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**“We Made It Together, So We Must Care for it Together”
Practices and Perceptions of Indonesian Working Fathers’
Involvement in Childcare**

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Disclaimer:

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List of Acronyms

MoWECP	: Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection
Tummy time	: baby's in lying on the stomach position
Maghrib	: prayer time in Islam and started around 06.00 PM
Isya	: prayer time in Islam and started around 07.00 PM
WFO	: Work from Office
WFH	: Work from Home
KRL	: <i>Kereta Rel Listrik</i> – Electric Railcar
Alhamdulillah	: Arab language, usually use as grateful expression in Islam
UNDP	: United Nations Development Program
Prospera	: Australia-Indonesia Partnership for Economic Development
KBBI	: <i>Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia</i> – Big Indonesia Dictionary

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Abstract

Raising awareness in gender role domestic work has led to the expectations of the fathers to have better involvement in childcare. Most of the studies about fathers are conducted in western countries, especially for countries that have regulations to increase the father involvement to study the shifting attitudes in childcare. Therefore, this study wants to contribute to the knowledge by exploring working fathers' experience in Indonesia, which has limited support in increasing father involvement, using the concept of masculinity. The study carried out twenty semi-structured online interviews with working fathers who have children aged 0-5 years old and living in dual-earner families. From the interview, it shows that the working father's involvement in childcare is usually different between newborns and children aged one year and above. Working fathers with flexible working arrangements are more involved in childcare. In doing childcare, the working father is motivated by their past experiences, wife' support, and information related to childcare. Furthermore, their working arrangements and extended family influence their childcare arrangements. In addition, most of the fathers in this study have strong characters of being leader, breadwinner, and selfless. And only those who have high involvement in direct care practice have sharing and care actor characteristics. Their perception of their masculinity shows in their characteristics and influences their childcare practice. The working fathers that position themselves as equal caregiver show more caring masculinity characteristic and have better involvement than those who see their role as support caregiver in childcare. Therefore, it is important to promote father as equal caregiver to increase father involvement in childcare.

Relevance to Development Studies

This study wants to point out the potential of men as working fathers to be equal caregivers for their child to reduce the women's double burden as mothers and workers. Productive work has acknowledged women's role as mothers, but not men's as fathers. Accepting men's role as fathers alongside being workers could lead to equality in productive sphere. And domestic work, especially care work, is usually seen as feminine sphere. Using masculinity lens shown that care work can be done by men who known for its masculinities and how masculinities could fit in care sphere. This can improve gender equality in the care sphere. To get the best of both spheres, studying the context of father, fathering, and fatherhood could be helpful to understand men's position in society as father and how it can be mentioned in future policies and regulation to reduce gender inequality. In addition, this study also wants to add the condition of father participation in childcare from Indonesia context to global knowledge.

Keywords: working father, father involvement, childcare, masculinity, Indonesia

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Nature of The Problem

Father involvement and fatherless are contradiction to each other. Fatherless is the absence of a father during a child's growth period which has a negative impact if studied from the field of psychology (Suwada, 2017, p. 53). Additionally, the new discourse regarding gender roles drawn the attention of the father's role in influencing child's life (Lamb *et al.*, 1985, p. 883). Because of this, the issue of father involvement arises (Suwada, 2017, p. 33). In several studies, talking about father involvement with children is looking at the activities, how often and for how long, willingness, and their perceptions in childcare (Lamb *et al.*, 1985, p. 884; Chong and Savitri, 2020, p. 471). Those are part of component on father practice in childcare and they expected to be more involved in all aspects in care beyond their gender roles, including emotional connection (Eggebeen, Knoester, and McDaniel, 2013, p. 339). Some studies suggest that direct involvement of fathers is helpful for children's linguistic skills and social behavior development because of different ways of communication between mothers and fathers (Lamb, 2010, p. 8; Lamb and Lewis, 2010, p. 131).

Furthermore, in several publications, Minister of Women Empowerment and Child Protection Indonesia, Bintang Puspayoga, shared which the responsibility in childcare is not only for women or mothers, but also fathers (Purnamasari, 2021; Pradewo, 2021). The awareness of father involvement in Indonesia is raising followed by the popularity of 'fatherless' term and made a headline in online publication which describes the negative effect of father absence during child development, physical and emotional (Anastasia, 2023; Dian, 2023). Emphasizes in the discourse of the father is not really involved directly in childcare so there is distance between child and father (Sundari and Herdjani, 2013, p. 267). Moreover, fatherless conditions do not appear immediately, but later in child life development (Ashari, 2018, p. 38). In my opinion, the popularity is also resulted from people around my age that feel the impact of it. Then, the popularity of 'fatherless' can be seen as signal of the importance of father involvement in childcare in Indonesia. Study by Adler and Lenz (2015, p. 231) said that fathers need to be encouraged to childcare, much like mothers to work for the long-term family-wellbeing.

