



Narratives of Children's Gender Socialization from Fathers Who Take Parental Leave in South Korea

Youngcho Lee¹

Accepted: 27 September 2023
© The Author(s) 2023

Abstract

Do leave-taking fathers who 'undo' gender in their division of domestic labour and responsibilities also 'undo' gender in relation to their children's gender socialization? This exploratory qualitative study seeks to understand how leave-taking fathers in South Korea ($N=17$) experience and envision their children's gender socialization by identifying three types of fathers. For 'committed' fathers, leave-taking is an extension of their genuine convictions and best efforts to raise children based on feminist ideals, but contradictory messages from non-parental influences such as preschools pose challenges. 'Conflicted' fathers undergo significant changes in their views about men and women's roles through leave uptake but confess to still holding rigid views about children's gender socialization. 'Receptive' fathers demonstrate more open and moderately flexible attitudes to children's gender roles than the 'conflicted' fathers, although not as consciously, proactively, or consistently as the 'committed' fathers. The findings indicate that fathers' uptake of leave leads to diverging, rather than uniform trajectories in fathers' development of attitudes and behaviours toward children's socialization. The findings point to the need to consider inconsistencies operating at multiple levels of the 'gender trap,' including between fathers' attitudes toward adult and children's gender roles, fathers' behaviours and attitudes, and parental and non-parental influences.

Keywords Child gender socialization · Gendered parenting · Fathering · Children · Parental leave

Berk posits that the home is a site or “factory” where gender is produced and reproduced (1985). While Berk focuses on how “household members ‘do’ gender, as they ‘do’ housework and childcare” (p. 201), the home is also a critical site of gender production for children's socialization of gender roles and expectations. When parents ‘do gender’ differently at home—for instance, in the case of leave-taking fathers engaging in traditionally feminine domestic activities— understandings of “the material embodiment of [...] womanly and manly conduct” (West & Zimmerman, 1987, p. 144) changes not just for the parents but also crucially for their children (Sani, 2016; Scheibling, 2022). In other words, fathers ‘undoing’ gender by taking leave (Deutsch, 2007; Risman, 2009) may have a knock-on effect on children's acquisition and development of more egalitarian and flexible gender roles, in which case

the gender-equalizing impact of fathers' leave policies may extend beyond a single generation.

There exists a well-established body of literature that finds fathers' uptake of leave to result in their greater involvement in childcare and housework (Bünning, 2015; Gonalons-Pons, 2022; Kotsadam & Finseraas, 2011; Patnaik, 2019; Tamm, 2019; Wray, 2020). Another body of literature has found fathers' greater involvement in childcare and housework to lead to more gender egalitarian attitudes and behaviours in children (Cano & Hofmeister, 2023; Davis & Wills, 2010; Deutsch et al., 2001; Halpern & Perry-Jenkins, 2016; Perales et al., 2021; Platt & Polavieja, 2016). However, there exists no study to the author's knowledge which directly considers whether and how fathers' uptake of parental leave may shape fathers' attitudes towards and experiences of their children's gender socialization. More generally, even though the literature on leave-taking and involved fathers has been rapidly expanding, limited attention has been paid to how fathers “interpret, explain, and contribute to the gendering of children” (Scheibling, 2022, p. 366). Addressing this gap, the current study will explore

✉ Youngcho Lee
y.lee28@lse.ac.uk

¹ Department of Social Policy, London School of Economics, London, UK

leave-taking fathers' narratives of how they envision and experience their children's gender socialization based on interviews with 17 fathers who have taken parental leave in South Korea. This focus will allow us to better understand the role that fathers' leave plays in constructing and (re)producing gender for their young children.

In what follows I will first review and put in conversation two bodies of literature, respectively, on the gender equalising impact of fathers' uptake of leave and the sociological and psychological literature on child gender socialization with a focus on the paternal pathway to frame the current study. Next, I will present the South Korean policy context and data and methods, followed by the findings from the qualitative analysis. Finally, I will conclude by discussing the findings, limitations, and implications of the study.

Connecting the Dots: Fathers' Uptake of Leave and Child Gender Socialization

The extant literature on the aftermaths of fathers' uptake of leave has paid particular attention to whether and to what extent fathers taking leave could contribute to gender equality within the household. Quantitative studies have documented a positive *causal* relationship between fathers' uptake of (long) leave and a more gender-egalitarian division of unpaid labour (Bünning, 2015; Kotsadam & Finseraas, 2011; Patnaik, 2019; Tamm, 2019; Wray, 2020). These results are backed up by various qualitative studies which have similarly noted the transformative effects of fathers' leave on their development of caring and active co-parenting identities (Doucet, 2018; O'Brien & Wall, 2017; Ranson, 2015). This body of evidence has established fathers' leave policy as a key intervention with the potential to equalize gender relations at home.

At the same time, some nuances and complexities in the relationship between fathers' leave and gender equality have been noted. For instance, Wall and Leitão (2017) identify and highlight heterogeneity among Portuguese fathers on leave alone, ranging from those who continue to see them as secondary caregivers who 'help' the mothers to those who are reflective, proactive, and committed to gender-egalitarian partnership and parenting. Wall and O'Brien (2017) further stress complexity in trajectories of change, as the impact of fathers' leave is mediated by multiple intervening factors from sociocultural norms to labour market circumstances. Thus, while there exists considerable evidence that fathers' uptake of leave has transformative and redistributive effects on the division of unpaid labour and responsibilities between couples, other works have suggested that the relationship between fathers' leave and gender equality may not be linear or uniform (Doucet & McKay, 2020; Duvander et al., 2019). Furthermore, because the empirical literature has

focused mainly on the gendered division of unpaid labour and responsibilities between couples, we do not yet know whether and how fathers' leave-taking may impact other dimensions of the (re)production of gender at home, such as child gender socialization.

A separate body of research on child gender socialization has established that the parental pathway is a prominent route through which children acquire knowledge about acceptable and unacceptable gender roles. Blakemore et al. (2008) classify four different manifestations of parental influence on child gender socialization. First, parents may create a gendered world for their children by making gendered choices about their children's names, belongings, and activities. Second, parents may have different interactions with or responses to sons and daughters. Third, parents may instruct gender-appropriate behaviours, through affirming or denying gender stereotypes. Finally, parents serve as role models for their children to imitate, particularly in their roles as caregivers and breadwinners, and particularly implicit and covert messages that play a key role in child gender socialization at home (Mesman & Groeneveld, 2018). Other studies have stressed how parents are not free from social influence in how they approach child gender socialization. Notably, Kane (2012) finds that parents demonstrate diverse attitudes and behaviours towards children's gender socialization depending on their own level of conformity and/or resistance as well as concern about others' judgment. Based on this analysis, Kane coins the term 'gender trap' to refer to the "set of expectations and structures that inhibit social change and stall many parents' best intentions for loosening the limits that gender can impose upon us" (p. 3).

