between fathers and their children, and studies how they influence reception of the characters. Next, in a chapter titled “From Tarzan to Homer Simpson: Banalization and Masculine Violence in Contemporary Societies” Sócrates Nolasco uses examples of films and cartoon television series to highlight and discuss the issue of anti-heroes and their demise as symbolic of the decline and downfall of male social representation in contemporary society. The section’s closing chapter is Tomasz Piasecki’s “Horned, Emperor, Pope. Fathers in Divination Handbooks,” devoted to linguistic and cultural constructions of the father motif in modern tarot handbooks and consisting of a study focused on linguistic methods of constructing fatherhood (gender related, functional, and axiological) and its placement within the cultural system in which spell handbooks, mantics, and various cultural aspects are realized (valorization, teleology, autoidentification of fatherhood).

All centered around the theme of fatherhood, the chapters in the following volume cover an impressive range of perspectives, research methods, and interpretations – from actual realizations of father roles in specific cultural contexts to fictional depictions of male parenthood and father figures. The multiplicity of voices in the debate and approaches to the subject matter makes the present volume a valid contribution to the already existing academic discourse on fatherhood.

SECTION I A

**NON-FICTION FATHERS:
FATHERHOOD IN SOCIOLOGICAL,
PSYCHOLOGICAL, AND POLITICAL
DISCOURSE**

FATHERHOOD IN LOCAL CONTEXTS

CHAPTER ONE

CONFRONTING OR CONFIRMING
WESTERNIZATION?
MASCULINITY AND FATHERHOOD
IN INDONESIAN LIFESTYLE MAGAZINES

DESI DWI PRIANTI¹

“Being a son, man has a bigger responsibility because in the future he will become the head of the family.” (Santana in *Best Life Indonesia*, 2012)

In contemporary, mainstream Indonesian society, doxic cultural expectations play an important role in how one forms one’s identity. As Men and Masculinities Studies have demonstrated (based on Connell’s concept of hegemonic masculinity), the development of gender identity, not only for women but also for men, is tensioned by powerful normative discourses, as illustrated by the opening quote. Forming a family, being a father and a husband are a man’s *kodrat* – or natural destiny – fate, which is the main guide for both men and women in defining their identity.

Historically since the pre-colonial era, the concept of fatherhood has lain at the heart of what it means to be a man in Indonesia. Indeed, being a dedicated father and husband represents a man’s primary route towards the acquisition of societal status. Within Indonesian patriarchal hierarchy, young men are subordinate to their fathers and other older male relatives until they have married and formed families of their own. Literature focusing on gender in Indonesia has repeatedly designated fatherhood as the idealized notion of masculinity (Blackwood, 1998; Graham, 2001; Clark, 2004; Nilan, Donaldson & Howson, 2007; Nilan, 2009). Indonesian men have, until recently, been expected to devote their lives to the reliable provision of income for their families. No matter how wild a man’s youth, once he is married and becomes a father, he is expected to take care of his family. Hence, the family was a man’s priority in life regardless of his ambitions and passions during adolescence.

However, modernization and the rise of feminism in contemporary Indonesian society have introduced different perspectives with regard to gender relations. Western notions of gender equality are partly based on the belief that the sexual division of labor within the family creates a disproportionate power balance, one in which women hold the inferior position. This view has been greatly influenced by materialist theory (Engels, [1891] 1978), which suggests that the means of production or the social domain represent the ultimate source of male dominance over women. Assigning women to purely domestic spheres such as child rearing was seen as the main source of women's exploitation. This structure, whilst widely accepted in Indonesian society, was to prove instrumental in initiating a movement towards women's emancipation during the late 1980s. In order to be equal to men some Indonesian women chose to have careers in social domains instead of domestic domains. However, in an Indonesian context, being a housewife does not necessarily situate any given woman in a binary opposition to a woman who chooses career over family. Indeed, numerous studies (Geertz, 1961; Peacock, 1973; Stoler, 1977; Koentjaraningrat, 1985; Megawangi, 1999; Handayani & Novianto, 2004) have confirmed women's (or wives') autonomy and authority over men (or husbands) in Indonesian society specifically *because* they are located in the domestic sphere. This is especially true for Javanese tribes – the most patriarchal tribes in Indonesia – where men heavily depend upon the support and autonomy of women. Additionally, in her research addressing Minahasa tribes, Megawangi (1999) reported a negative correlation between men's participation in household chores and their wives' perceived happiness. Clearly, Indonesia represents a geopolitical location in which the universality of Western perspectives of equality comes into question.