Additionally, according to a study from Indonesia, father support could lift mother confidence' for breastfeeding (Rahadian *et al.*, 2019, p. 169). Thus, fathers as emotional support to mother is also impacted the children indirectly (Lamb, 2010, p. 8-9). Regarding that, last year, Indonesia government published a Bill of Women and Child Welfare which include the plan to increase paternity leave to increase father involvement in childcare, especially during breastfeeding (Radinka, 2022). There is no specific regulation related to increase fathers be involved in family and childcare, except through two days paternity leave which stated in Labor Law (Levtov *et al.*, 2015, p. 39) and it usually applied by the formal sector, like big company. Therefore, for fathers who work in the informal sector, they still can be involved, but it depends on themselves to negotiate it with their work. The paternity leave regulation is also remaining the same for the last twenty years compare to the other Asian Countries. For example, Vietnam, Singapore, and Myanmar reformed their paternity entitlement between 2011 and 2021 (Addati, Cattaneo, and Pozzan, 2022, p. 102). Lack of father's participation in childcare because lack of policy intervention makes childcare policy gap in Indonesia is 80.9 months (*ibid.*, p. 415). In addition, the working father's role in childcare is mostly placed in narration to support the mother, instead of giving the opportunity to the working father as equal care giver in Indonesia context, such as supporting

breastfeeding. In my opinion, one of the consequences of that narration is minimize care practice that working fathers could do to their children.

1.2 Relevance and Justification

Inequality between men and women does not only occur in the public sphere, but also occurs in the domestic sphere, especially when they have new roles as fathers and mothers. The Global Gender Gap Report (WEF, 2022, p. 40) says that major events in women's lives, financial knowledge, and wage gaps influence the wealth gap between men and women. Women's responsibilities in care identified as major events in women's lives and critical factor in some countries (ibid, p. 40). Especially for women who have children aged between 0-6 years, they are more likely to work in care work (ibid., p. 33). It also happens in Indonesia which men spend less time on housework than women (Prospera, Investing in Women, and the University of Indonesia, 2023, p. 8). Related to that, I had seen friends of mine who become a mom considerate to quit her job because they become main caregiver for their child and lack involvement of the father to care the child. On the other hand, I know a friend which her husband contributes to care work. Knowing their experience make me realized, women always empowered to go to public sphere, but men in general rarely get encouragement to go to domestic sphere, like childcare.

Moreover, I think it is because in Indonesia most fathers believe that their role as breadwinner and the mothers as center of caring actor in family (Asy'ari and Ariyanto, 2019, p. 38). The dominant characteristic of father that exist on society still represents on the ideal men as breadwinner in family. Linked to their belief as breadwinner, the fathers tend to be less involved directly because of work. Studies conducted in Jakarta show that the fathers' perception score as breadwinner is higher than other categories regarding their involvement in care for their child as parents (Mil, Jalal, and Djamaris, 2022, p. 14466). Because of that, they are less done taking care of children less in day-to-day activities categories, like feeding their child (ibid., p. 14466). During the pandemic, fathers who stop working have more interaction with their child than those who keep working (Suriastini *et al.*, 2020, p. 2). They spend more time at work as part of the role to provide material needs for their family.

In general, that pattern is also found in global studies. For men, they show their love through their role as breadwinner (Anderson and Magrath, 2019, p. 117). However, because of the caretaking that culturally grow is identical to femininity and emotional bond, that kind of care in masculinity is not acknowledged (Cancian, 1987 in Anderson and Magrath, 2019, p. 116). It internalizes, so even if they perform the known care, they will seek their nature of care with their labor. For example, experience as primary caregiver of left-behind fathers, they still pursue working that help them to maintain their image as men and 'good fatherhood' based on society standard of masculinity (Lam and Yeoh, 2018, p. 113). How men carry out their responsibilities towards their families, both materially and in family time, is measured as masculinity (Prianti, 2017, p. 13). Further, fathers' involvement in childcare is getting highly anticipated (Hunter, Riggs, and Augoustinos, 2017, p. 3). Being father and breadwinner count as "positive" hegemonic masculinities (Messerschmidt, 2018, p. 40).

