RESEARCH

Online media experiences of caregiving fathers: A study of leave-taking fathers in South Korea

Youngcho Lee 🆔

Department of Social Policy, London School of Economics and Political Science, London, United Kingdom

Correspondence
Department of Social Policy, London School of Economics and Political Science, London. Houghton St, London WC2A 2AE, United Kingdom.
Email: y.lee28@lse.ac.uk

Abstract

Objective: This work aims to document the different ways in which leave-taking fathers in South Korea engage with online media to address some of their challenges as male primary caregivers.

Background: Although involved and caring fathers are becoming more common, childcare responsibilities still remain gendered. To equalize the gendered division of childcare, there is a need to gain a better understanding of the cultural barriers that fathers face in caring for their children and the ways that fathers could be supported, including through informal online communities.

Methods: This article qualitatively analyzes semistructured interviews with fathers in Korea as well as posts from blogs by parents of young children about their experiences of taking parental leave and being a primary caregiver for their children.

Results: Caregiving fathers experience similar exclusion and isolation in offline and online spheres from both communities dominated by mothers and those dominated by men who do not identify as caregivers. However, by engaging in online media communities for caregiving fathers, they learn to be better caregivers, connect with other fathers, and influence other parents through their online activities. Although such online activities allow fathers to address their various struggles as male caregivers, some fathers voiced reservations and critiques of online communities.

Conclusion: In general, most fathers reported positive experiences from online activities that allowed them to address their experiences of exclusion as male caregivers, but there remains room for greater inclusion and accessibility for fathers.

Implications: There is a need for online communities to become more diverse, better promoted, more inclusive, and more easily accessible for fathers.

K E Y W O R D S
childcare, community, fathers, online media, South Korea

Over the past few decades, countries around the world have witnessed an increase in the prominence of, as well as attention to, fathers' roles as caregivers. Yet at the same time, childcare remains highly gendered, with mothers continuing to bear the majority of childcare responsibilities around the world, but particularly in East Asia. An important question in this context would be how the gendered division of caregiving could be equalized further. One key policy intervention involves incentivizing fathers to take parental leave, but it is equally important to identify cultural barriers to fathers' caregiving as well as less formalized ways through which fathers could receive support in caring for their children.

Previous studies have documented fathers' experiences of exclusion in (female-dominant) childcare settings (Brooks & Hodkinson, 2020; Doucet, 2006, 2009, 2018; Gill et al., 2021). A separate body of literature has more recently focused on the mediating role that online media activities play in fathers' identities, experiences, and relationships (Hodkinson & Das, 2021; Hunter & Riggs, 2019; Scheibling, 2020a, 2020b, 2020c). Building on such existing scholarship, this article profiles how leave-taking fathers in Korea engage in a range of activities using online media to address some of their challenges as male caregivers. It demonstrates both the positive and less positive experiences and sentiments expressed by these fathers, based on which the article discusses some practical suggestions for online parenting communities and platforms, particularly those aimed at fathers.

The remainder of this article is organized as follows. I first review the theoretical and empirical literature on the intersections of fathers, caregiving, and online media that will inform this study. I then offer a brief review of the key developments relating to involved fatherhood in the Korean context before presenting the data and methods used in the study. The findings section is followed by a discussion and conclusion, including the implications and limitations of the study.

FATHERS, CAREGIVING, AND SOME CHALLENGES

Traditionally, men have been understood as the default and ungendered worker, while considerations of care for children have been implicitly equated with women (Hearn, 2010; Hearn & Pringle, 2006). However, in recent decades, there have been notable advancements in critical studies of men and masculinities and also attention to and research on fathers who engage in caregiving. This has also coincided with the introduction of policy initiatives around the world aimed at engendering caring men and equalizing caring duties, most notably incentives for fathers to take childcare leave (Koslowski et al., 2021; O'Brien & Wall, 2017).

Previous research on men's engagement in caregiving (Brandth & Kvande, 2018; Doucet, 2018; Hanlon, 2012; Johansson, 2011; O'Brien & Wall, 2017; Ranson, 2015; Rehel, 2013) has documented a process of transformation in which fathers come to embody more egalitarian and nurturing identities and actively reconstruct their own masculine identities as well as broader societal understandings of masculinities. The emerging "caring masculinities" is understood to signal a disruption of and a progressive shift away from conventional hegemonic masculinities (Connell, 2005) conceptualized on the basis of men's roles in paid work

and as breadwinners and toward an embodiment of an ethics of care based on affective, relational, emotional, interdependent qualities and gender-egalitarianism (Elliott, 2016).

Despite such changes at least on a discursive level (Johansson & Andreasson, 2017), the division of parental leave and caregiving duties more broadly remain highly gendered globally. For instance, the gendered differences in the total days of parental leave taken persist even in the case of the Nordic countries, which are pioneers of involved fatherhood and progressive leave policies and where it is relatively common for fathers to take leave or otherwise actively engage in caregiving.[1] The gendered disparity in caregiving is undoubtedly greater in countries with shorter traditions of leave policies and lower uptake rates and where the fathers who engage in primary caregiving are still an exception rather than the norm. Such persisting gendered inequalities in childcare suggest that there still exist significant tensions in the process of transformation of masculine identities or the relationship between new fatherhood ideals and traditional definitions of masculinity (Dermott, 2008; McLaughlin & Muldoon, 2014; Miller, 2010; Segal, 2007).

As such, fathers who do engage in care for their children where it is uncommon face various gendered challenges. Several works document fathers' experiences of uneasiness or exclusion in feminized childcare settings (Brooks & Hodkinson, 2020; Doucet, 2006, 2009, 2018; Gill et al., 2021; Lee & Lee, 2018; Merla, 2008; O'Brien & Twamley, 2017; Tremblay & Lazzari Dodeler, 2017). For example, Doucet (2006; see also 2009, 2018) wrote that the overwhelming majority of more than 100 fathers that she has interviewed over her 20 years of research on fathers and families spoke about awkward, uncomfortable, or unwelcomed moments in "*estrogen-filled worlds*" (emphasis original) such as local community center baby clinics, schoolyards, and playgrounds. Accounts of caregiving fathers' exclusion from gendered caregiving spaces and networks have been echoed in subsequent research, including studies of leave-taking fathers (O'Brien & Twamley, 2017; Tremblay & Lazzari Dodeler, 2017), who regularly report experiences of feeling isolated from female-dominant networks in childcare contexts.