Thus Indonesia, even as a patriarchal society, still questions the hegemonic Western concepts of what being a man actually means. As a father, a man is expected to be the head of the family, a position that does not necessarily mean being the superior figure *of* the household but rather implies a particular responsibility *in* the household. The father is primarily responsible for providing the family income, putting his wife's and children's best interests first. As an example, it is common practice for Indonesian men to give all or most of their income to their wives, both because men are considered incapable of handling money carefully, and as a way to demonstrate their responsibility towards their families (Geertz, 1961; Koentjaraningrat, 1985).

Nonetheless, the extraordinary global expansion of Western media has provided Indonesian society with new images of Western masculinity:

white, educated, appearance-oriented, middle-class men. As a result, fatherhood, which has always been firmly rooted in the Indonesian concept of masculinity, is fading into the background, now being detached from men's widely understood life goals and agendas. This research shows how a selection of popular contemporary men's lifestyle magazines currently available in Indonesia, do not consider fatherhood to be an important editorial topic. As I hope to demonstrate, changing concepts of masculinity are believed to have a close relation with the existence of men's lifestyle magazines and for this reason the magazines intentionally choose to address it (Frank, 2014; Nixon, 2013). After a careful analysis of seven most popular men's magazines available in Indonesia, including *Esquire Indonesia*, *Men's Health Indonesia*, *Men's Folio*, and *Best Life Indonesia*, I found that only the latter provides a section on fatherhood in each edition. The other magazines focus more on men's sex life, working life, and physical appearance. To expand upon these findings, I will discuss how fatherhood is portrayed alongside contemporary concepts of masculinity in Indonesia by (1) looking at historical and sociological factors that influence gender construction in Indonesia; (2) studying the changes in the discourse on masculinity; and (3) investigating the portrayal of fatherhood, specifically in *Best Life Indonesia* magazine.

Fatherhood as the core of masculinity in Indonesia

Indonesia is a large and extraordinarily diverse country. According to the national census in 2010 by Statistics Indonesia (BPS, 2011), the population consists of almost 240 million people with more than one thousand tribes and ethnic groups.² The country encompasses more than one thousand islands. Historically, the state has stipulated that being a father and a family man were the most important societal narratives for men in Indonesia. As an example, Law no 1 of 1974 concerning marriage explicitly regulates the relation between husband and wife in the family. The law clearly positions the husband as the head of the family who has to protect his wife and provide her with a household and a livelihood. The same principle is also supported by another governmental organization, namely the National Family Planning Coordinating Board (BKKBN). Moreover, the BKKBN asserts that persevering, leading, and guiding the family – including helping one's wife take care of the children – are all parts of a husband's duties.

The national family planning program, or *Keluarga Berencana* (KB), successfully reduced the national fertility rate whilst at the same time promoting the 'ideal' type of family, one which consists of a father as the

breadwinner, a mother as the caregiver, and two children. These 'ideal' narratives are also supported by several state-sanctioned women's organizations, such as *Dharma Wanita*, or Women's Service, and the PKK, or Family Guidance Movement. The former is an organization of the wives of civil servants whilst the latter is an organization of wives at a broader, more local, community level. Both organizations emphasize the important duty of wives to support their husbands as breadwinners by taking care of the household. In this overtly patriarchal discourse, being a reliable provider becomes a moral obligation for men, whilst being a caregiver becomes a moral obligation for women.