Furthermore, involved in care work could help men develop 'nurturing identities' (Elliot, 2015, p. 16). Since masculinity is not a fixed practice and depending on the gender interaction practice in society, the masculinity could be seen (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005., p. 852 and 836), then by acknowledge the 'love' and caring aspect allows us to know other forms of it (Hanlon, 2012, p. 26). Related to that, the concept of 'caring masculinity' appears to understand fathers' characteristic

that does not fit with 'hegemonic' masculinity (Hunter, Riggs, and Augoustinos, 2017, p. 9, p. 3). Hanlon (2012, p. 208) calls 'caring masculinity' positive relationships with others that contradict the image of manly men. It allows men to embrace their 'care' side as they engage in nursing activities (Elliot, 2015, p. 15). Men participation in 'care' activities assumes that men's support gender-equality in care sphere since it against hegemonic masculinity (Scambor *et al.*, 2023, p. 3). The concept is useful to identify men's role as father (Suwada, 2017, p. 167). Thus, the concept of caring masculinity becomes important to learn about father involvement in childcare.

Additionally, masculinity concept is also used to see transform practice in fathering. Some studies identified fathers as traditional masculinity if they hold hegemonic masculinities values, like breadwinner, and when they show caring masculinities values then they identified as new father (Johansson and Andreasson, 2017, p. 81; McLaughlin and Muldoon, 2014, p. 449). While other studies see how those two concepts interact in the practice (Brandth and Kvande, 1998, p. 311; Brandth and Kvande, 2018, p. 87). I also interested in categories developed by Hanlon (2012, p. 197-207) to describe men care practice which are 'conventional' describes hegemonic masculinities values, 'sharer' describes hegemonic and caring masculinities values, and 'carer' describes caring masculinities values. Those concepts are helpful to explore the masculinities characteristic beyond traditional and new.

Related to that, Hunter, Riggs, and Augoustinos (2017, p. 6) argued that fathers negotiated their behavior between traditional and new masculinity in childcare involvement. Hegemonic and caring masculinity are complemented rather against each other (*ibid.*, p. 4). Using caring masculinity without considering hegemonic masculinity character to learn father practice in childcare could create void to understand it (McLaughlin and Muldoon, 2014, p. 440). Because from my understanding is caring masculinity creates expectation on father involvement in care, while in practice it could be different from that, and by bringing in the hegemonic masculinity characteristic, I could get deep understanding about it. The concepts completed each other to get broader idea about fatherhood (Offer and Kaplan, 2021, p. 1002).

Furthermore, the study about fathers and masculinities was carried out around several perspectives. Like, from policy perspective related to paternity or paternal leaves quota shows positive result in increased father's practice in childcare (Kvande and Brandth, 2017, p. 42; Tremblay and Dodeler, 2017, p.85; Lammi-Taskula, 2017, p. 104; Kvande, 2022, p. 153). Yet different result shows in Asian countries, like Japan and Korea, where their abundance leave is not appealing for the fathers to involve in childcare (Nakazato, 2017, p. 254; Lee, 2023, p. 20). Then, from the practice shows that the more involved fathers in childcare, especially direct childcare, the more they detached from hegemonic masculinities character or attached to caring masculinities and become 'new fathers' (Nešporová, 2019, p. 159; Johansson, 2011, p. 178; Beglaubther, 2021, p. 17). However, study related father involvement in childcare related to the leave policy or using masculinity concept are not very common in Indonesia. Father involvement in leave policy is specific to breastfeeding practice (Rahadian *et al.*, 2020, p. 172), rather than focus on childcare practice. It is because difference interpretation on how masculinity and femininity perceive in Indonesia which interpret as '*kodrat*' - fated from God (Nilan, Demartoto, and Wibowo, 2014, p. 71), so the father role as care actor is not equal to that of the mother. Some studies from Indonesia related to father practice (Asy'ari and Ariyanto, 2019, p. 38; Mil, Jalal, and Djamaris, 2022, p. 14466; Suriastini *et al.*, 2020, p. 2) that I mentioned above are also show the element of masculine characteristics, even though the studies do not use masculinity concept.

Because of that, I argue there is a need to explore the working father's involvement in childcare by using masculinity concept to unpack the practice and how the *kodrat* perception influences their involvement in childcare in Indonesia context. I emphasize working fathers here to acknowledge the role as worker and father. It makes 'working mother' and 'working father' on the equal position as workers and parents (Ranson, 2012, p. 758). Previous study suggests going through the factor that influence father roles, including the practice (Yunianti, Mulya, and Nanik, 2023, p. 33). There is also suggestion to see whether father more involved in childcare when they work at supportive workplace (Atkinson, 2021, p. 859). In addition, most of the studies about working father involvement look at father's perspective have done in country with generous leave policy like Sweden, Norway, Japan, and Korea (Bergqvist and Saxonberg, 2017, p. 1471; Nakazato, 2017, p. 253; Byun and Won, 2020, p. 609). Then, what about Indonesia that has limited resources to support the working father and known for its patriarchal society? Thus, look at different setting, this study wants to fill the gap and add nuance of working father involvement in childcare, and masculinity studies in global discourse by study it on fathers in Indonesia. Through this research, I want to highlight how fathers' involvement in childcare uses the concept of masculinity by paying attention to the elements above.