Fathers' difficulties in being embedded into relationships and networks central to the care of their children undoubtedly pose difficulties in their capacity to form social relationships around childcare, or what Doucet (2018) conceptualized as "community responsibilities." The severe lack of other caregiving males to interact with further contributes to the social and emotional isolation and possibly poses a threat to the mental and psychological well-being of these fathers. Responding to such instances of marginalization of fathers in childcare settings, Doucet (2018) suggested that the previously discussed "discomfort with mother-dominated playgrounds led a few stay-at-home fathers to create their own" (p. 148). In contrast, Brooks and Hodkinson (2020) suggested that caregiving fathers "found themselves caught between female-dominated daytime parenting spaces on the one hand, and masculine or breadwinner-oriented 'dad groups' on the other[,] … neither … ideally suited to their needs and both … [making] them feel out-of-place" (p. 211). It is in this context that I turn to online media as a potential outlet that could support fathers in addressing some of their challenges and isolation as caregivers by creating alternative communities, networks, and relationships.

CAREGIVING FATHERS AND ONLINE MEDIA ACTIVITIES

Although ample online support groups and discussion forums for parents exist, the majority of these revolve around mothers. In contrast, there exist limited online platforms, communities, or services specifically aimed at fathers, and even less research that document these spaces (see review by Lupton et al., 2016).

One strand of the limited existing research on fathers' online activities includes studies inquiring how fathers as bloggers engage with norms of fatherhood and masculinity (Asenhed et al., 2014; Friedman, 2016; Hunter & Riggs, 2019; Scheibling, 2020a, 2020b, 2020c). These studies typically draw on blog posts of expectant or engaged fathers, with the exception of

Scheibling, whose research is based on a rich cyber-ethnographic project involving blog posts, fieldwork observation, and interviews of North American dad bloggers. The literature points to tensions, contradictions, and complexities in the fathers' accounts, where conventional understandings of gender roles and masculinities are simultaneously resisted and inhabited. For instance, Scheibling (2020a, 2020b, 2020c) found that despite certain tensions and contradictions, dad bloggers are challenging traditional notions of masculinity and construct pro-feminist identities and discourses based on "caring masculinities." On the other hand, Hunter and Riggs (2019) presented a slightly more pessimistic account in their study of blogs of 40 men who engage in primary caregiving, highlighting how these blog posts often contained content and language that evoked a normative understanding of masculine identities.

Another strand of studies pays attention to the role of online communities and platforms as a source of peer or mental health support for fathers (Fletcher & StGeorge, 2011; Hodkinson & Das, 2021; Livesay, 2011; Lee, 2018; Lee & Lee, 2018; Salzmann-Erikson & Eriksson, 2013). For example, Livesay (2011) found that online discussion forums act as an avenue for fathers "to vent their daily frustrations, see how others have handled similar situations, and quite frankly, just chat with other men" (p. 174). Lee's (2018) research of Taiwanese daddyblogs further illustrates the potential for fathers' online media activity to mediate and develop into in-person interactions and supportive gatherings, or "playgroups." These works demonstrate the important role that digitally mediated peer support communities can play in addressing some of the struggles that fathers experience. This is especially important when considering that men are less likely to seek professional help for mental or emotional difficulties (O'Brien et al., 2017) and that men's prenatal struggles may be informed by "repertoires of illegitimacy" (Hodkinson & Das, 2021).

The present study seeks to contribute to the literature by drawing on, bridging, and expanding the existing limited studies on fathers' online media experiences in the following ways. First, I intend to connect and present a more holistic picture of the two strands of aforementioned literature that have focused respectively on fathers' social exclusion in caregiving spaces and peer support behaviors in fathers' online activities. I do so by first giving an account of caregiving fathers' isolation from not just offline but also online spaces, then discussing whether, to what extent, and how their experiences and perceptions of various online activities address those difficulties. Second, whereas most of the previous research is either based on a study of fathers' activities on online platforms (typically either blogs or forums) or interviews with fathers, the present study will build on Scheibling's (2020c) multimethod approach. It will draw on interviews with fathers as well as online activities and contents on various types of, as opposed to a single, online parenting platforms, including blogs, government-led communities, and mobile services to offer a richer account of fathers' narratives. The utilization and triangulation of data from multiple sources will have the advantage of offering more comprehensive and complementary insights that account for fathers' multiple forms of self-expression both in the offline and online worlds as connected spheres. Finally, whereas existing studies have tended to document fathers who make active use of online media, the present study also includes the voices of fathers who are skeptical of such online platforms. Before presenting the data and methods used for this study, I briefly introduce the relevant South Korean context on which this study is based.

INVOLVED FATHERHOOD IN SOUTH KOREAN MEDIA

In the Korean context, the scant academic attention to men as fathers has mostly centered around their roles and responsibilities as breadwinners. It is only in the recent decade that "friendy" (friend + daddy)—or friend-like fathers—has emerged as a new model for fathers in Korea, along with renewed attention and expectations about the role of men as fathers.

Arguably, central to such a cultural shift have been two television shows: *Daddy, Where Are We Going*? (아빠, 어디가?; MBC, 2013–2015) and *The Return of the Superman* (슈퍼맨이 돌아왔다; (KBS, 2013–present) that showcased celebrity fathers spending time (mostly playtime) with their young children. Critiques contend that media representations of upper- and middle-class fathers' engagement in nonroutine excursions or playtime as fun, friendly, and "cool" conform to the "ideal family" model and reinforce an unfair gender order (Han, 2013; Heo, 2016; Kim, 2014; Lee, 2014; Lee & Baek, 2016). Nonetheless, both shows quickly gained national popularity following their launch, reaching nearly 20% ratings, contributing to the mainstreaming of discourses and ideals of fathers as involved and caring. The emergence and popularity of such portrayals of fathers in popular media coincided with the introduction of policy incentives for fathers to take parental leave in 2014, as well as other government-led initiatives targeting fathers.

Notably, in 2012, the Ministry of Health and Welfare established an online community called the 100 Dads Group (100인의 아빠단; naver.com/motherplusall) to promote men's greater participation in childcare, closer father–child relationships, and culture of co-parenting. This online community has grown to be the largest fathers' community in Korea, and now the community invited applications in each of the 17 municipalities in Korea, where approximately 100 selected fathers with children aged 3 to 7 years participate in a range of childcare activities for 6 months, supported by 25 experienced fathers ("mentors") and five childcare experts. Fathers taking part are invited to carry out and share photos of their participation in weekly (mostly developmental) childcare activities suggested by the "mentors" on the online community over five areas (play, health, education, relationship, and daily activities). Typical activities include baking cookies, visiting the stationery store, or having a conversation about a given topic. In addition, the community offers opportunities for fathers to seek parenting advice and information from professionals both online and offline. Further to this, in 2017, the Ministry of Employment and Labor set up an online channel called Papanet (아빠넷) targeted specifically at fathers to provide information about childcare. With discourses of involved fatherhood increasingly gaining prominence and cultural currency, the interest in fathers in Korea is arguably higher now than ever, coupled with anticipation toward the prospects of a new generation of fathers who embody gender egalitarian norms and caring masculinities.