Pervasive Western perspectives on women's position, namely that of being inferior to men, were widely accepted during the late 1980s and fueled the women's emancipation movement in Indonesia.³ This movement was greatly influenced by popular Western notions of gender equality. In capitalist societies, economic capital is seen as the ultimate resource through which an individual can gain power. Engels ([1891] 1978) believed that the exploitation of women primarily takes place within the family. Thus, following Engels, the first generation of women to seek emancipation in Indonesia actively advocated economic independence as a way for women to become empowered. The woman as a domestic mother started to be perceived as powerless and dependent upon her husband. As a result, the private domain, such as child rearing, came to be considered unmanly through these narratives of powerlessness. However, Indonesia is a case in which the universality of Western perspectives is thrown into question. Being the sole breadwinner does not necessarily privilege a man as the superior figure in the family. Not only because of the man's obligation to give all of his income to his wife, but also his need for his wife's permission to spend his money – she has the authority. Indeed, in her anthropological study on Javanese families, Geertz (1961) discovered how married men in general were highly dependent upon their wives, struggling to support their livelihoods without them.⁴ Other scholars (Megawangi, 1999; Clark, 2004; Handayani & Novianto, 2004) also share this concept of women as men's more powerful partners in the family. Following this concept, two popular sitcoms broadcasted by two different national television stations – *Suami-Suami Takut Istri* (Trans TV, 2007) and *Ikatan Suami Takut Istri* (SCTV, 2015) – depicted the phenomenon of *Suami takut istri* (a husband who is extremely weak or frightened of his wife) in Indonesian society – the former being made into a feature film in 2008.

A study of young men in Indonesia conducted by Nilan (2009) exposed the great pressure upon young men to aspire to being a responsible husband

and father. Five Focus Group Discussions (FGD) conducted in 2013 with 50 undergraduate students – female and male – also supported Nilan's findings. While female students pursue higher education in order to achieve their dreams of becoming career women, male students pursue higher education in order to be successful family men. Further discussions revealed how the ability to provide a livelihood for their future wives and children was what the male students believed represented a successful life.

Hence, it is common for young men to envisage their futures as fathers and family men. Being married and being a father are a man's way to acquire status as a 'man'. A man will always be considered a boy, and thus subordinate to older men, unless he is both married and a father. As a father, a man is not only expected to provide economic support for his family, but also to dedicate his time to the welfare of his family, including helping his wife with household tasks and taking care of the children. A man's involvement with his children should ideally begin as early as the prenatal period (Geertz, 1961; Koentjaraningrat, 1985; Megawangi, 1995). Men are thus required to grant and satisfy their wives' wishes during pregnancy no matter how difficult and bizarre those wishes might be. They should also observe the pregnancy taboos such killing animals, cutting their hair, not being allowed to curse, etc. Their active role and companionship is also expected during the delivery. All of these efforts go towards ensuring the birth of a healthy and happy child. These findings are supported by a study conducted by Megawangi, Sumarwan and Hartoyo (1994) which revealed that men believed that pleasing their pregnant wives was their obligation and duty. By conforming to these expectations, Indonesian men lay claim to their masculinity. Furthermore, the father's important role during childhood is performed when the baby is being weaned. Geertz (1961) observed that during this period it is common for the father to play with, feed, bathe, cuddle, and even bring the baby to social occasions. These findings correspond to Coltrane's (1988) cross-cultural study, which found that fathers have more participation in childcare in cultures that afford women high status.

According to the now famous cultural dimensions study by Hofstede (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2010), Indonesia scored low on the individuality dimension compared to the other 40 countries in Hofstede's research. This score carried implications with regard to the ways in which individuals see and define the concept of 'family.' Men are expected to take care not only of their immediate family (wife and children), but also of their extended family – their mother, father and sisters (Saptari, 2000). The same situation does not apply to women, since – once married – a woman and her extended family becomes her husband's responsibility.