1.3 Research objective and question

To determine the ability of working fathers as care actors, this research wants to answer questions regarding:

What is the experience of working fathers in childcare in Indonesia from masculinity perspective?

Chapter 2. Method and Methodology

This study wants to explore the experience and behaviors of working fathers in childcare. And to answer the research question, the technique that I used in this study is qualitative interviewing. Qualitative interviewing was chosen because I wanted to explore the social behavior of working fathers in childcare. It allows me to understand the situation that I never part of it (Rubin and Rubin, 2005, p.3). The interview was a semi structured interview using interview guidelines to help focus on the story around the study.

In participant recruitment, I advertised the study to reach the working fathers. Advertising is one of the strategies to recruit interviewees (King, Horrocks, and Brooks, 2019, p. 62). I advertised it through Instagram and WhatsApp broadcast message. I decided to use the advertisement because I wanted to get diverse occupations of working fathers. In the advertisement, I stated the information of the study, the characteristics of working fathers, my contact, and lottery information. The lottery was intended to attract the participants and personally, it is the way I show my gratitude for their participation in my study. The advertisement and broadcast message started from July 30th and was accepting response until August 5th, 2023.

Moreover, the characteristic that I informed in the advertisement poster is those who a working father, has a wife who also works, has a child within 0-5 years old, and willing to be interviewed. While in the broadcast message I gave more information regarding the formal and informal sector and example of job. It is because 60,12% workers in Indonesia work on informal sector (Statistic Indonesia, 2023b, p. 12). Based on Statistics Indonesia (2023a), people who are self-employed, freelance, work with temporary or unpaid workers, and work with unpaid family or family workers are categorized as informal workers. While people who work as employees and those who do business with help from permanent workers or paid workers are included as formal workers (Statistic of West Java, 2022, p. 9). Additionally, to look at practices around paternity leave because the paternity leave policy in Indonesia is usually implemented by large companies and the public sector in the formal sector compared to the informal sector.

Furthermore, in this study I specified for working fathers in dual earner families who have a child between 0-5 years old. It is because in 2020, based on National Socioeconomic Survey, there are 74,94% married men and 69,52% married women in workforce (Statistic Indonesia, 2020 in MoWECP and Statistic Indonesia, 2022, p. 49) which indicate the possibility of dual earner family. In addition, a study from Prospera, Investing in Women, and the University of Indonesia (2023, p. 9) shows that there is gap in care work between men and women in child aged 0 – 5 years old. The child around that age is dependent on adults which impacts the care workload. I also wanted to get the recent experience, so I chose to focus with working fathers with children aged 0-5 years old.

During the process of recruitment, the fathers picked when and through what platform they were willing to be interviewed. I did an online interview, so I gave several options which were G-meets, Zoom, WhatsApp call, and WhatsApp text. It was because I wanted to talk to them comfortably based on their preference. Before I started, I explained about the study and consent verbally and through online form that I gave them. The online form consisted of related information, including informing them about their consent whether they fine to be recorded or not. All the participants gave their consent to be recorded. The interview was conducted from July 30th to August 15th, 2023. The length of the interview was around 38 minutes to one hour and half. The interview conducted in Indonesian Languages. In addition, I transcribed the interview using Google Docs

voice typing and zoom meeting transcription. I also contacted some of the interviewees for follow up questions and confirmation through email and WhatsApp.

In the analyzing process, I analyzed it by seeing the themes that emerge from the transcription. I analyzed the similarities and the differences in each interview. I also used pseudonyms in this study to protect the identity of fathers. The idea to use pseudonyms came from me because I wanted them to feel secure and comfortable talking about themselves. In addition, I thought it was my ethic as researcher to provide safe space for them. Furthermore, the quotations in this study translated from Indonesian to English with adjustment to make it understandable in English without omitted the meaning and context of the quote.