At the same time, it is important to ground such changes and progression within the broader social context. South Korea is characterised by one of the most unequal gendered divisions of unpaid labor in Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2021), with men spending an average of 49 minutes per day on unpaid labor, contributing to less than one fifth of the total unpaid work, while Korean women spend 215 minutes. Even when limited to just dual-income couples, Korean husbands on average spend 54 minutes per day on unpaid labor while wives spend 3.5 times this amount—187 minutes (Statistics Korea, 2020). Moreover, despite rapid increases in absolute numbers, the ratio of fathers with 2021-born children who took leave during the year following the birth of their child was a mere 3% of all 2021-born children (Statistics Korea, 2022). In short, Korean fathers who engage in intensive primary caregiving are exceptions to the norm and studying these minority fathers' experiences is a necessary first step to better support and normalise caregiving fathers.

DATA AND METHODS

This article draws on qualitative data from 51 semistructured interviews and 49 parenting blogs[2] on fathers' uptake of parental leave in South Korea. The data collection took place in 2020, and ethical approval for the project was obtained from the Ethical Approval and Risk

Assessment Committee for Sociological Research of my home institution at the time (University of Cambridge) in December 2019. With the exception of a few fathers who were recruited through personal connections, the interviewed fathers were recruited through major online communities and platforms for parents. Fathers were first invited to take part in an online survey that asked about their experiences of parental leave and other aspects of family life, and those expressing interest in a follow-up interview were subsequently contacted. As for the blog data, a long list of blogs was first identified by searching blogs containing the keyword "male parental leave" (남성 육아휴직) on Korea's largest search engine, portal, and platform for blogs, then narrowed down based on their level of relevance and detail, following Hookway's (2017) guidelines.

Table 1 outlines the demographic composition of all 51 interviewees. The typical father in my sample of interviewees was in his late 30s with a university degree and had one or two children, with the youngest child approximately 3 years old. My interviews with these fathers covered their parental leave experience as well as other more general aspects of family life that came up, including their difficulties as primary caregivers for their children and experiences and/or perceptions of online communities and social media platforms as a means to support fathers. All interviews were audio recoded with informed consent and transcribed verbatim and pseudonyms are used to protect the privacy of the interviewees. In presenting the blog data, I quote bloggers using initials and present the links to the original blog posts in footnotes to treat blogs as a source of open access publication and respect the authorship of the bloggers (Bassett & O'Riordan, 2002; Kozinets, 2015; von Benzon, 2019) while maintaining legibility as well as a level of privacy. However, I refrain from directly quoting or referencing the posts when referring to blog posts written by my interviewees to protect their anonymity and privacy, in line with the terms of their informed consent. Further details of my approach for addressing the ethics of using online blog data for research as well as the full list of blogs and their links can be found in Lee (2022a).

TABLE 1 Demographic composition of all interviewed fathers by key characteristics ($N = 51$)

Age, years, mean (range)	38 (27–42)
No. of children, n	
1	19
2	28
3	4
Months of leave, mean (range)[a]	13 (2.5–36)
Age, youngest child, years, mean (range)	3 (0–8)
Employment, n	
Public sector	21
Private sector	18
Nonprofit sector	8
Freelance or self-employed	3
Not employed	1
Education, n	
Secondary	1
Two-year college	4
Four-year university	38
Graduate degree	8

[a]Where the father took multiple leaves, I referred to the most recent leave.

It is important to note that this study draws on a specific subset of caregiving fathers—leave-taking fathers—whereas caregiving fathers is a broader umbrella term that includes fathers who are engaging in caregiving to different degrees while employed. Considering that only a small minority of fathers take leave in South Korea, the interviewed fathers do not represent the typical Korean father. However, my decision to focus on leave-taking fathers in a study of fathers "doing family online" is a suitable and strategic one in that it allows me to examine parenting challenges and online experiences of fathers who are actively involved in and take primary responsibility for childcare. Because all the interviewed fathers had experience taking parental leave for a period of 2.5 months to 3 years, most of these fathers had intensive and primary caregiving experiences while their wives were working full time. Therefore, it would be more accurate to understand the sample of fathers being studied in this article as pioneers of caregiving and involved fatherhood. If leave-taking fathers who are immersed in childcare for a set period experience certain challenges, other caregiving fathers would presumably also experience similar difficulties, even if to different degrees.

My original research project had a broader focus on fathers' experiences of family life and leave uptake, rather than a narrow one on fathers' activities or experiences on online platforms and communities. However, because I had recruited most of my interviewees via online parents' communities or social media platforms such as blogs, I was aware that the majority of the interviewed fathers were engaged in some form of online activity on parenting communities or social media platforms. As such, experiences on online media regularly came up in many of the interviews, and it was the prominence of fathers who shared experiences of exclusion as a caregiving male and the (contrastingly) positive experience that some fathers noted about their involvement in fathers' communities online (as well as offline) that inspired this work. I thus supplemented my interview data with posts from blogs run by parents of young children, including a few blogs that my interviewees had been running; the posts in all these blogs contained detailed accounts of experiences and reflections about family life during, as well as before and after, the fathers' parental leave. This allowed me, on one hand, to listen to fathers talk about their online activities during the interviews, while, on the other hand, accessing some of their online activities in the form of posts on blogs and other social media in text form. Working with multidata sources in this way allowed me to shift and triangulate between fathers' experiences and activities in both offline and online spaces, as well as their articulation of both and the interaction between the two, offering a richer understanding of fathers' narratives.

For such reasons, my analytic approach was mainly inductive and my coding and themes primarily arose bottom-up, from the fathers' narratives. Informed by Doucet (2018) and van Manen (1990), my analytic strategy entailed extensively conducting multiple readings and multilevel analyses of the data. I first developed a holistic picture of each interviewee, then purposefully focused on different topics of interest and then on the details of people's narratives. In doing so, the transcribed data were read vertically multiple times to extract each father's narrative and to identify and color-code the main themes which emerged. I created a summary of each interview, highlighting the most prominent points which stood out for each father. Then the color-coded materials were read horizontally, again multiple times, to compare across fathers. Here I paid more attention to identifying general patterns, similarities, and differences in relation to my research questions. The presentation of findings in the next section is organized into three sections to reflect the major themes that emerged from the data. I first demonstrate the isolating experiences that fathers went through as primary caregivers in both offline as well as online spheres. I then discuss the ways some of these fathers were able to benefit from their activities in online fathers' communities. Finally, I consider some alternative sentiments, of reservations toward or critiques of online communities and social media platforms as well as popular media portrayals of fathering more generally.