The expansion of Western media discourse

The fall of the New Order and the associated political turmoil in 1998 brought significant changes in daily life in Indonesia. The country entered a period of reformation following the resignation of President Soeharto, the polemic leader who ruled Indonesia for 31 years.⁵ Following this period of upheaval freedom was high on everyone's agenda. Freedom of expression – especially freedom of the press – became paramount in people's minds. The New Order's system of strict media control had intentionally placed the government in a privileged position, one from which to scrutinize all media activity – effectively a regime of censorship and propaganda. As stated by Hill and Sen (2005) during the New Order era, the Indonesian media consisted of newspapers and magazines, government-controlled radio, and government-controlled television stations. The new freedoms heralded by the Reformation propelled Indonesia towards a new era – one of unprecedented freedom of the press. This freedom was marked by the enactment of the press law (Law Number 40 of 1999), which officially dismantled the government's right to exert either censorship or control over the press or media. The government's policy to lift the New Order's restrictive press rules unleashed the full potential of the international media corporations in Indonesia. A report conducted by Nugroho, Putri and Laksmi (2012) states that by 1999 the number of print media publications in Indonesia hit almost 1,400 – five times higher than the previous year. The number of international media corporations in Indonesia also increased significantly – all of them US-based. *Playboy*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Vogue*, *Esquire*, and *For Him Magazine* are just a few of those US-based magazines that now circulate in Indonesia. These dramatic changes in freedom of the press have contributed significantly to the changes occurring throughout Indonesia. The massive expansion of US-based media influences many aspects of Indonesian society. Studies demonstrate the homogenization of culture and the decline of traditional values as a result of Americanization (Budiman, 2002; Machin & Leeuwen, 2007; Lasminah, 2011; Prianti, 2012).

The Indonesian reformation opened the door to a more open, information-centered society, one which inevitably brought forth dramatic social changes including (but certainly not limited to) gender relations, as the media challenged and questioned the established concepts of both family and patriarchal authority. The intense promotion of Western values eventually changed the established notions of masculinity leaning more towards the ideal of the white, educated, appearance-oriented, middle-class man. Unlike traditional Indonesian notions of masculinity, Western

narratives of masculinity are more characterized by a self-aware appearance – as portrayed by US-based men’s lifestyle magazines (Drummond & Drummond, 2014; Frank, 2014; Jankowski, Fawkner, Slater & Tiggeman, 2014; Crewe & Goodrum, 2000). Nixon (2013), discussed how men’s grooming product advertisements provide a new imagery of what it takes to be a man. The fetish and the fragmentation of the body – techniques which used to be exclusively associated with the representation of women in the media – are now successfully implemented to illustrate the male body and to advertise products for men.

In a globalized age, cultural hybridity and transculturation (Rogers, 2006) are inevitable consequences. Transculturation problematizes otherwise distinct aspects of a given culture, aspects that might otherwise delineate differences between nations, territories or other entities. Instead culture becomes fragmented, expressing multiplicity and indeterminacy. Therefore, as a result of the dialogical nature of culture, hybridity is inescapable. However, this does not mean that domination and exploitation are absent from the equation. Indeed, cultural imbalances rely on meta-structures which define the superior and the inferior.

Simulating fatherhood

As stated earlier, out of seven of the most popular men’s magazines available in Indonesia – *Esquire Indonesia*, *Men’s Health Indonesia*, *Daman Indonesia*, *Men’s Obsession*, *Fitness for Men*, *Men’s Folio Indonesia*, and *Best Life Indonesia* – only the latter provided a fatherhood section in each edition. It would seem, at least from the perspective of these magazines, that being a father and a husband is no longer at the core of contemporary notions of masculinity. Men’s lifestyle magazines instead position work, sex, hobbies, personal grooming and fashion at the core of their editorial output. Family is unlikely to be discussed.