Table 1. List of Participants

No	Name	Occupation	Sector	Working Time	Domicile	Children Age
1	Andi	Civil Servant	Formal	9 to 5 and flexible	Bogor	7 months old
2	Aris	Civil Servant	Formal	study leave - flexible	Bandung	1 months old
3	Beni	Finance accountant	Formal	9 to 5	Jakarta	2 years old
4	Budi	HR/ Talent Development	Formal	study leave - flexible	Depok	10 months old
5	Dani	Driver	Informal	flexible	Semarang	2 years old and 5 years old
6	Farhan	Civil Servant	Formal	9 to 5	Tangerang	2 years old, 7 months old, and 7 months old
7	Faris	Civil Servant	Formal	9 to 5	Jakarta	2 years old
8	Ferdi	Data Scientist	Formal	9 to 5 and flexible	Bogor	5 months old
9	Hari	Entrepreneur	Informal	flexible	Bogor	4 years old
10	Hendra	Civil Servant	Formal	9 to 5	Sragen	3 years old
11	Irvin	Psychologist	Informal	flexible	Bekasi	4 years old and 8 years old
12	Jaya	Account manager	Informal	flexible	Jakarta	2 years old, 5 years old, and 9 years old
13	Jodi	Production Technician	Formal	shift	Bekasi	3.5 years old
14	Kevin	Civil Servant	Formal	9 to 5	Bogor	1.5 years old and 4 years old
15	Kresna	Architect Supervisor	Formal	9 to 5	Jakarta	3 years old
16	Kukuh	Entrepreneur	Formal	flexible	Surakarta	23 months old
17	Luthfi	Lecturer	Formal	flexible	Jakarta	2.5 years old
18	Malik	Team Leader Operation Facility	Formal	shift	Jakarta	2.5 years old
19	Naufal	Marketing Assistant	Formal	9 to 5	Medan	1 year old
20	Niswar	Manager Assistant	Formal	shift	Semarang	4 years old

The list of participants in table 1 consists of four fathers who work in the informal sector and the rest in the formal sector. In addition, there are variations in their work arrangements in both the formal and informal sectors. Nonetheless, informally employed fathers in this study predominantly worked in flexible arrangements. Then, for fathers who are on study leave, one of them was return to the office in August, while the other will return to the office next year. The domicile of the fathers is mostly concentrated in urban areas, like JABODETABEK (Jakarta – Bogor – Depok – Tangerang – Bekasi), while the rest are from Semarang and Sragen in Central Java, Medan in North Sumatera, and Bandung in West Java. During the interview I found out that most of them have bachelor's degrees. The working fathers come from middle-income families which can be seen from the type of job and place where they are working and living, and level of education. In

addition, some of them are first-time fathers, while others have more than one child under five years old and over five years old.

The limitation of this study is that the participants come from middle-income social economic backgrounds and the working fathers from informal sector work in flexible working arrangement. It could be because there is limitation in my network to advertise the study. I also did not consider their ethnicity, religion, education level, and age when I interviewed them. It is also limited to working fathers who have children under five years old and living in dual earner arrangements. Moreover, interviews were conducted only once through an online platform. Thus, with the diversity that Indonesia has and limitation of this study, the study does not want to generalize, but rather provides descriptions and add knowledge about how fathers participate in childcare in Indonesian society, which is known as a patriarchal society. I hope this study can be useful in acknowledgements of the potential of working fathers in childcare.

Chapter 3. Fathers Involvement in Childcare

3.1 Care practice

In this section, I describe the working fathers' care practice based on their workplace situation, 'common' father and stay-home-father. Moreover, there are two types of care practice that are observed in this study, which are direct and indirect care. The direct care for the newborn that is most mentioned is carrying the baby, giving milk with bottle, changing the diapers, sunbathing, bathing, bedtime stories, and playing with the baby. Play with the baby is like baby-clapping, talk to them, and singing to them. The indirect care activities that are mentioned are like preparing the milk, getting food for their wife, supporting their wife during breastfeeding, and doing laundry. In addition, some of them mentioned how they care for the newborn and some of them mentioned that they are more involved in direct care after the child is slightly older.

3.1.1 Working fathers as 'common' father

I refer to 'common' father to describe that fathers must have a job and work outside house in Indonesia societies. Most of the working fathers in this group are those who need to work from the office, referring to themselves as support caregivers, and work in formal sector, except for Irvin. Even though most of them placed themselves as supporters, they all mentioned their activities both directly and indirectly. In addition, since it dominated by formal sector, I analyses the early involvement through paternity leave entitlement, and I also found out change in care practice from newborn to one-year-old child and above.