What then, do we know about fathers' roles in child gender socialization, more specifically? Studies on children's development have tended to consider mothers as the primary pathway through which children acquire beliefs and knowledge about acceptable gender roles. As such, there exist relatively limited studies that focus specifically on fathers' influence on their children's gender socialization (e.g., Cano & Hofmeister, 2023; Carlson, 1984; Davis & Wills, 2010; Halpern & Perry-Jenkins, 2016; Scheibling, 2022). Yet these studies as well as others that more broadly account for both parents' roles do find that fathers' attitudes and behaviors matter for children's egalitarian gender role attitudes (Deutsch et al., 2001; Fagot & Leinbach, 1995; Perales et al., 2021; Platt & Polavieja, 2016; Weinraub et al., 1984). The most recent of these works by Cano and Hofmeister (2023), for instance, finds that paternal involvement in housework and childcare is a significant predictor of children's gender role attitudes, even after controlling for maternal involvement and both parents' gender-role attitudes. The authors specifically highlight that "policy interventions [...] such as paternal leave [...] might contribute toward a new generation of men

and women who hold more egalitarian views on gender and raise children who do as well” (p. 18). A few works have furthermore shown that children are more likely perform gender-atypical household tasks if their father does so (Álvarez & Miles-Touya, 2012; Cunningham, 2001; Evertsson, 2006; Sani, 2016).

With most of the research on the intergenerational transmission of gender roles studied quantitatively, Risman and Myers’ work (1997) is one of the few qualitative studies that examine how parents’ gender egalitarianism impacts children’s understanding of gender egalitarianism. Confirming the findings from the quantitative literature, the children in this study were found to uniformly adopt their parents’ non-sexist attitudes. However, the authors also found that the rhetoric of fairness does not extend to the children’s understandings of gender roles for boys and girls. Faced with conflicting messages on one hand from their parents and on the other hand from non-parental influences such as peers, the media, and school, parents’ efforts to reduce the salience of gender difference in their children’s lives were not always successful (see also Blakemore et al., 2008). More generally, these findings align with Bronfenbrenner’s ecological theory (1993) stressing the bidirectional interactions between individual children and their surrounding contexts and actors ranging from family, peers, and teachers to broader influences from the media as well as legal and social systems.

Building on existing literature, it is important to examine whether leave-taking fathers who ‘undo’ gender in the division of domestic labour also ‘undo’ gender in raising their children. Leave-taking fathers may, as an extension of their leave uptake, actively resist reproducing gendered distinctions in instructing or interacting with children or in constructing children’s gendered worlds. Moreover, given that fathers’ uptake of leave has been found to have a long-lasting gender-equalising impact (Tamm, 2019), children who grow up seeing their fathers on leave may mirror their parents’ interchangeable or complementary roles as caregivers and breadwinners or simply grow up with less gendered norms about who-does-what. However, we must also note the various factors that complicate the relationship between fathers taking leave and children developing more egalitarian and flexible gender roles attitudes, as previous studies suggest. For one, leave-taking fathers are not necessarily a homogenous group, particularly in the extent to which they develop gender egalitarian, deconstructive, and reflexive attitudes and identities (Wall & Leitão, 2017). Moreover, children encounter a range of non-parental influences, some of which could contradict or offset parental influences (Risman & Myers, 1997). Finally, while leave-taking may make fathers more gender egalitarian and flexible, it could also be that fathers who already demonstrate gender egalitarian attitudes decide to take leave, particularly where fathers’ uptake of leave is not common (Lee, 2023). As such, the direction, linearity, and

consistency of the association between fathers’ leave, gender egalitarian parenting styles, and children’s acquisition of flexible gender role attitudes are all up for further inquiry.

In short, while the extant literature has sought to uncover the relationship between parents’ and children’s gender role attitudes and behaviours, most studies have taken a quantitative approach. Moreover, existing studies have not yet examined how fathers’ uptake of parental leave may subsequently impact children’s gender socialization. Bearing in mind such gaps and considerations, the present study will explore the links between fathers’ uptake of leave and narratives of their children’s gender socialization. Through qualitative interviews conducted with fathers with parental leave experience in South Korea, this study will seek to capture the complexities and nuances in how leave-taking fathers experiences and envision their children’s gender socialization.

Policy Context: Fathers’ Uptake of Parental Leave in South Korea

Korea’s parental leave policies is among the most flexible and generous globally in terms of duration; each parent can use a non-transferable period of leave of up to twelve months for each child aged up to eight. In terms of income replacement rate, recent reforms to the ‘father’s month bonus’ guarantees generous benefits for the second parent to take leave (typically the fathers) for the first three months of leave while a moderate to low level of benefit is provided in the subsequent months. Even though the number of Korean fathers choosing to take parental leave has been on a rapid rise in the last several years, a recent government report suggests that a mere 1.8 per cent of all eligible fathers took leave for 2019 born children (Statistics Korea, 2020).

At the same time, the fathers who do take leave regularly take a year-long leave and the mean length of fathers’ leave in Korea approximates seven months (National Assembly Budget Office, 2019), substantially longer than the mean leave of fathers in Nordic countries such as Sweden (131 days), Iceland (70 days), and Norway (40 days) (Nordic Social-Statistical Committee, 2017). The low uptake rate implies that highly selective fathers are opting into parental leave, while the long lengths of leave for children as young as a few months and as old as eight (or even older, where fathers took leave for a younger child in households where the older child was eight or older or where fathers began leave when the child is eight or younger but finish his leave when the child is older) means that there is a relatively wide window of opportunity for children to learn from their fathers’ atypical gender roles.

More broadly, Korea is marked by one of the longest paid work hours and one of the most gender unequal division of unpaid labour among high-income countries (Organization

for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2022; 2023). Korean men spend an average of 64 min per day on unpaid labour while Korean women spend 225 min, men contributing to less than a quarter of the total unpaid work (Statistics Korea, 2021). Even when limited to just dual-income couples, husbands on average spend 54 min per day on unpaid labour while wives spend 3.5 times this amount, of 187 min (Statistics Korea, 2021). Such figures further suggest that leave-taking fathers are indeed exceptions to the norm in Korea.