In total 23 editions of *Best Life Indonesia (BLI)* were published during the years 2008-2012. All of the editions from 2014, including three special editions on fatherhood, were analyzed. Targeting mature, middle-class men in their mid-thirties, *BLI* was first published in November 2008. As a localized version of *Best Life US*, *BLI* uses *bahasa Indonesia* and has its own editorial board.⁶ Positioning itself as a lifestyle magazine for mature 30+ men, each monthly publication of *BLI* devotes approximately 10% of its editorial space to topics related to family and fatherhood. Its online media kit states that topics on family and fatherhood are intended to explore ways of being a better father, of looking after one’s parents, and to provide practical solutions for one’s future. However, a note should be

made that, although stated in the media kit, topics pertaining to looking after one's parents were not to be found in the sample magazines.

For the magazine, the ideal father is one who provides economic support for the family and is thoughtful enough to account for leisure time with his child. Thus, in promoting fatherhood, *BLI* believes economic capital can be found as a resource in the responsible father, whilst dedicating time to the family is promoted as an upgrading option – not only upgrading the father's status from a responsible to the ideal father, but also upgrading a father's own well-being. In *The Happy Father* (Santana, 2014), the person who was being interviewed claimed that his personal balance in life was found when he was able to apportion the same amount of time to his work and his children. In the *Experiences Which Build The Dream* (Ardiansyah, 2014) Emmanuel Wehry, a chief marketing officer, cites his family as the best way to get self-refreshment.

Unlike the Indonesian version of fatherhood, with its emphasis on family well-being, in *BLI*, the male reader is perpetually reminded that spending time with his children is important for his *own* well-being. *BLI*'s 'what's in it for me?' narrative works best with the Western idea of patriarchy. Johnson (2005) argued that in a patriarchal world, life is valued from the point of view of male dominance, both male-identified and male-centered. Evidently, Johnson's concept is not applicable to Indonesian society. Once married, men are expected to devote their lives to their families. Ideally, the father is seen as both the head and the leader of the family. As the leader of the family, the father is expected to act out in the best interest of his family. No matter how wild a man's youth, irrespective of the dreams he might have had, once he becomes a father, he is expected to put his family first (Geertz, 1961; Graham, 2001; Nilan, Donaldson & Howson, 2007).

Furthermore, *BLI* specifically defines 'quality time' between father and child as doing outdoor, stereotypically masculine activities: horse riding, driving a car, biking, practicing sports, and sailing. In this narrative, the father is seen as the ideal entertainer, fun and worth waiting for. The article *When Father is Choosing Stroller* (Ardiansyah, 2014) reinforces the same narrative. The article advises the father that with an expensive, branded stroller, there is no reason for him not to stroll his baby. The article also claims that men will be more than willing to stroll their child because it is the same as riding a sports car – something that a man can be proud of. Since children were portrayed as the best way for the father to become re-energized after feeling exhausted from work, doing more passive or relaxing child rearing activities such as changing diapers, giving a bath, brushing their teeth or preparing the bottle were not classified as

‘fun’ activities. According to several studies (Dzwonkowska-Godula & Brzezinska, 2012; Connel, 2005; Scherrer, 1990), Western cultural stereotypes of childcare are either ‘unmanly’ or have feminine characteristics.

To be the ideal father, the great father, the perfect father, the inspiring father, the successful father, the best father, is the ultimate goal of the articles about fatherhood found in the *BLI* – father discourses that function best within Western narratives of fatherhood. Several studies (Valkonen & Hanninen, 2012; Baker, 2005; Johnson, 2005; Kimmel, 1994; Messner, 1989) pointed out that being dominant, competitive or success-oriented are perceived as intrinsically masculine characteristics.

Showing the difficulty of being a father is another way in which *BLI* portrays fatherhood within the masculine domain. Being a father is never an easy job. That fatherhood is a difficult and challenging job is a common narrative used to construct articles on the topic of fatherhood. Framing fatherhood as a challenging thing to do, it is the archetypal man who believes, according to Kimmel (1994), that taking risks and facing challenges is a part of any truly masculine character. An article entitled *12 ways to become the ideal father* (Ardiansyah, 2014) explicitly states, “Anyone can be a father, but it takes a real man to be a daddy.”