A. Newborn

Newborn care practice for working father that need to be present at the office and in formal sector can be describe since they took paternity leave. Paternity leave in Indonesia regulated under Law no. 13/ 2003 about Employment, in article no. 93 (Government of Indonesia, 2003, p. 37). The article basically talks about wage payment which the employer is mandatory to pay employee wage for two days leave when their wife giving birth (ibid., p. 38). The entitlement is under employer authority, and it is different for some workplace. It means that if the employee asks for leave more than two days or more than their workplace paternity leave quota, then the employer does not have to pay the additional days, or they get unpaid leave. The alternative to get paid is by using an annual leave entitlement to extend their leave, which commonly happens. The employees have rights to twelve days in a year for year leave quota (ibid., p. 32) which is regulated in the same regulations. There are also two fathers that were on study leave when I interviewed them, so they are not get paternity leave because of their employee status on study leave. It is helpful to identify the pattern practice and understand their situations. Based on that, there are three variations of practice that I observed during the interview with the working father.

First, despite the length of their leave and direct or indirect care activities that they do, they emphasized care for the mother than the child. It is because some of them shared that they are afraid to do something wrong with the baby, and the baby in this phase is closer to the mother. For example, Faris, who is a civil servant and has a two-year-old child, spent two weeks' leave in total when his child was born. His child was born in his wife hometown and his wife stay there during maternity leave. During that time, he shared that he helped his wife, like lubricated baby oil to the baby and carried the baby, but he was afraid to bathe the baby. He added that the intensity of childcare in the newborn phase was emphasized on his wife. He refers to himself as a supporter

for his wife. I believe that his feelings and perception on childcare influenced his involvement in the newborn phase.

“When the child was a baby, maybe my wife had more intensity than me because of her touch, I mean she had more physical contact and knew everything. For me, at most, I helped her [...].” (Faris, civil servant)

Second, are those who maximize their involvement during leave. It is because the working fathers at that time had more time to spend with their child when they were on leave than after the leave because of their situations. The care arrangements change right after they go back to the office. Aris is one of the examples of this situation. Aris was on study leave when their one months old child was born and when I interviewed him. He was going back to his office in August. His care practices changed after he returned to work because his wife was on study leave and studying in a different city. He shared he was planning to visit his family on the weekends and get help from domestic workers to care for his child when he and his wife are away. Because of his situation, his study leave helps him to have more time together with his child for almost one month or so, making him more involved during his leave because he has more time with his child. He participated in direct care, such as taking baths, feeding the baby, and changing the diaper.

“Right now, usually what I do is changing the diapers, bathing, massage, chatting, tummy time, carry, and prepared the baby to sleep” (Aris, civil servant)

He explained that the way he and his wife divide the task is flexible, so if his wife busy then he takes over to caring the child. He added because he lives together with his in-laws, sometimes he gets help from them and domestic workers when he or his wife needs to do something else.

“[...] there is no specific task. If I cannot do it, then my wife will do it, and sometimes if my wife has something else to do, I will do it, like feed the baby with the bottle.” (Aris, civil servant)

Third, there are fathers that are more involved after their leave has ended. At that time, they had limited opportunities to get involved directly with their child because of different reasons, like because of childcare done by another person, or because of short leave. For instance, Farhan, who has a two-year-old son and seven-month-old twin daughters. In his first paternity leave, he had two days paternity leave and added one week more by using his annual leave entitlement. During his first leave he mostly did indirect care and became an observer because his in-laws took care of everything since they lived together. However, he insisted on doing direct care, and gained trust later. While Malik, who has a two-year-old child, shared that during his three days leave, he took care of his wife and was busy with the administration stuff. He works on shift, and needs to stand by, so it was impossible for him to stay at home for some period of time. He described his activity in childcare after the leave. He took turns with his wife to care for his child. He explained his involvement was in sunbathing, carry/ hold, babysitting when the baby sleeps, and wash cloth diapers. He also loved to take his baby out, like strolling around the neighborhood.

“[...] In this house, we change roles, take turns, so when I was at home, (my wife) could take a rest, and I care the baby. When it was only the two of us (he and his wife), we took turns. There were several months that only two of us. [...]” (Malik, team leader operation facility)

He added that he also got help from his siblings to back up when he and his wife finished maternity leave and work at the same time.

“The first week after the baby was born, the parents came (and stayed for a week), after that it was only two of us until two or three months. Then, I asked my younger sister to stay together and help to back up us.” (Malik, team leader operation facility).

B. One-year-old children and above

The different care from newborn with one-year-old child is the variation of activities that the working fathers shared, including their hobby, besides basic care activities that they do it, like feeding, bathing, or bedtime. Irvin, who is freelance psychology and has two children, shared he likes to accompany them while watching YouTube. Niswar, who has a four-year-old child, and Kevin, who has a four-year-old daughter and two-year-old son, like to stroll around the neighborhood, playing in the playground, or go to the mall. Jodi, a technician who has a four-year-old daughter and two-year-old son, shared his children riding his back or playing ball together when he is at home. He also likes to do his hobbies with his children, like cycling.