FINDINGS

Fathers' experiences of isolation as primary caregivers offline and online

It was common for fathers to talk about experiences as the only man in public and/or childcare spaces. Many of these fathers reported feeling lonely, awkward, and out of place, in line with earlier studies of caregiving fathers. Fathers emphasized how fitting in or creating a community is much more challenging for them compared with mothers, and how lonely they were as primary carers. On one hand, this was because they were the odd male in childcare or parenting spaces. As Sungho put it:

> Moms tend to get close quickly. Moms with babies meet quickly and ask each other, "How old is your child?" and everything, but they don't ask dads. And because fathers taking leave is so rare, it's hard to set up a community. So I felt quite lonely.

Such experiences of isolation posed challenges for fathers fitting into a network of social relations required for childcare. For instance, Yohan found arranging playdates with moms difficult, and as a result, he had a particularly hard time coming up with activities to keep his child occupied each day:

> When kids are out to play in the playground, the moms form small groups, and I want to talk about parenting with them, but I'm a strange man, I can't join them. … I wanted to bring [my child] to the playground to make friends but there's a boundary. … That aspect of childcare was a dilemma; I always had no idea where to take the child when I got up in the morning.

In the case of Jungwoo, fitting in the community of moms of his children's primary school as the only father was an obstacle:

> Because my kids go to school, I need to be a part of the moms' community for my child to get along with the other kids, but [joining] the moms' group chat, that was a bit embarrassing, because people keep why I'm the primary carer. They think it's strange because it's not common.

On the other hand, the fathers were also estranged from their (male) peer groups, including colleagues at work and friends from school. Because being a male primary caregiver was so unusual, fathers experienced drifting away from their peers, who were living work-centric lives. For instance, Jaein remarked, "I remember I was really lonely. … I was distanced from my friends, and isolated from the other teachers at work." Jaein also looked back on how he was always thirsty for conversations with people, as he was stuck with his baby most of the time. Juha similarly explained, "When I call up my friends and they say, 'Hey, I have a meeting, so let's talk later,' I'd think to myself, 'Why am I at home taking care of the kids?'" As a result, fathers often could not relieve their stress because they had no one to share their feelings with. Inho reflected, "You need to meet different people and relieve [stress] but because kids are at home all the time and I'm at home all the time, fatigue just kept building."

On top of feeling doubly out of place in offline networks of female-dominated caregiving spaces as well as masculine networks of non-caregiving men as Brooks and Hodkinson (2020) found, fathers described a similar type of double-exclusion in online communities. As Minjae and Taein suggested, online platforms for fathers are still scarce compared with those servicing mothers, whereas caregiving fathers could not feel a connection with users on online

communities composed primarily of men who neither engaged in caregiving nor shared gender egalitarian views toward parenting. Minjae explained,

> The Ministry of Employment and Labor has created a comprehensive portal for dads called Dadsnet or something, but it's still hard to get information. … Accessing platforms for education or information is definitely more difficult than for moms. Maybe I don't try enough, but I feel there are just fewer platforms. I still can't access mom's online communities. So it would be nice if there were more that fathers could use.

Taein testified, "I now feel that childcare is something you have to do together. But you know how a lot of men spend time in online communities? The men in those communities don't understand."

What these fathers demonstrate is that the dynamics of caregiving fathers' exclusion in off-line spaces is mirrored in online spaces, as Table 2 illustrates. The double-exclusion that Brooks and Hodkinson (2020) described was taking place both offline and online, with male-dominated spaces still being governed by hegemonic masculine norms on one hand, while men who were seeking to practice caring masculinities were not welcomed into mothers' spaces on the other hand.

Although Minjae spoke humbly of himself, he was perhaps one of the most well informed, active, and internet-savvy of the fathers whom I interviewed, and he was not wrong to feel that online communities and resources that fathers can use are insufficient. In fact, some of the interviewed fathers were unaware of existing communities and major platforms exclusively made for fathers such as the 100 Dads Group or Dadsnet and simply felt there was no accessible local online community where they could connect with other fathers. This suggests that current government-led platforms for fathers are not being effectively promoted and also possibly that some fathers felt emotional distance about connecting online with unspecified and anonymous others who may not understand their feelings and experiences as a caregiving father, as Taein alluded to. As a result, fathers were being excluded not just in offline but also in online spaces, which together worked against the normalization of fathers' roles in caregiving.

Several fathers acknowledged the impact that their experiences of isolation and lack of peers to interact with had on their mental health and stress. These fathers' feelings of destress, anxiety, and isolation were often closely tied to their masculine identities, or the lack thereof. Fathers described feeling "demoralized," "unmanly," "depressed," "lethargic," "anxious," "self-conscious," and "pressured" about the fact they were not economically active. However, the interviewed fathers did not seek professional help, with the exception of Juha, who had consulted a psychologist about his "stress over role as a man [and] concerns about career." Given that fathers were deprived of interaction with other adults and did not have opportunities to speak candidly about their feelings, several fathers who were on leave at the time of the interview welcomed the interview as a rare opportunity to chat with an adult.

T A B L E 2 Four-way exclusion that caregiving fathers experience

	Dominant group	
	Caregiving women	Non-caregiving men
Offline	Playgrounds, schools, and other childcare settings	Relations with colleagues at work or friends from school
Online	Parenting platforms and communities for moms only	Male-dominated online communities

Fathers' experiences in online parenting communities and platforms

Having discussed some experiences of isolation that caregiving fathers shared both offline and online, I now turn to the different ways fathers used online fathers' communities and platforms to address some of their challenges in positive way. I outline three themes to illustrate the diversity of fathers' online media activities and experiences on platforms such as the 100 Dads Group, blogs, and mobile services: learning, connecting, and influencing.

Learning: Attaining practical information to be more competent caregivers and fathers

First, fathers sought online communities to become more involved fathers and competent carers. This motivation was illustrated most clearly by Taejoon, who explained his reason for joining the 100 Dads Group as wanting to excel as a father and full-time househusband. Although Taejoon also reported feeling emasculated while being on leave, it appeared that his sense of emasculation was perhaps tied more with his perceived lack of contribution to his family rather than his non-breadwinning status per se. He was thus able to regain his self-esteem to an extent by immersing himself in the life of a househusband and online platforms played a critical faciliatory role in his process of "professionalization" as a carer.