A (superior) father can also be measured by having a child of whom he can be proud – a great child, a smart child, a talented child, a child with academic achievements. Having a child the father can be proud of can help him to compete with others in order to be the epitome of the *ideal* father. A further article *The Best Holiday for Family* (Puji, 2014) explores expensive holiday destinations in foreign countries and literally encourages wealthy fathers to laugh at other fathers who cannot afford ‘classy’ vacations for their child.

Again, as with appearance and personal grooming, the superiority narrative works best together with Western ideas of masculinity. According to Kimmel (1994) and Messner (1994), masculinity is a ‘homosocial enactment.’ It is built upon men’s fear of the possibility of being considered ‘unmanly’ by other men. The logic therefore is that men need the acknowledgement of other men, in the form of appraisals and compliments for their masculinity. However, since being a father and a family man was *kodrat* for men in Indonesia, and fatherhood is assumed to be their natural destiny, there is no innate competition involved. Indonesia is a country in which collective sensitivities are paramount and modesty is highly valued. This has deep cultural roots, historically speaking, in the way masculinity has always been performed. Emotional self-restraint, demonstrating a high degree of self-regulation, and the performance of a discreet demeanor constituted the upper-class Javanese (*priyayi*) model of

masculinity. In his canonic work, Geertz (1961) reported the performance of royal, aristocratic and bureaucratic *priyayi* behavior during the pre-colonial period. Therefore, instead of showing aggressiveness and competitiveness in an explicit manner – a reference to Western masculinity – the father is expected to express a more restrained, mature, masculine behavior (Nilan, Donaldson & Howson, 2007).

Fatherhood as a masculine legacy

BLI portrays fatherhood as a means for men to teach their children overtly Western stereotypes of masculine behavior, such as critical thinking, logical thinking, problem solving, being responsible, being competitive, being rational, being confident, etc. That every father has the same noble purpose in this world – raising a healthy child; smart, highly educated, responsible and able to achieve success in his or her future – was a common narrative found in many of the sample magazines. *Father as The Child's Teacher of Life* (Estri, 2012) is exemplary among articles that speak about the importance of educating children so that they demonstrate masculine characteristics. Most articles and pictures also illustrate the relationship between the man and his son, as a sign of his legacy. In addition, *Like Father Like Son* (Akhmad, 2014) explicitly uses a narrative about the son as the father's generational successor. In all of these cases, fatherhood dealt noticeably more with a man's legacy to his son rather than to his daughter. The primary aims of fatherhood are to ensure that his son inherits his masculine characteristics and that he might also share the same passions and hobbies.

Narratives of the family man were supported in the magazines through the transmission of explicit messages to the reader that men need to spend time with their children in order to build emotional attachments with them. However, it is also based on the belief that men (fathers) have a significant role to play in contributing to the shaping of their child's character not least because the woman (mother) is subordinated. Moreover, the need for the father to play a significant role in the rearing of children is based on the assumption that a man has the ability to make better decisions in technical matters than a woman, for example when choosing a stroller. Generally speaking, these narratives completely overrule any power the woman may possess within the Indonesian family. Geertz (1961), Megawangi (1999), Clark (2004), and Handayani & Novianto (2004) have all commented upon the ultimate power of the wife with regard to her husband. However, the fact that *BLI* failed to communicate these local

values is not surprising since as a US-based publication, *BLI* is essentially always promoting the idea of the modern Western family.