Method

Interview Procedure and Schedule

The data for the current study was collected as part of a bigger mixed methods project on the determinants and aftermaths of fathers' uptake of parental leave in South Korea. The project obtained approval from the Ethical Approval and Risk Assessment Committee for Sociological Research of the University of Cambridge in December 2019 and the interviews were conducted between May and October of 2020. Although 51 fathers were interviewed in total for the project, for the current study, I specifically draw on interviews with 17 fathers with whom discussions around child gender socialization emerged as a particularly salient topic during the interview. While the majority of interviewees were recruited via their participation and indication of interest through an online survey which was distributed in various online parenting platforms, some ($N = 5$) were additionally recruited through personal networks. The interviews were recorded with consent, transcribed verbatim, and the names of the quoted participants have been replaced with pseudonyms.

Participants

Table 1 presents a summary of the interviewees' key demographic features. While there was some diversity among the interviewed fathers in their demographic background and how their leave was taken, the 'average father' was in his late 30's with his youngest child around 3-years-old, had a

university education, and took parental leave of around one year; where fathers took leave more than once, I refer to the one taken most recently.

Study Design

Although this study was conducted as a part of a bigger project on the experiences of leave-taking fathers, the interviews were conducted with a view to exploring how leave-taking fathers experience and envision their children's gender socialization. As such, the derived data corresponded to the research aim of understanding leave-taking fathers' narratives of child gender socialization. Prior to the interview, the participants filled out an online survey in which they were asked to select the extent to which they agree to a series of statements on gender role attitudes on a five-point Likert scale, including items widely used in social surveys including the ISSP (International Social Survey Programme), such as "a husband's job is to earn money and a wife's job is to look after the home and family" as well as bespoke items such as "boys and girls should be raised differently, according to their gender." During the interview the participants were asked about their views and experiences relating to their children's gender socialization in various ways, including by asking to explain and elaborate on their response to the survey questionnaire. Participants were also asked about whether there were any differences in their and their wives' parenting styles, as well as whether they observed any gender differences between their children in cases where they had both son and daughter. These questions allowed me to understand how fathers envisioned and experienced their children's development of gender roles and identities. The interviews also covered, more generally, fathers' experiences during leave and changes to their gender role attitudes.

Data Analysis

Of particular interest for this study was how fathers understood their parental leave experience to have contributed to (changes in) their attitudes and experiences of child gender socialization. To effectively make this connection and identify continuity and change, it was important to be able to simultaneously

Table 1 Demographic Composition of Sample of Leave-Taking Fathers ($N = 17$)

Age, Father (mean, range)	38 (31–42)	Education	
Age, Youngest Child (mean, range)	3 (0–7)	Four-year university degree	13
Employment		Graduate degree	4
Public sector	4	Number of Children	
Private sector	6	One	6
Non-profit sector	4	Two	10
Freelance or self-employed	2	Three	1
Not in employment	1	Length of leave (mean, range)	12 (2.5–36)

have a holistic account of the fathers' leave-taking experiences and their account of child gender socialization more specifically. Hence, I first developed a summary of each father's overall profile and narrative, after which I focused more closely on the dataset directly relating to fathers' narratives of child gender socialization.

The thematic analysis that followed was informed by Braun and Clarke's guideline for reflexive thematic analysis, an iterative and interpretive technique to engage, code, and develop themes in qualitative data (2006, see also 2021a, b). First, I conducted an initial coding of the data, noting recurring and diverging patterns of change, persistence, challenges, and contradictions in fathers' narratives of child gender socialization. Second, based on this initial coding, I sought to identify, distinguish, and conceptualize fathers' different narratives of child gender socialization to develop distinct profiles of fathers. As a third and final step, I noted how fathers in each category explained any influence of leave-taking on their children's attitudes. The typologies developed should not be taken as necessarily always mutually exclusive or corresponding to the stories of every single father interviewed but rather as potential archetypes that maybe useful for research and practice around children's gender socialization.

Research Positionality and Reflexivity

As a cis-gender women currently without children who is studying fathers, I took care to reflect on my own assumptions and position as a researcher. This included "provid[ing] space for men's narratives of caregiving and to resist the impulse to measure, judge, and evaluate them through maternal standards" (Doucet, 2018, p.28). I was also conscious of my lack of first-hand experience or knowledge of being a parent and engaging extensively in childcare or the "discursive resource within the interview setting" that mothers researching motherhood often draw on (Frost & Holt, 2013, p.96). I was hence cautious not to impose particular themes or angles that I had in mind before the fieldwork that the research participants may not necessarily feel to be relevant to their experiences. Instead, I emphasized to the interviewees that I am happy to learn about any aspect of their experience that they felt was important and kept an open and evolving outlook throughout the data collection phase.

Results

The results of the thematic analysis are presented below, organized by the three profiles of child gender socialization that emerged in the study. Table 2 presents a summary of the major themes identified.

Table 2 Summary of Major Themes

Theme	Description	Frequency	Exemplary quote
Committed	Proactively and consciously contesting gender boundaries in their role as caregivers as well as for their children's gender socialization	23.53% (N=4)	I try not to use gendered language to children. [...] My wife and I have decided to educate our children this way, but [...] they do learn it from their friends and teachers at preschool. (Juho, father of five-year-old daughter and three-year-old son)
Conflicted	Holding flexible views toward men and women's roles in paid and unpaid work, yet still holding conflicted or contradictory views about children's gender roles	23.53% (N=4)	I can see myself saying things like, 'girls shouldn't do that'. I feel like I need to guide my child so that she doesn't make mistakes elsewhere. (Mimho, father of one-year-old daughter)
Receptive	Holding moderately flexible gender role attitudes toward children, though not as proactive, consistent, or conscious as the 'committed' fathers	52.94% (N=9)	At the very least, I think my child is growing up without stereotypes that it is mom's job to feed him, change his diaper, or do housework. (Jimhwan, father of three-year-old son)

'Committed' Fathers

'Committed' fathers, accounting for just under a quarter of the fathers studied, proactively and consciously sought to contest gender boundaries not only in their role as caregivers but moreover in their children's understanding of gender roles. These fathers seemed to have held fairly progressive gender role attitudes even prior to taking leave. For instance, Sion identified as a feminist and had strong convictions about raising his son in a gender-free household and providing him with a "landscape" that could open up his gender imaginaries. For Sion, taking parental leave for one year was a given from the moment he and his wife decided to have a child and was one of his various efforts to socialize his child free from gender norms, along with other conscious decisions around his son's clothes and toys.