“I used to cycle with my first child. I put a baby seat for the cycle. That used to be every week or twice a week I went cycling (with my child). But since she turned three years old the seat no longer fits her, so now my second child turns. [...]” (Jodi, production technician)

The significant change in practice in this study experienced by the father who was placed themselves as supporter in the early life of their child. It usually changes when their baby becomes one year old. For instance, Kresna. He shared, he is more involved when the baby turns one year old because he is no longer afraid and able to communicate with the baby. He adds now, he is more involved with his three-year-old child in talking, physical activity, and bathing. He also always drops off his child to school, and his in-laws will pick up his child after school.

“[...] After a year or so, when he was starting to crawl or something... Well, that's just how I dare to play or carry him and all kinds of things. At this age, three years old can already make all kinds of jokes. So, that's when I play more there.” (Kresna, architect supervisor)

3.1.2 Working father as stay-home-father

In this study, I use the term stay-at-home father to describe working fathers who have more time at home while working. However, some of them get misunderstood by spend their time at home because it is not common in Indonesia to work without leave the house or spend less time outside the house. The working fathers in this group have flexible working arrangements and do not have paternity leave experience. It is because three out of five of them work in the informal sector and the other two do not pay attention to entitlement because of the pandemic and their flexibility in working.

A. Newborn

The fathers are involved from the beginning and maintain their involvement while they also go back to work because of their working arrangements. Most of them refer themselves as active carer for their child. In addition, there is also not much different before and after maternity leave because most of them work remotely from home, so they handled the childcare work when their wife work. Flexible and remote working arrangements allow them to engage more in childcare. Jaya and Hari are the example of this group.

First, Jaya has three children aged nine years old, five years old, and two years old. He gives his best to involve since his first child born and he keeps doing it until his third child is born. He was

a private tutor when his first child was born, owned Kebab enterprise when his second child was born, and now, he has been working as account manager since before his third child was born. All his work experience is in flexible working arrangements. He shared that he took care of his third child soon after birth while working remotely.

“Because it’s remote working so I gave my responds or work on it when I had time. Maybe because it is not time-based work, it could be done late at night or after the third child had a rest.” (Jaya, account manager).

The activity that he did when his children were babies, like washing the cloth diaper, changing the diapers, bathing, carried and calmed the baby when cried. In general, he used to care for his first child since he was born, and it repeated in his second and third child.

“I was involved (in childcare) but was not in charge. What I meant was at that time, our parents also could not help much for 24 hours because they were working. And because my wife had a normal birth, she could not right away care for the baby. Because of that, I cared the baby since the first day and it continued until now.” (Jaya, account manager)

He explains that he and his wife take turns and support each other in childcare from the beginning. When his wife goes back to work, he takes the role as full-time caregiver while working remotely.

“From the beginning, since the first child, we are like to fill in the hole which means, a person who are not busy could care the child first.” (Jaya, account manager)

However, Hari, who has a four-year-old child, shared he was not active carer when his child was born. He was more into helping their wife take care of the baby, rather than taking care of the baby directly because he was not sure what he should do at the beginning. So, he mostly helped his wife, like preparing the milk for the baby.

“Prepared the milk, then if child is crying, I was still brave (to carry the baby). I can’t bathe the baby, because I were a little bit scared, So, I did standard things like making milk and then carrying the baby.” (Hari, Entrepreneur).

B. One-year-old children and above

Since they have become an active carer, they are continuing in doing daily care for their child, like feeding and bathing, and they share other activities. For example, Dani, who has two children, quit his job when his first child was born to care for his child. He changed his job several times because he still wanted to care for his children, until he currently become school driver and driver for online ride hailing platform. When their children get older, he keeps doing daily care, like bathing and feeding his children. He also likes to spend time together with his children by learning, like mentioning animals’ names when the child is older. He makes meals for his children in the morning before work. At noon, he picks up the student from school and also brings his child who has just come home from school.

“[...] I bring the older child to pick up the student from school.” (Dani, driver)

Kukuh, who has two-year-old child, has been working remotely since his child was born and continued after his wife finished her maternity leave to engage in care activity. When his baby was twenty-one months old, he camped together at the mountain. He continued his care activity that he has been doing, such as bedtime stories.

“Before sleep, we usually like to read a book or sing together. I have been doing it since the baby was two months old. Because that the moment for me, my wife, and my child to bond.” (Kukuh, entrepreneur).