> I started to think about how I can look after the kids better, and as I was looking after the home, I needed to feed the kids better. So I signed up to learn to cook and signed up for lectures on parenting or childrearing, and I also signed up for the 100 Dads Group.

A concern for fathers was that they were unsure of how they should play and spend the day with their kids, as illustrated by Yohan earlier in the article. In this context, Dohoon and Minjae found the daily play missions that the 100 Dads Group offers to be a great source of ideas for activities to do with their children. This suggests that online communities could provide considerable help even when it comes to fathers' involvement in developmental and play-related childcare, dimensions where fathers are understood to be already relatively highly involved in comparison to routine aspects of childcare (Craig, 2006; Steinbach & Schulz, 2022; Yeung et al., 2001). According to Dohoon,

> Dads have a hard time building relationships with their kids, we don't know how to play with them, I was like that, [I wondered,] how should I play with my kids? [The 100 Dads Group] gives out missions and themes so it helped a lot.

In addition to participating in the play missions, these fathers were involved in offline activities that the 100 Dads Group organized, such as lectures and mentoring sessions. Several daddy bloggers, including Minjae, posted on their blogs detailed reviews of their participation in 100 Dads Group activities. As the events organized by the 100 Dads Group often involved high-profile speakers such as a well-known psychotherapist and television personality, the fathers who participated in these events expressed feeling inspired and informed about becoming better parents. In such cases, fathers' online activities were mediating their presence in two different offline spheres—the home and public parenting events—thus further contributing to the visibility of caregiving fathers.

Connecting: Befriending likeminded fathers and creating a sense of belonging and connectedness

The online activities of the fathers in my study led them to forge new friendships and relationships with other likeminded fathers, some of which extended offline, as Lee (2018) found earlier. Fathers such as Dohoon and Taejoon below spoke fondly of their new peers, appreciating the way they were able to share and recognize each other's struggles openly and honestly. The new connections gave fathers the sense of belonging and affinity that they could not find in their friends or in mothers' communities. As Dohoon offered,

> I met a dad on parental leave through [the 100 Dads Group]. … I'd go to his place from time to time. … They had three kids and their second and third kids were the same age as our kids, same gender and same age. So I often met that dad to chat. Since he is older than me and is a more experienced father, we could talk about our difficulties. I shared things that I couldn't even share with my friends.

Taejoon recounted the following:

> I think my life satisfaction increased because of those [fathers' community] activities … and especially being a part of a community of similar-minded fathers where we can acknowledge each other. I found it much easier to communicate with and felt comfortable around fathers I met here than my friends.

Among Minjae's multiple blog posts relating to his 100 Dads Group activities was one recommending other fathers join the community. He explained that he had started blogging actively when he was at the peak of his postnatal depression because he was feeling lonely and isolated from spending most of his time with a baby and having nobody to talk with. In this context, he shared a link to the 100 Dads Group, strongly urging other fathers to join parenting communities to meet other parents and relieve stress from childcare. Online space, in this case, mediated both Minjae's alleviation of challenges as a caregiving father and his subsequent communication and expression of his positive experiences to other fathers.

H, an active daddy blogger, posted about a friend he made through his blogging activities. He had learned that one of his "blog friends," whose child was the same age and gender as his child, happened to live in his neighborhood. The two families, including both wives and children, met offline for the children to have a playdate and for the parents to chat over coffee. H wrote about the experience in a very positive tone: "I am really happy I met such pleasant and cheery people. It would be great if we can continue to meet up often in the neighborhood and eat together."[3] Despite the two families living in geographic proximity, this relationship likely would not have been created if it had not been for H's blogging activities. This suggests that online space could offer a more effective means of in-person socialization for fathers than more traditional and physical neighborhood venues such as playgrounds.

Influencing: Speaking up and advocating for social change

Finally, fathers used online platforms and activities to influence others, whether this meant advocating for a cause or social change or sharing useful information or their personal experiences of childcare. For instance, J, an active daddy blogger, wrote a post titled "Childcare is 'labor'."[4] In this post, he shares his own experience of realizing how laborious looking after a young child is and the difficulties that he faced in the process of applying for leave. He assures fathers that they do not need to feel overly guilty or concerned about going on parental leave

because they are not going on a holiday. He also urges those in senior positions to be more supportive of fathers going on leave, especially in smaller companies where it is uncommon for male employees to take parental leave.

Another example is Juho, who primarily blogs about his profession but occasionally also about his experience as a father. In one blog post that he shared with me before the interview, he emphasized the importance of men, as a privileged group in a patriarchal society, stepping up as involved fathers to alleviate their wives' burdens. In another post, he wrote about sending his blog post as a petition to the Ministry of Health and Welfare calling for change and receiving a response, albeit a generic one.

Hanbin was yet another father who fit this profile. I had come across and recruited him as an interviewee for my study when he was managing a mobile platform where he curated a topic on parenting every day for 100 days and invited participants to post short responses. When asked about his motivations for leading such activities, he mentioned that it was a combination of two reasons, wanting "to feel a sense of purpose" and "to raise social awareness about father's participation in childcare."

These fathers were not necessarily highly influential; their activities typically attracted modest numbers of likes, visitors, and comments. Nonetheless, regardless of the level of reach and influence, these fathers can be understood to be taking an "activist" or "influencer" approach, either advocating for social change or sharing their views and lives honestly and arguably making an impact on an everyday level, albeit to a few people and on a small scale.

Remaining challenges and limitations

Despite the mostly positive experiences of online activities and experiences that fathers shared, a few fathers shared their reservations about and critiques of online communities and platforms for fathers. Although these were minority opinions, they are important in that they indicate room for future improvement.

In addition to the overall lack of online communities and platforms for fathers, as discussed earlier, a few fathers expressed a lack of trust in the mainstream representation of parenting and fathering in online communities, social network platforms, and the popular media more broadly, sometimes even as they also partook in online activities. For instance, a blog post written by S suggested that what is posted on blogs are glamourized or filtered versions of reality and reading such posts does not help him with the "real" questions and difficulties he has:

> How do people play with their children? Everyone posts fancy things on their blogs and stuff … but I have extremely low trust in blogs and these things. How do typical moms and dads play with their kids in "real" life, not for blog posts? I'm curious.[5]

Joonsoo similarly shared his thoughts on how representations of fathers in online communities and social network platforms promote somewhat unrealistic ideals of fatherhood that he feels he is never able to attain:

> On [online] communities or social networks, there are a lot of dads who are really good to their kids. I feel like I'm not good enough. I mean, I am doing well in my own way but … how are those dads doing that? So I try not to look at those dad's communities and stuff.