I wear a lot of pink, a lot of bright colours and avoid colours that men typically wear. I do the same to my child, I pick out a lot of pink clothes and try not to go for blue. Toys of cars and robots do not have a place in my home. [...] I try to give my child that type of sentiment. I think with or without knowing it, this would become a landscape to my child, and he would come to believe in what he perceives. So I hope my child unconsciously feels this sense of 'gender-free beauty' by growing in a household landscape that's a bit free from conventional gender norms. (Sion, father of three-year-old son)

This was in line with another father, Sangyoon, who gave a similar account of how attentive he and his wife are in ensuring his two children do not grow up with gender stereotypes. Sangyoon was conscious of the importance of his children growing up watching him cook, do the dishes, and clean the house, so that they would not consider housework as a gendered activity. Sangyoon and his wife would actively intervene to limit their children's media consumption if they felt certain cartoons reinforce unhealthy gendered stereotypes, and they would actively correct their elder daughter if she came home having been exposed to gender prejudices.

My wife and I really try hard so that my child doesn't grow up with biases or stereotypes. First, I consciously try to make sure they see me cook and think daddy can obviously cook and do the dishes and clean the house. [My child told me] that during role play at preschool, boys were assigned as doctors and girls as nurses. So we would try to correct that by saying, 'girls can be doctors. You were born to a female doctor. The same goes for your brother.' (Sangyoon, father of two daughters, aged four and under one)

For these fathers, taking fathers' leave was often a reflection of their commitment to gender equality and a way of

putting their commitments into practice in their relationship with their wives as well in raising their children. However, as Sangyoon alludes to in his quote above, these fathers faced major challenges to raising their children in line with their gender egalitarian ideologies due to influences from other sources such as preschool and the media. Daniel similarly stressed the range of barriers to his and his wife's efforts to provide a gender-neutral environment for their daughter, including some that were simply outside parental control. Even if Daniel took primary responsibility of his daughter for a full year while his wife went back to work, he felt that his daughter's experiences at preschool would nullify some of their efforts.

[My wife and I] both agree, as much as possible, to provide a gender-neutral environment so that she can learn her own identity but there are so many limitations to that, we realized. With our former preschool, [...] we saw a construction site set up for the boys and a kitchen set up for the girls [...] and we said straight away that one of our first conditions is that they don't assign gender roles especially at a young age. They said they'd try. But we know, with minute day to day stuff, it's very hard. Even from looking at staff, every single staff that I've seen in preschool have been women, [...] down to the last person. So even that is an influence of what she can end up. (Daniel, father of two-year-old daughter)

Sangyoon lamented similar difficulties due to the conflicting messaging at home and elsewhere. Sangyoon described his daughter as "really active", "better than boys at the swing or monkey bars" and having "a thing for dinosaurs". Nonetheless, he felt she "seems to feel a sense of inferiority" when her preschool teachers would tell the girls in dresses, "you look like a princess, you're so pretty today". This would make his daughter come home and ask to put on a dress too.

Similarly, in teaching a famous children's song in Korea titled "Three Bears", Sion and his wife had changed the lyrics from the original "daddy bear is fat, mommy bear is slim, and baby bear is so cute" to "daddy bear cooks, mommy bear sings, and baby bear is so cute" as an attempt to practice degendered child socialization that better reflects their household scenery and values. However, once their son learned the original lyrics at preschool, he insisted on the original lyrics of the daddy bear as fat, rather than someone who cooks, even though Sion was actually slim. In response to such discouraging and frustrating experiences, Sion explained plans to compile a comprehensive list of ways in which his son's preschool is reinforcing gender stereotypes to raise a formal complaint. In the meanwhile, however, he could only hope that his child would one day come to understand and "accept that daddy is always in the kitchen and is the main chef at home if that's what he sees every day."

To recap, ‘committed’ fathers typically had already held considerably flexible and egalitarian gender role attitudes prior to taking leave and thus they experienced little change in their gender ideology because of taking leave. Hence, for these fathers, leave-taking followed rather than preceded their gender egalitarian values. The ‘committed’ fathers actively and consciously sought to raise their children as free from gender stereotypes as possible, in line with their values. In this sense, they could be compared to the “innovator” or “resister” typologies in Kane’s work (2012). Nonetheless, they experienced significant barriers to actualising their visions for gender-free parenting due to various non-parental influences. As a result, they recounted instances of their children seemingly conforming to pressure from peers and preschool and following conventional gender norms despite their best intentions and efforts.

‘Conflicted’ Fathers

‘Conflicted’ fathers, who accounted for close to another quarter of the sample of fathers, represent those whose views that men and women should share responsibility for breadwinning, housework, and childcare did not always map consistently onto their views for how their boys and girls should be brought up. Even when these fathers had shifted their views toward adult gender roles substantially because of leave uptake, they still held conflicted or contradictory views about their children’s gender roles. One such example is Yohan, who described himself as having changed significantly for the better due to his uptake of parental leave, a sentiment shared by many of the interviewed fathers. Before his leave, Yohan had thought he was doing “enough” by “helping” his wife out around the home but taking leave of one year had opened his eyes and helped him see things from his wife’s perspective. Now Yohan thought, “women work too, so [...] it’s obvious [that men share the housework the childcare]. [...] [Taking leave] has definitely helped me understand.” Yet even though Yohan had come to accept the idea of a gender egalitarian division of unpaid labour and responsibilities, challenging conventional gender stereotypes in raising his two sons was difficult to reconcile with. Particularly interesting was the way Yohan was aware of the lack of consistency or gender egalitarianism in his parenting yet still could not seem to help himself.