Another article *Detecting Dangerous Food Ingredients for Children* (Ardiansyah, 2014) uses an illustrative story in which the father has small fights with the mother because their child got food poisoning. From the narration, purely by virtue of being the father, a man has the right to question the mother's responsibility if the child becomes unwell. The father has a right to know whilst the mother as the primary caregiver has to take responsibility for any problems. Based on this logic, mothers need to defend themselves by providing the explanation whilst, as the breadwinner, the father merely needs to provide economic support for his family. Though both parents play their own significant roles in supporting the family, economic capital is seen as superior to any other form of capital. This Western cultural narrative privileges the father's position. By acting as the sole economic provider, the father has more power in the family, and as such acts as the decision maker. Indeed, Hobson and Morgan (2002) argued that men's authority in the family and male breadwinning sit at the core of masculinity politics in the West. Hence, when it comes to fatherhood, men become distant fathers and everything related to child rearing is the mother's responsibility because it is considered unmanly.

Father as The Guru of Life

The Indonesian notion of fatherhood is also firmly rooted in the idea of the father as the one who sets the example for his children. In her anthropological study Geertz (1961) supported this notion of the father's responsibility in leading his family. The same idea is also strongly supported by BKKBN (2015) – a government organization which focuses on the family – with their recent campaign about *8 fungsi keluarga* (eight family functions). In its campaign BKKBN emphasizes the husband's duties in persevering, leading and guiding his family both emotionally and materially. Moreover, according to Silverstein (1996), historically fathers have been responsible not only for the economic support of the family but also for their children's religious, moral and vocational training. The same narrative is echoed through *Best Life Indonesia's* discourse of fatherhood. Teaching the values and the principals of life, being a child's role model, and passing down the philosophical meaning of life were seen as the father's tasks in raising his child. The article *Father as The Child's Teacher of Life* (Estri, 2012) told the story about the father as a wise figure – each and every one of his words was reliable. This is because the

father's words are based on his life experience as the head of the family, a husband for his wife and a father for his children.

Although *BLI* supported the idea of the father as the guru of life, at the same time it constantly promotes the idea that only a successful man is able to be the guru of his child's life: by being successful, men have the ability to inspire and be role models for their children. Moreover, the *BLI's* idea of what represents a successful man is very much Western-oriented. In *BLI* successful men are defined as middle class, with high rank or status in their jobs or as wealthy men who can afford luxury products such as branded strollers, expensive gifts, and holidays in foreign countries or exotic places.

Conclusion

As a patriarchal country, Indonesia has a strong male-as-breadwinner tradition. Men are expected to become fathers and be family-oriented. Indeed, the state explicitly regulates man's responsibility to provide a livelihood for his wife and children. Therefore, men are expected to give all of their income to their wives to demonstrate their responsibility towards their family. The importance of the family in Indonesian society is also shown through the ways in which the government provides statutes which govern and discuss the family as a social institution, including men's duties as husbands and fathers. Furthermore, being a father is a man's way to acquire status in the eyes of his own father or other males. Masculinity is measured in the way men perform their responsibilities towards their wives and children, not only by investing their economic capital but also by dedicating quality time to their families. However, the global expansion of Western media discourse has changed these notions of masculinity. Masculinity rooted in fatherhood, founded by the institution of fatherhood, or heavily dependent on ideologies of fatherhood, fatherhood that is rooted within traditional Indonesian concepts of masculinity now finds itself in a transitional phase. Men's lifestyle magazines, which as demonstrated here, contribute to the changing meaning of contemporary Indonesian masculinity, apparently no longer consider fatherhood as a big part of men's lifestyle. When magazines decide to run editorials on the topic of fatherhood, instead of perpetuating the Indonesian notion of masculinity, they choose to infuse the Western notion thereof. For the proponents of media imperialism it might be one of many possible proofs of global narratives of westernization. For the proponents of cultural hybridity, it might be another way to show transculturation as a contemporary condition. Either way, this study

demonstrates the correlation between the universalization of Western perspectives and homogenization.

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Notes

¹ Directorate General of Higher Education (DGHE) of Indonesia's grant funded this research.

² BPS stands for Badan Pusat Statistik. Statistics Indonesia is a non-governmental organization which is directly responsible to the president. Its main activities are undertaking population, agricultural and economic censuses as well as statistical surveys.