The negative emotions that the fathers alluded to had two dimensions: a financial one in which they felt pressure to take children to fancy places as well as an affective one in which they

felt pressure to be always emotionally available and patient with their children. These sentiments conveyed feelings of shame, resentment, and pressure about the unrealistic and unattainable depictions of fathering on online media. This type of experience with online media content is in line with the characterization of blogging as a performative and curated act to construct bloggers' identities as well as others' imagined perceptions of them (von Benzon, 2019). They are also consistent with more general critiques of involved fatherhood in other types of media such as television (Han, 2013; Heo, 2016; Kim, 2014; Lee, 2014; Lee & Baek, 2016). Online media was thus, in a sense, magnifying the pressures that these pioneering caregiving fathers were under, as breadwinners as well as caregivers.

DISCUSSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

By drawing on data on Korean leave-taking fathers, this article has sought to explore and profile how online communities and platforms for fathers can support fathers in addressing some of their challenges as male caregivers. To do so, I have first recounted the exclusion that fathers often experienced as caregivers, both from the community of caregiving mothers and from the community of their (non-caregiver) male peers, both offline as well as online. I then focused on the fathers who actively engaged in a range of online communities that are in line with their caregiving identities to demonstrate how online media activities allowed these fathers to learn to be better caregivers, connect with other caregiving fathers, and influence other fathers. Finally, focusing on the perceptions of fathers who were critical or reserved about online communities and platforms, I highlighted some remaining limitations and challenges to be addressed.

On the whole, fathers reported positive experiences of their online activities on fathers' communities and other platforms. Information and activities that the state-led community 100 Dads Group allowed fathers to learn to build better relationships with their children and to reflect on their parenting styles and behaviors. Moreover, the connections built through online activities and communities led to valuable friendships based on shared experience and mutual recognition. Further, there were fathers who sought to speak up about their own experiences and advocate for social causes around making involved fatherhood more normative. What is particularly important about these online activities is that they helped fathers to address their experiences of exclusion as male caregivers. Whereas fathers commonly faced difficulties in accessing and sharing parenting-related information and experiences with peer caregivers which resulted in challenges to fulfilling community responsibilities as well as mental health issues, the newly forged online networks allowed fathers to address and relieve some of these struggles. Although online communities for fathers were generally helpful in supporting caregiving fathers, there were also some critical or reserved sentiments that social media contents promote unrealistic and unattainable ideals of fatherhood, as well as the view that accessing information is still challenging and limited.

The findings from this article add and contribute to the wider literature on fathers' isolation from caregiving spaces and the role of online media. First, my study extends Brooks and Hodkinson's (2020) analysis of caregiving fathers being doubly excluded in offline settings and demonstrates a similar exclusion in the online sphere: on one hand from online communities for moms and on the other hand from male-dominant online communities. I suggest that this locates caregiving fathers at the junction of a four-way exclusion, both offline and online as well as among both women's communities and men's communities, contributing to and reinforcing the persistent gender norm against men's caregiving. Whereas most existing documentation of fathers' exclusions as caregivers focused on the offline space (Brooks & Hodkinson, 2020; Doucet, 2006, 2009, 2018; Gill et al., 2021; Lee & Lee, 2018; Merla, 2008; O'Brien & Twamley, 2017; Tremblay & Lazzari Dodeler, 2017), I extended this by

demonstrating how the same could be said of their exclusion online. Second, I diversify the understanding of the relationship between online and offline activities in the context of fathers' caregiving. Previous studies have focused on the role of online activities in providing emotional support to fathers (Fletcher & StGeorge, 2011; Hodkinson & Das, 2021; Livesay, 2011; Lee & Lee, 2018; Salzmann-Erikson & Eriksson, 2013) or forging networks and relationships offline (Lee, 2018). Adding to this, I have identified a plethora of ways that online media mediates fathers' caregiving by empowering them in their roles as caregivers. This includes upskilling in fathering, participation in public parenting events, and challenging and possibly changing social perceptions of the role of fathers. At the same time, I have highlighted how online media could, in certain cases, amplify the pressures or inequalities that fathers experience, resulting in negative and skeptical outlooks. Third, I find that online activities contribute to addressing the challenges that fathers experience as caregivers—not only their isolation but also their active reconstruction of masculine identities to embody elements of gender egalitarianism and social justice. It seems that enabling caregiving fathers to engage with likeminded people can play an important role in their affirmation of their new identities as caregivers. In this sense, it is fathers' uptake of leave and their online activities that jointly work to challenge and redefine the gender binary between breadwinning and caregiving. This adds a new layer of nuance to existing studies on the role of fathers' uptake of leave and the reconstruction of fathers' masculine identities (Brandth & Kvande, 2018; Johansson, 2011; O'Brien & Wall, 2017; Rehel, 2013).

These findings have some practical implications for improving support for fathers online, in Korea as well as elsewhere. First, the major challenge seems to be that most fathers are not yet very aware of the presence of online communities and support for fathers. Even though the interviewed fathers were all involved and leave-taking fathers and many were active online, they felt the range and level of accessibility of information, content, and advice for fathers was lacking compared with those for mothers. Hence, there seems to be a need for more diversified and better promoted online communities and resources that are more easily accessible for fathers. In the case of Korea where the largest online community for fathers is run and supported by the government, it would be a good idea to centralize the provision of information about online communities so that fathers are informed about the community and encouraged to join, for instance, when their child is born or when they are applying to take parental leave. Where major fathers' online communities are not centrally managed, local governments could consider introducing similar initiatives to make it easier for local fathers to connect. Moreover, efforts should focus on making online communities and content more inclusive and in touch with the reality of the majority of fathers. It is, of course, neither possible nor desirable to regulate the contents of individual bloggers who may have their vested, and often economic, interests in blogging (Hunter & Riggs, 2019; von Benzon, 2019). However, the greater their influence, the greater consideration managers of online communities and platforms should give to the type of ideal fatherhood that they are promoting. In particular, state-run communities should take care not to promote a normative ideal of fatherhood that privileges an exclusive group of fathers, such as those who are economically well-off. The same goes for broader media depictions of fathers; the aim should be to broadcast and portray a diverse range of fathers, rather than limited and hegemonic portrayals.