I tell my children things like, ‘you are a boy so you should choose blue.’ I feel upset when my child picks pinks. [Researcher: Even after taking parental leave?] Yes, even now. My son likes doing reserved activities. It might just be his personality, but he likes crafting and art classes and even today he put on a girly necklace and braided rings onto his mask chain. Looking at that, I think, ‘guys should be active.’ I’m like this even though I try. (Yohan, father of two sons, five and three)

Taeyang similarly stressed, “you absolutely have to look after the child together” and that “there should be no distinction between women’s roles and men’s roles.” In fact, Taeyang explained that he has done and still does more housework and childcare than his wife, both prior to his leave and currently after his leave, because he is more competent. In line with this, he did not seem to think there exists innate gender differences in the ability to care for the home or children. However, in relation to his two children’s gender socialization, Taeyang had very different ideas, even going to the extent of educating his seven-year-old son about South Korea’s mandatory military conscription for able-bodied male citizens. Both Taeyang and Yohan’s anticipation that their sons embody traditional elements of masculine identity seemed almost as if they, in a sense, sought compensation for their own lack of conformity to conventional masculine roles.

I hope my daughter could act like a lady because she’s a girl. In the case of my son, [I tell him things like,] ‘guys shouldn’t do that’, ‘blue is for boys.’ I want my son to grow up to be a cool guy, someone who is persistent and confident when it comes to what he wants. [...] I hope he also embodies some of more traditional understanding of manliness, [so I tell him things like] ‘men shouldn’t cry,’ ‘you need to go to the military to protect the country.’ (Taeyang, father of seven-year-old son and five-year-old daughter)

Some fathers tried to explain or resolve the apparent discrepancy between their views about men and women’s gender roles in relation to breadwinning and caregiving and their views about children’s gender roles with the rationalization that there exist innate gender differences between young girls and boys, akin to Kane’s conceptualization of ‘naturalizer’ parents (2012). Illustrative of this was Sungho, who suggested that girls and boys were “instinctively” drawn to different things, and whose purported approach to parenting could be described as ‘laissez-faire.’ This was at odds with how he suggested that there were no innate differences between men and women in looking after children, explaining, as Taeyang did, that he finds himself to be more suited for childcare than his wife.

She’s a girl so she likes playing house with mommy and copying mommy’s makeup. [...] Girls wearing pink clothes and boys wearing things with dinosaurs on it or blue clothes, that’s not actually something we impose depending on whether they are a boy or a girl. Instinctively, girls like pink and boys like blue [...]. I don’t consciously try to change that [...]. That’s based on their instincts, so I let them be, and don’t force them to do try something else. (Sungho, one-year-old daughter)

In short, the ‘conflicted’ fathers actively partook in domestic and care labour and developed flexible attitudes

about men and women's roles during their leave. Nevertheless, they continued to hold rigid or inconsistent ideas about their children's gender roles and identities. As a result, they encouraged their children to conform to gendered expectations and sought to correct when their children demonstrated gender atypical behaviour or preferences. These fathers' ideological dissonance between their gender egalitarian views toward men and women's roles as parents and rigid views about children's gendered preferences evoke a mirror-image of Risman and Myers's study (1997). Whereas Risman and Myers found children to hold the belief that "men and women are similar and equal, but boys and girls are different and unequal" (p. 229), in the present study it was the fathers who subscribed to this narrative. These leave-taking fathers expressing rigid and inconsistent views regarding children's gender roles despite demonstrating gender egalitarianism when it comes to the division of paid and unpaid work was similar to how Scheibling (2022) finds that "even a group of pro-feminist blogging fathers may fall into the 'gender trap' in raising children, thus exposing the *stickiness* of heteronormative logics and parenting mandates" (p. 376; emphasis original). Their conflicting and contradictory ideologies reflected their struggles to reconcile their behaviours and/or personal beliefs with some of the more widely accepted social norms.

'Receptive' Fathers

'Receptive' fathers, who were the most common and accounted for just over half of the fathers, could be placed in between the 'committed' and 'conflicted' fathers. These fathers also typically experienced major changes to their beliefs about men and women's gender roles because of taking leave, as the 'conflicted' fathers. However, unlike the 'conflicted' fathers, the 'receptive' fathers demonstrated a level of consistency between their views about adult and child gender roles. As such, they held more open and receptive views toward their children's gender roles than the 'conflicted' fathers. The 'receptive' fathers' commitment toward children's gender-flexible socialization could be described as moderate, compared with the more proactive, conscious, and deliberate views of 'committed' fathers.

Hojun described himself prior to taking leave as a "typical guy" who "just worked" and "never cooked, cleaned, or did other housework." It was taking leave that made him think, "men and women are supposed to do this together, but why are women doing it all? If I had just worked [without taking leave], I would have probably not realized this until the day I die." Hojun's such realisations extended to his views toward child gender socialization. For instance, by seeing him make meals during his leave, he hoped his

daughter would naturally grow up without prejudices about who should oversee cooking for the family. Also, if he felt his daughter was being too fixated on pink toys, he would try to balance out by gently suggesting blue ones. Hojun felt his role modelling as a primary caregiver during parental leave left a positive influence, even though his child was only one-year-old when he took leave. He happily shared an anecdote of his young child, who seemed to think housework is daddy's responsibility.

The book I read with my baby has images of mothers doing the dishes and cooking and stuff, and never men. But my child, whenever reading that book, would always point and say 'daddy,' even though the images show a woman. So I feel I can give my child a basis to change some understanding of gender roles even as a baby. (Hojun, father of three-year-old son)

Jungwoo was another father who proudly shared a memorable episode to illustrate how his leave seemed to have an impact on his daughters. Jungwoo had taken a very long leave of three years, before which his wife had near-sole responsibility of the housework and childcare, but after which Jungwoo had quit his job to be the full-time caregiver at home. His two daughters, who were in kindergarten and second grade when he began his leave, were already in third and fifth grade by the time of the interview. The extended period of Jungwoo's time as a primary caregiver of his daughters as well as the relatively older ages of the girls seemed to have implanted a consciousness about gender equality that led them to question wider gender inequalities in their everyday life, something Jungwoo had not necessarily intended, but was nonetheless proud of.

You know how when you give student IDs to children at school? [Researcher: You mean allocating numbers to male students first?] Yes, there's a lot of those invisible [gendered inequalities]. [...] There's nothing I consciously do, and I didn't necessarily intend it, but I think me taking parental leave has naturally had an impact on my children, and they have had some incidents at school because of that. Apparently my daughter made an objection to the teacher about this, asking why girls are allocated numbers starting from 51. When I heard that, I thought, 'ah, I raised her well.' (Jungwoo, father of twelve-year-old and ten-year old daughters)

Another father, Minjae, had just started his second leave at the time of the interview and had previously taken a 17-month leave, before the birth of his second child. Minjae confessed that he had fixated ideas about what men should and should not do before taking his first leave. Taking parental leave was a turning point and Minjae now spoke of how "maternal and paternal love

does not have to look different,” stressing how involved he has been in childcare, especially of his first child. Minjae explained how his daughter had ‘masculine’ preferences in play and appearance, perhaps because Minjae was her primary caregiver for a significant period of her life, while his son, who had so far been raised primarily by Minjae’s wife, had ‘feminine’ preferences.