³ The word emansipasi *perempuan* (women's emancipation) was popular in Indonesia during late 1980s. Women indeed constitute a part of Indonesia's political agenda. Since 1978 the Indonesian government has a minister who focuses specifically on women's empowerment.

⁴ The Javanese tribe is the largest and most prominent tribe in Indonesia.

⁵ Despite the chaos and demonstrations demanding Soeharto's resignation in 1998, to a certain extent he is still loved and missed by some Indonesians.

⁶ *Bahasa Indonesia* is the official language of Indonesia

CHAPTER TWO

FATHER MANAGERS (UN)DOING TRADITIONAL MASCULINITY

EMILIA KANGAS
ANNA-MAIJA LÄMSÄ
SUVI HEIKKINEN

Introduction

Although there has been some advancement in the general atmosphere in society towards a more committed and participatory fatherhood, many organizations still tend to operate under the traditional masculine assumption where the norm is that fatherhood should not interfere with work (Bleijenbergh et al. 2013). In this article we argue that it is particularly important for men who are managers to understand the meaning of fatherhood. This is because managers – the majority of whom are men (The Global Gender Gap Report 2015) – are in a position to create new organizational cultures (Schein 1985) which also take family responsibilities into account. It could help to enable men (and also women) to integrate their work and family spheres successfully and advance their wellbeing and quality of life (Hobson 2011). In order to accomplish gender equality in their public and private roles, men should have the opportunity to bring changes into their work, allowing them to devote themselves more to family life (Kaufman and Bernhardt 2015).

The purpose of our study is to conceptualize how male managers construct their fatherhood. We are especially interested in whether they follow the expectations of the traditional masculine ideology of fatherhood, or whether they have adopted more recent ideas of participatory fatherhood. Using a discourse analysis approach, we conducted an empirical study to answer the main research question: What kind of discourses do father managers construct of their fatherhood? Our

more specific questions are: What kind of gender order do father managers produce in the discourses? How do they construct the relationship between fatherhood and leadership work? Hence, our research combines the discussions of masculine leadership and fatherhood with the discussion of men's changing gender roles.

Generally, the questions of the family–work relationship have been associated almost exclusively with women in employment (Özbilgin et al. 2011). Male managers, in contrast, are mainly viewed as beneficial financial actors in organizational life, whereas their fatherhood tends to remain invisible in organizations (Tracy and Rivera 2010). Burnett et al. (2013) even used the term “ghost” to describe the invisibility of the father in the context of the organization. Such a tradition and practice not only reduces women's opportunities to advance in their careers, but prevents men from understanding their own rights as equal parents also in the work sphere. Still, devoting more time to their domestic responsibilities is not unproblematic for male managers who have children; instead, it may be a source of contradiction due to the competing demands of work and home (Hearn and Niemistö 2012). Fathers who are inclined towards the new fatherhood ideology have to struggle to resolve the tension between this new ideology and the expectation to conform to the traditional male manager model (Sallee 2012).

The context of this empirical study is Finland, a country with relatively high gender equality in its societal standards and norms (The Global Gender Gap Report 2015). However, from the perspective of the work–family relationship, the statistics tell another story: although there is an extensive system of public childcare to encourage full-time work for both spouses, Finnish women still carry the main responsibility for domestic work and taking care of the children (Heikkinen et al. 2014). Despite the legal opportunities for parental leaves, they are used almost exclusively by mothers; in fact, Finnish men rank low among their Nordic counterparts in their interest to use parental leaves (Pietiläinen 2013).

Theoretical background

This article draws upon the theory of “doing gender.” According to the theory, gender is done through social practices (West and Zimmerman 1987), such as discourses, which both shape social orders and are shaped by them (Connell 2000; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). The ideas of masculinity and femininity are constructed in a process which produces gender order: formal and informal arrangements that define the complex and changing patterns of gender relations in a particular context (Connell