To conclude, this work adds to the emerging yet limited body of literature that studies caregiving fathers' engagement in online media, based on a triangulation of qualitative interviews and web materials. The contribution is meaningful in that it documents a range of online media activities, experiences, and views, based on which I present some practical recommendations. This work is not without limitations, however. First, because the vast majority of the fathers in this study are middle-class, educated, white-collar fathers in heterosexual marriage relationships, it does not account for the experiences of fathers from more underprivileged or nonnormative backgrounds. Neither does the focus on leave-taking fathers'

experiences of primary caregiving account for other types of fathering experiences, particularly that of full-time working fathers. Moreover, because leave-taking fathers represent a minority population in Korea, the experiences of fathers in this study should not be considered representative of the experiences of all Korean fathers. Finally, although this paper alluded to some of the activities promoted in the government-led online fathers' community, there was not enough space for a critical inquiry into the type of fatherhood ideals that are being produced and reproduced in the online community. With these limitations in mind, I invite further works to explore a wider range of fathers' experiences of family life online, based on diverse country contexts and multiple data and methods, as well as accounting for a variety of fathers.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ENDNOTES

[1] According to recent figures, Nordic men took 10% to 30% of the total leave; Swedish fathers took 131 days (334 days for mothers), Icelandic fathers took 70 days (173 days for mothers), and Norwegian fathers took 40 days (174 days for mothers) on average (NOSOSCO, 2017).

[2] This included 29 blogs by fathers, 18 blogs by mothers, and two blogs jointly run by both parents, all where the father had experience taking parental leave. However, because this particular article focuses on the experiences and perceptions of fathers on caring for their children and using online communities, primacy was given to fathers' views. Thus, all the selected illustrative quotes in this article come from fathers. See Lee (2022b) for research drawing on the same blog data but referring equally extensively to mothers' views.

[3] https://blog.naver.com/hswstar/221495934829

[4] https://blog.naver.com/hw7002/221219444450

[5] https://blog.naver.com/happy21122/221520940672

REFERENCES

Asenhed, L., Kilstam, J., Alehagen, S., & Baggens, C. (2014). Becoming a father is an emotional roller coaster—an analysis of first-time fathers' blogs. *Journal of Clinical Nursing.*, *23*(9–10), 1309–1317. https://doi.org/10.1111/jocn.12355.

Bassett, E. H., & O'Riordan, K. (2002). Ethics of Internet research: Contesting the human subjects research model. *Ethics and Information Technology*, *4*, 233–247 https://link.springer.com/article/10.1023/A:1021319125207.

Brandth, B., & Kvande, E. (2018). Masculinity and fathering alone during parental leave. *Men and Masculinities*, *21*(1), 72–90. https://doi.org/10.1177/1097184X16652659.

Brooks, R., & Hodkinson, P. (2020). Out-of-place: The lack of engagement with parent networks of caregiving fathers of young children. *Families, Relationships and Societies*, *9*(2), 201–216. https://doi.org/10.1332/204674319X15536844488314.

Connell, R. W. (2005). *Masculinities* ((2nd ed.). ed.). Polity Press.

Craig, L. (2006). Does father care mean fathers share? A comparison of how mothers and fathers in intact families spend time with children. *Gender & Society*, *20*(2), 259–281 http://www.jstor.org/stable/27640883.

Dermott, E. (2008). *Intimate fatherhood: A sociological analysis.* Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203927069.

Doucet, A. (2006). "Estrogen-filled worlds": Fathers as primary caregivers and embodiment. *The Sociological Review*, *54*(4), 696–716. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-954X.2006.00667.x.

Doucet, A. (2009). Dad and baby in the first year: Gendered responsibilities and embodiment. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *624*(1), 78–98. https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716209334069.

Doucet, A. (2018). *Do men mother? Fathering, care, and domestic responsibility* ((2nd ed.). ed.). University of Toronto Press.

Elliott, K. (2016). Caring masculinities: Theorizing an emerging concept. *Men and Masculinities*, *19*(3), 24–259. https://doi.org/10.1177/1097184X15576203.

Fletcher, R., & StGeorge, J. (2011). Heading into fatherhood—nervously: Support for fathering from online dads. *Qualitative Health Research*, *21*(8), 1101–1114. https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732311404903.

Friedman, M. (2016). Daddyblogs know best: Histories of fatherhood in the cyber age. In E. Podnieks (Ed.), *Pops in pop culture* (pp. 87–103). Palgrave Macmillan 10.1007/978-1-137-57767-2_5.

Gill, P., Scacco, S., De Haan, S., & Gent, A. (2021). Getting into the "Dad Zone": How do primary caregiving fathers of young children experience social support? *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, *30*(11), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-021-01919-1.

Han, H. J. (2013). Audience reception of the representation of fatherhood in the reality TV program, Daddy! Where are we going? *Social Science Research Review*, *29*(3), 161–186. https://doi.org/G704-001638.2013.29.3.008.

Hanlon, N. (2012). Masculinities, care and equality: identity and nurture in men's lives. *Palgrave Macmillan.* https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137264879.

Hearn, J. (2010). Reflecting on men and social policy: Contemporary critical debates and implications for social policy. *Critical Social Policy*, *30*(2), 165–188. https://doi.org/10.1177/0261018309358288.

Hearn, J., & Pringle, K. (2006). Men, masculinities and children: Some European perspectives. *Critical Social Policy*, *26*(2), 365–389. https://doi.org/10.1177/0261018306062590.

Heo, Y. (2016). Misogyny in the era of "daughter-fools"—Korea's Masculinity in the 2000s seen through the transformation of the "father figure.". *Journal of Popular Narrative*, *22*(4), 279–309 10.18856/jpn.2016.22.4.008.

Hodkinson, P., & Das, R. (2021). *New fathers, mental health and digital communication*. Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-66482-4.

Hunter, S. C., & Riggs, D. W. (2019). *Men, caregiving and the media*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429455476.

Hookway, N. (2017). Archives of everyday life: Using blogs in qualitative research. In I. V. Braun, V. Clarke, D. Gray, & D. (Eds.), *Collecting qualitative data: A practical guide to textual, media and virtual techniques* (pp. 144–165). Cambridge University Press.

Johansson, T. (2011). Fatherhood in transition: Paternity leave and changing masculinities. *Journal of Family Communication*, *11*(3), 165–180. https://doi.org/10.1080/15267431.2011.561137.

Johansson, T., & Andreasson, J. (2017). *Fatherhood in transition: Masculinity, identity, and everyday life*. Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-58953-8.

Kim, M. (2014). New types of masculinity represented in TV and its limitations: Focusing on weekend variety programs. *The Journal of the Korea Contents Association*, *16*(1), 88–96. https://doi.org/10.5392/JKCA.2014.14.01.088.