My daughter hates wearing skirts, maybe because she spent so much time with me. She says she wants to be brave and strong, like a police officer. When we go shopping and I ask her, ‘Do you not like skirts? Let’s buy some skirts,’ she stubbornly declines. She says she wants to cut her hair short, like a man, like daddy. I’d tell her, ‘you can’t cut your hair short’ but my wife would say, ‘why not, she can cut her hair like you. Would you like to try?’ And I’d think to myself, ‘I’m being outdated.’ (Minjae, father of six-year-old daughter and three-year-old son)

Minjae’s instance of ideological dissonance about what his daughter can and cannot do was similar to the ‘conflicted’ fathers. However, what set Minjae apart from them was how he immediately reflected on himself as well as how he genuinely did not seem to mind—and even seemed proud of—his daughter’s tomboyishness. This was also the case for Jungwoo, who described the way he and his wife play with their daughters as “very different”; his wife would play with dolls, decorate diaries, or draw with their daughters while Jungwoo would typically take them out to play. In spite of such occasional mixed and inconsistent signals from parents, fathers noted children’s demonstration of meaningful, though perhaps somewhat incidental, moments of gender subversion in a positive light.

Therefore, this final group of ‘receptive’ fathers’ attitudes toward their children’s gender socialization could be considered moderately gender egalitarian. They would, for instance, be critical of pervasive gender stereotypes present in the media or at preschools and oppose socializing their children based on explicitly gendered messages the way the ‘conflicted’ fathers may. Moreover, they would be pleased to see their children growing up without gender stereotypes or in some cases subverting gender categories. However, the ‘receptive’ fathers could be distinguished from the ‘committed’ fathers in the degree to which they would go out of their way to make a conscious, intentional, and proactive effort for their children’s degendered socialization. While ‘receptive’ fathers sought to eschew explicit gender stereotypes in instructing children’s behaviors or acting as role models, they did not necessarily go to the extent of actively and consistently intervening in or correcting the child’s gender socialization processes the way ‘committed’ fathers did.

Discussion

This study adds to the literature on the intergenerational transmission of gender through fathers by offering the first study of leave-taking fathers’ narratives of child gender socialization in the Korean context. Although leave-taking fathers engaged in gender egalitarian division of roles and responsibilities, their narratives of child gender socialization were mixed and heterogeneous. First, ‘committed’ fathers subscribed to genuine feminist ideals as fathers and husbands that preceded their uptake of leave. Despite their best efforts, they discussed barriers due to contradictory messages from non-parental influences such as preschools, playgrounds. In contrast, many ‘conflicted’ and ‘receptive’ fathers had developed gender egalitarian attitudes and behaviours about men and women’s roles through their leave-taking experience, but with different outlooks toward child gender socialization. The ‘conflicted’ fathers confessed to still holding rigid views when it came to their children’s gender socialization, comparable to the children in Risman and Myers’ study (1997). The ‘receptive’ fathers, in contrast, demonstrated more open and moderately flexible attitudes to children’s gender roles than the ‘conflicted’ fathers, but not to the same extent as the ‘committed’ fathers.

Based on such narratives, I draw the following conclusions. First and most importantly, the gender-equalising impact of fathers’ uptake of leave on the division of domestic labour and responsibilities in Korea do not necessarily neatly map onto fathers’ narratives of how they envision and experience child gender socialization. Rather, leave-taking fathers shared diverging narratives, in line with Wall and Leitão (2017). Put simply, greater gender egalitarianism and flexibility in one dimension of family life did not guarantee the same for another. One explanation for this could potentially be that leave-taking fathers in Korea often take leave due to external constraints in balancing work and care (Lee, 2022). Hence, although leave-taking fathers may have come to develop flexible attitudes about men and women’s roles to reduce the cognitive dissonance between their beliefs and daily practice in the process of their leave experience, this may not extend beyond that, to the extent of fundamentally challenge their views toward child gender socialization. Fathers furthermore demonstrated the difficulty—if not impossibility—of consistent messaging for children’s gender socialization, whether this be due to external influences as the ‘committed’ fathers stressed, or contradictions and mixed messages from fathers themselves, as in the case of ‘conflicted’ and to a less extent ‘receptive’ fathers. Even though the fathers reported various instances of children’s gender contestation, equally notable were their accounts of children’s conformity to gender categories. This again pointed to the inadequacy of fathers’ role reversal though leave uptake alone for children’s

gender-free socialization. In short, fathers' narratives illustrated the persistence of what Kane (2012) refers to as the 'gender trap' from fathers as well as social institutions such as the preschools and the media.

This study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of processes of the intergenerational (re)production of gender at home by taking a unique focus on leave-taking fathers and their narratives of child gender socialization. While the scholarly attention to caregiving and involved fathers are rapidly increasing, limited qualitative studies have paid attention to the intergenerational transmission of gender from fathers to children. The present study fills this gap by demonstrating diverse trajectories of leave-taking fathers' development of views toward child gender socialization as well as internal and external constraints to more gender flexible child socialization. It has also expanded the literature on the impact of fathers' uptake on gender equality by moving beyond the limited focus on the gendered division of labour and responsibilities between parents. Overall, the study suggests that even where leave-taking fathers 'undo' gender in their division of domestic labour and responsibilities, this does not guarantee that they also 'undo' gender in relation to children's wider gender socialization. The study has highlighted inconsistencies operating at multiple levels of the 'gender trap', including between fathers' attitudes toward adult and children's gender roles, fathers' behaviours and attitudes, and parental and non-parental influences. Such inconsistencies may help explain why gender roles and stereotypes persist for children, even in gender egalitarian households.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

Because this study has relied on fathers' perceptions and narratives of children's gender socialization at a single point in time, it limits our capacity to draw conclusions about children's gender socialization processes or outcomes over time. First of all, fathers may not be fully aware of their subtle behaviours or bias that could work to reinforce (or contest) gender roles for children (Mesman & Groeneveld, 2018). It is also clear how mothers would be interacting with children and either reinforcing or contesting the messages from fathers. Furthermore, although fathers shared memorable instances of their children's gendered or subversive behaviours, these episodes are not necessarily representative of children's attitudes or behaviors, nor could we attribute fathers to be responsible for such behaviors with confidence. In addition, as the current study also suggests to an extent, both parents and children's gender role attitudes are not immutable and may very well change further down the line. Therefore, longitudinal research designs based on interviews with children as well as both parents and observations of parent-child interactions at multiple time

points will allow us to acquire a more holistic and long-term view of children's gender socialization that essentially includes children's first-hand accounts. Further quantitative as well as qualitative studies of the relationship between fathers' uptake of leave and children's gender role attitudes in various country contexts would be a welcome addition to the literature.