Koslowski, A., Blum, S., Dobrotić, I., Kaufman, G., & Moss, P. (2021). *17th International Review of Leave Policies and Related Research 2021*. doi:10.18445/20210817-144100-0 https://www.leavenetwork.org/annual-review-reports/review-2021/.

Kozinets, R. V. (2015). *Netnography redefined*. Sage Publications.

Lee, D. (2014). The limitations of paternal involvement discourses and alternative fatherhood—beyond happy family and friendly father. *Gender and Culture*, *7*(2), 147–180 https://doi.org/G704-SER000002148.2014.7.2.004.

Lee, J. Y., & Lee, S. J. (2018). Caring is masculine: Stay-at-home fathers and masculine identity. *Psychology of Men & Masculinity*, *19*(1), 47–58. https://doi.org/10.1037/men0000079.

Lee, R., & Baek, S. G. (2016). Fatherhood representations of childcare entertainment programs—a semiotic study on a reality program, "Where Are We Going, Dad?" of MBC. *The Journal of the Korea Contents Association*, *16*(1), 107–120. https://doi.org/10.5392/JKCA.2016.16.01.107.

Lee, Y. (2018). *Raised online by Daddy: Fatherhoods and childhoods in Taiwanese father-run baby blogs* [PhD thesis. Scotland: University of Edinburgh. https://era.ed.ac.uk/handle/1842/31275.

Lee, Y. (2022a). *Fathers' uptake of parental leave in South Korea: Determinants and aftermaths* [Doctoral dissertation. Cambridge, UK: University of Cambridge https://www.repository.cam.ac.uk/bitstream/handle/1810/337127/[final_redacted]PhDthesisYoungchoLee.pdf?sequence=5.

Lee, Y. (2022b). Norms about childcare, working hours, and fathers' uptake of parental leave in South Korea. *Community, Work & Family*. https://doi.org/10.1080/13668803.2022.2031889.

Livesay, C. (2011). the other side of the (gender) coin: Stay-at-home fathers' use of online discussion groups. In M. Moravec (Ed.), *Motherhood online* (pp. 168–179). Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Lupton, D., Pedersen, S., & Thomas, G. M. (2016). Parenting and digital media: From the early web to contemporary digital society. *Sociology Compass*, *10*(8), 730–743. https://doi.org/10.1111/soc4.12398.

McLaughlin, K., & Muldoon, O. (2014). Father identity, involvement and work–family balance: An in-depth interview study. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, *24*(5), 439–452. https://doi.org/10.1002/casp.2183.

Merla, L. (2008). Determinants, costs and meanings of Belgian stay-at-home fathers: An international comparison. *Fathering*, *6*(2), 113–132. https://doi.org/10.3149/fth.0602.113.

Miller, T. (2010). *Making sense of fatherhood: Gender, caring and work*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511778186.

NOSOSCO (Nordic Statistical Committee). (2017). *Social protection in the Nordic countries: scope, expenditure and financing*. https://norden.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1148493/FULLTEXT02.pdf.

O'Brien, A. P., McNeil, K. A., Fletcher, R., Conrad, A., Wilson, A. J., Jones, D., & Chan, S. W. (2017). New fathers' perinatal depression and anxiety—Treatment options: An integrative review. *American Journal of Men's Health*, *11*(4), 863–876. https://doi.org/10.1177/1557988316669047.

O'Brien, M., & Twamley, K. (2017). Fathers taking leave alone in the UK—a gift exchange between mother and father? In M. O'Brien & K. Wall (Eds.), *Comparative perspectives on work–life balance and gender equality: Fathers on leave alone* (pp. 163–182). Springer Open. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-42970-0.

O'Brien, M., & Wall, K. (Eds.). (2017). *Comparative perspectives on work–life balance and gender equality: Fathers on leave alone*. Springer Open. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-42970-0.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2021). *Time spent in paid and unpaid work, by sex*. https://stats.oecd.org/index.aspx?queryid=54757#.

Rehel, E. M. (2013). When dad stays home too: Paternity leave, gender, and parenting. *Gender & Society*, *28*(1), 110–132. https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243213503900.

Ranson, G. (2015). *Fathering, masculinity and the embodiment of care*. Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137455895.

Salzmann-Erikson, M., & Eriksson, H. (2013). Fathers sharing about early parental support in health-care—virtual discussions on an Internet forum. *Health and Social Care in the Community*, *21*(4), 381–390. https://doi.org/10.1111/hsc.12028.

Scheibling, C. (2020a). The culture of fatherhood 2.0: exploring the "tiny public" of dad bloggers in North America. *Feminist Media Studies*, *20*(6), 813–830. https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2019.1617764.

Scheibling, C. (2020b). Doing fatherhood online: Men's parental identities, experiences, and ideologies on social media. *Symbolic Interaction*, *43*(3), 472–492. https://doi.org/10.1002/symb.459.

Scheibling, C. (2020c). "Real heroes care": How dad bloggers are reconstructing fatherhood and masculinities. *Men and Masculinities*, *23*(1), 3–19. https://doi.org/10.1177/1097184X18816506.

Segal, L. (2007). *Slow motion: Changing masculinities, changing men*. Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230582521.

Statistics Korea. (2020). *Time-use survey*. http://www.index.go.kr/potal/stts/idxMain/selectPoSttsIdxMainPrint.do?idx_cd=3027&board_cd=INDX_001.

Statistics Korea. (2022). Parental leave statistics 2021 (provisional). https://www.kostat.go.kr/portal/korea/kor_nw/1/3/6/index.board?bmode=read&aSeq=422530&pageNo=1&amSeq=&sTarget=&sTxt=.

Steinbach, A., & Schulz, F. (2022). Stability and change in German parents' childcare patterns across two decades. *Social Politics*, *29*(2), 428–445. https://doi.org/10.1093/sp/jxab017.

Tremblay, D.-G., & Lazzari Dodeler, N. (2017). Fathers on leave alone in Quebec (Canada): The case of innovative, subversive and activist fathers! (pp. 69–87). In M. O'Brien & K. Wall (Eds.), *Comparative perspectives on work–life balance and gender equality: Fathers on leave alone*. Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-42970-0.

van Manen, M. (1990). *Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy*. State University of New York Press.

von Benzon, N. (2019). Informed consent and secondary data: Reflections on the use of mothers' blogs in social media research. *Area*, *51*(1), 182–189. https://doi.org/10.1111/area.12445.

Yeung, W. J., Sandberg, J. F., Davis-Kean, P. E., & Hofferth, S. L. (2001). Children's time with fathers in intact families. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *63*(1), 136–154. https://www.jstor.org/stable/3599964.