Practice Implications

The findings from this study have implications for the study of gender role ideologies, the impact of fathers' leave, and children's gender socialization. First, the accounts of 'conflicted' fathers' ideological dissonance highlight how one dimension of gender role attitudes—such as views on adult gender roles—may not be consistent with expectations about another dimension—for instance, children's gender roles. Taking this into account, the literature on and survey measurements relating to gender equality at home could benefit from considering the multitude of ways that gender could be 'undone' at home, including through their children's gender socialization. Relatedly, education programmes targeting new or expectant parents or fathers going on leave could account for the multiple ways that involved and caregiving fathers could contribute to gender equality at home, emphasizing not only their potential involvement in domestic and care labour but also in the gendering of their children. Finally, the stories of 'committed' fathers who found it difficult to socialize their children in line with their feminist ideals despite taking lengthy parental leave suggests that similar to the proverb, 'it takes a village to raise a child,' it also takes a village to raise children free from gender stereotypes. Efforts to embed gender equality in upbringing children need to occur concurrently in multiple sites of children's socialization. Acknowledging this, policy efforts should be made to consistently address gender inequality and stereotypes in all aspects of children's social worlds, including in (pre)schools and the media.

Conclusion

The results of this qualitative study with leave-taking fathers indicated that fathers' gender egalitarian attitudes toward adult gender roles do not always map neatly onto their attitudes toward children's gender roles. Three themes were identified around how fathers were doing and undoing gender in the home during leave and the 'committed,' 'conflicted,' and 'receptive' fathers demonstrated diverse trajectories of change and continuity in gender roles attitudes through leave uptake. While the development of gender egalitarian attitudes for both leave-taking fathers and their children appear to be an unfinished work-in-progress and one

not without contradictions and challenges, having fathers who taking parental leave appears to be a positive step for illuminating and challenging the ‘gender trap’ for themselves and their children.

Acknowledgements The data that was used in this research was collected as part of my doctoral studies, funded by the Cambridge Trust and Murray Edwards College. The writing and revisions for this paper was enabled with the generous support of the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) postdoctoral fellowship (ES/X006344/1).

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Ethical Approval 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 the University of Cambridge in December 2019. The datasets generated and analysed in the current study are not publicly available due to conditions of informed consent.

Competing Interests The authors have no relevant financial or non-financial interests to disclose. The authors have no competing interests to declare that are relevant to the content of this article. All authors certify that they have no affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity with any financial interest or non-financial interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript. The authors have no financial or proprietary interests in any material discussed in this article.

Open Access This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License, which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons licence, and indicate if changes were made. The images or other third party material in this article are included in the article’s Creative Commons licence, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the article’s Creative Commons licence and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder. To view a copy of this licence, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

References

- Álvarez, B., & Miles-Touya, D. (2012). Exploring the relationship between parents’ and children’s housework time in Spain. *Review of Economics of the Household*, *10*, 299–318. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11150-011-9135-4>
- Berk, S. F. (1985). *The gender factory: The apportionment of work in American households*. Plenum Press.
- Blakemore, J. E. O., Berenbaum, S. A., & Liben, L. S. (2008). *Gender development*. Psychology Press.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *3*(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2021a). Can I use TA? Should I use TA? Should I not use TA? Comparing reflexive thematic analysis and other pattern-based qualitative analytic approaches. *Counseling and Psychotherapy Research*, *21*(1), 37–47. <https://doi.org/10.1002/capr.12360>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2021b). One size fits all? What counts as qualitative practice in (reflexive) thematic analysis? *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *18*(3), 328–352. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2020.1769238>
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1993). The ecology of cognitive development: research models and fugitive findings. In: Wozniak, R., Fischer, K. (Eds.), *Development in context: Acting and thinking in specific environments* (pp. 3–44). Erlbaum.
- Bünning, M. (2015). What happens after the ‘daddy months’? Fathers’ involvement in paid work, childcare, and housework after taking parental leave in Germany. *European Sociological Review*, *31*(6), 738–748. <https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jcv072>
- Cano, T., & Hofmeister, H. (2023). The intergenerational transmission of gender: Paternal influences on children’s gender attitudes. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jomf.12863>
- Carlson, B. E. (1984). The father’s contribution to child care: Effects on children’s perceptions of parental roles. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, *54*(1), 123–136. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1939-0025.1984.tb01480.x>
- Cunningham, M. (2001). Parental influences on the gendered division of housework. *American Sociological Review*, *66*, 184–203. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2657414>
- Davis, S. N., & Wills, J. B. (2010). Adolescent gender ideology socialisation: Direct and moderating effects of fathers’ beliefs. *Sociological Spectrum*, *30*, 580–604. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02732173.2010.496106>
- Deutsch, F. M. (2007). Undoing gender. *Gender & Society*, *21*(1), 107–127. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243206293577>
- Deutsch, F. M., Servis, L. J., & Payne, J. D. (2001). Paternal participation in child care and its effects on children’s self-esteem and attitudes toward gendered roles. *Journal of Family Issues*, *22*(8), 1000–1024. <https://doi.org/10.1177/019251301022008003>
- Doucet, A. (2018). *Do men mother?: Fathering, care, and domestic responsibility* (2nd ed.). University of Toronto Press.
- Doucet, A., & McKay, L. (2020). Fathering, parental leave, impacts, and gender equality: What/how are we measuring? *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, *40*(5/6), 441–463. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSSP-04-2019-0086>
- Duvander, A.-Z., Eydal, G. B., Brandth, B., Gíslason, I. V., Lammi-Taskula, J., & Rostgaard, T. (2019). Gender equality: Parental leave design and evaluating its effects on fathers’ participation. (187–204) In Moss, P., Duvander, A.-Z., and Koslowski, A. (Eds.), *Parental leave and beyond*. Polity Press. <https://doi.org/10.1332/policypress/9781447338772.003.0011>
- Evertsson, M. (2006). The reproduction of gender: Housework and attitudes towards gender equality in the home among Swedish boys and girls. *The British Journal of Sociology*, *57*, 415–436. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-4446.2006.00118.x>
- Fagot, B. I., & Leinbach, M. D. (1995). Gender knowledge in egalitarian and traditional families. *Sex Roles*, *32*(7/8), 513–526. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF01544186>
- Frost, N., & Holt, A. (2014). Mother, researcher, feminist, woman: Reflections on “maternal status” as a researcher identity. *Qualitative Research Journal*, *14*(2), 90–102. <https://doi.org/10.1108/QRJ-06-2013-0038>
- Gonalons-Pons, P. (2022). Differentiated egalitarianism: The impact of paid family leave policy on women’s and men’s paid and unpaid work. *Social Forces*, *101*(4), 1744–1771. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/soac081>
- Halpern, H. P., & Perry-Jenkins, M. (2016). Parents’ gender ideology and gendered behavior as predictors of children’s gender-role attitudes: A longitudinal exploration. *Sex Roles*, *74*, 527–542. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-015-0539-0>
- Kane, E. W. (2012). *The gender trap: Parents and the pitfalls of raising boys and girls*. New York University Press.

- Kotsadam, A., & Finseraas, H. (2011). The state intervenes in the battle of the sexes: Causal effects of paternity leave. *Social Science Research*, 40, 1611–1622. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2011.06.011>
- Lee, Y. (2022). Norms about childcare, working hours, and fathers' uptake of parental leave in South Korea. *Community, Work & Family*, 26(4), 466–491. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13668803.2022.2031889>
- Lee, Y. (2023). 'Undoing gender' or selection effects? *Fathers' Uptake of Leave and Involvement in Housework and Childcare in South Korea*. *Journal of Family Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13229400.2023.2200747>
- Mesman, J., & Groeneveld, M. G. (2018). Gendered parenting in early childhood: Subtle but unmistakable if you know where to look. *Child Development Perspectives*, 12, 22–27. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdep.12250>
- National Assembly Budget Office. (2019). *An analysis of the characteristics and projections of financing for childcare support projects*. https://www.nabo.go.kr/Sub/01Report/01_01_Board.jsp?funcSUB=view&bid=19&arg_cid1=0&arg_cid2=0&arg_class_id=0¤tPage=0&pageSize=10¤tPageSUB=0&pageSizeSUB=10&key_typeSUB=&keySUB=&search_start_dateSUB=&search_end_dateSUB=&department=0&department_sub=0&etc_cate1=&etc_cate2=&sortBy=reg_date&ascOrDesc=desc&search_key1=&etc_1=0&etc_2=0&tag_key=&arg_id=7078&item_id=7078&etc_1=0&etc_2=0&name2=0
- Nordic Social-Statistical Committee (NOSOSCO). (2017). *Social protection in the Nordic countries: Scope, expenditure and financing*. <https://norden.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1148493/FULLTEXT02.pdf>
- O'Brien, M., & Wall, K. (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>
- Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2022). Hours worked. <https://data.oecd.org/emp/hours-worked.htm>
- Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2023). Time spent in paid and unpaid work, by sex. <https://stats.oecd.org/index.aspx?queryid=54757>
- Patnaik, A. (2019). Reserving time for daddy: The consequences of fathers' quotas. *Journal of Labor Economics*, 37(4), 1009–1059. <https://doi.org/10.1086/703115>
- Perales, F., Hoffman, H., King, T., Vidal, S., & Baxter, J. (2021). Mothers, fathers and the intergenerational transmission of gender ideology. *Social Science Research*, 99. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2021.102597>
- Platt, L., & Polavieja, J. (2016). Saying and doing gender: Intergenerational transmission of attitudes towards the sexual division of labour. *European Sociological Review*, 32(6), 820–834. <https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jcw037>
- Ranson, G. (2015). *Fathering, masculinity and the embodiment of care*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Risman, B. J., & Myers, K. (1997). As the twig is bent: Children reared in feminist households. *Qualitative Sociology*, 20(2), 229–252. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1024713702365>
- Risman, B. (2009). From doing to undoing: Gender as we know it. *Gender & Society*, 23(1), 81–84. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243208326874>
- Sani, G. M. D. (2016). Undoing gender in housework? Participation in domestic chores by Italian fathers and children of different ages. *Sex Roles*, 74, 411–421. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-016-0585-2>
- Scheibling, C. (2022). "Why can't boys be #LikeAGirl?": Sticky essentialism and ambivalent (de)gendering in fathers' online accounts of children's gender and sexuality. *Sex Roles*, 86, 366–378. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-022-01274-5>
- Statistics Korea. (2020). Parental leave statistics 2019 (provisional). https://kostat.go.kr/board.es?mid=a10301010000&bid=11814&act=view&list_no=386975
- Statistics Korea. (2021). Time-use survey. <https://www.index.go.kr/unify/idx-info.do?idxCd=4232&clasCd=7>
- Tamm, M. (2019). Fathers' parental leave-taking, childcare involvement and labour market participation. *Labour Economics*, 59, 184–197. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.labeco.2019.04.007>
- Wall, K., & Leitão, M. (2017). Father on leave alone in Portugal: Lived experiences and impact of forerunner fathers. In O'Brien, M. and Wall, K. (Eds.) *Comparative perspectives on work-life balance and gender equality: Fathers on leave alone* (pp. 45–68). Springer Open. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-42970-0>
- Wall, K., & O'Brien, M. (2017). Discussion and conclusion. In O'Brien, M. and Wall, K. (Eds.), *Comparative perspectives on work-life balance and gender equality: Fathers on leave alone* (pp. 257–266). Springer Open. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-42970-0>
- Weinraub, M., Clemens, L. P., Sockloff, A., Ethridge, T., Gracely, E., & Myers, B. (1984). The development of sex role stereotypes in the third year: Relationships to gender labeling, gender identity, sex-types toy preference, and family characteristics. *Child Development*, 55(4), 1493–1503. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1130019>
- West, C., & Zimmerman, D. H. (1987). Doing gender. *Gender and Society*, 1(2), 125–151. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243287001002002>
- Wray, D. (2020). Paternity leave and fathers' responsibility: Evidence from a natural experiment in Canada. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 82, 534–549. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jomf.12661>

Publisher's Note Springer Nature remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.