3.1.3 Care alone

Some fathers also shared their experience when they cared for their children alone without any help. They shared being fully in charge as caregiver is meaningful. Jodi feels he gets closer to his children when there are only three of them. For Andi, it is meaningful because he feels capable of caring for his child alone.

“Most probably because this is the first child, so something can be done for the child, is very memorable, for example, bathing the child, feeding the child. Then when the mother on business trip, so her grandma takes care of the child, and when her grandma going back home at the same time with the mother on business trip, automatically the child left alone, so without any choice I need to care her full time since the morning when she wake up until she wake up again. Everything is memorable, especially when I as her father care of her full time (alone).” (Andi, civil servant)

For Hari, it was meaningful because it was his first time caring for the baby alone and made him realize that childcare is doable to do it together with his wife, even though it was not easy to care for the child and he felt stress at that time. It is kind of like a turning point for him.

“The moment made me realize... I mean the consequences of having a working wife is left alone with the child. [...]” (Hari, entrepreneur).

The experience of caring for the child alone could be a good challenge for the fathers. I found this experience important for them, because at some point it helps them gain skill and confidence in doing childcare. It shows that the fathers are also able to care for the child and give them the experience of being an equal caregiver.

3.1.4 Discussion

I try to capture when and in what task usually the father is more involved than other family members. There is lot of aspect that make the working fathers seems less engage in childcare besides their working arrangement, like because they afraid to hurt the children, they do not know what they should do, the involvement of another care actor, like in-laws, and the perception of child is closer to their mother. As a result, the father is likely to be involved when the baby is older when they can share various activities, like their hobby or playing. Entertaining activities, like playing, are widely popular among fathers as their part in childcare (Adler and Lenz, 2015, p. 235). It could be because the way men in fathering promoted in society (Prianti, 2017, p. 9) which excluded what is considered as feminine activities. However, the father is actively involved beyond fun activities when there is only, he and his child or he and his wife together with his child. It is because by caring alone, they gain confidence in doing childcare (Brandth and Kvande, 2018, p. 86-87) which could help them develop their caring masculinities. Additionally, it further shows the way they place themselves in childcare, because of their masculinity, influences their participation in care activities.

3.2 Emotions

In this section, I illustrate various emotions that working fathers experience while doing childcare. I refer to it as one package because all the feeling exists together, most of the working fathers said that they feel tired, but also happy. Both working fathers in formal and informal sectors experience similar emotions.

3.2.1 One Package

The first emotion is tiredness, stress, and boredom. The fathers express it in various ways. For example, Andi and Jaya. Andi said that he feels complicated while doing childcare and work at the same time. He also feels more complicated than before he had a child. However, he realized that it is part of his responsibility to take care of his baby. On the other hand, Jaya feels stress because there is moment who he hopes his children will cooperate with him, but not and it happens on a daily basis. And if the feeling is at its peak, he cries his heart out to his wife.

“Yes, sometimes I feel tired, I'm really stressed. Because sometimes our expectations do not match what is happening on the ground. For example, maybe when we hope that children can obey, can calm down first, suddenly they make all kinds of fuss. And that happens every day. So yeah, the accumulation of stress is fast in the meantime and sometimes I like... uubhhh stress, sometimes crying because it's impossible to throw a tantrum. That happened when something happened out of expectation.” (Jaya, account manager).

In addition, some of the fathers said that childcare is not comparable to any other work. For instance, Hari said that childcare is the most stressful job compared to any other job that he ever tried. Jodi also said that childcare is emotionally draining and if he can choose, he prefers to only work, but he realized that childcare is his duty as parents and no choice for that.

“[...] I feel that if I had to choose, I would rather work, than take care of the children. Taking care of children is not only emotionally draining, but also what... patience draining, it is very tiring. So, if I have a choice, whether I'm told to work or to take care of my child, I'd rather just be told to work. But because taking care of the children is our responsibility as parents, whether we like it or not, so just do it.” (Jodi, production technician).

Little bit different, Kukuh said that sometimes he feels bored when doing childcare because he dedicated himself to childcare while he runs his business from home. When he feels that, he usually takes his time from childcare activities and hanging out with his friends. He does that to stabilize his emotions.

“I'm happy, but sometimes I'm bored too, if I'm bored, I'll tell my wife first to reduce the amount of time I have with my children. then have coffee with friends, go for a walk. After that, I'm going back to do childcare again.” (Kukuh, entrepreneur).

The second emotion is being afraid. They feel afraid because they love their children and do not want anything bad to happen. For example, Aris said that doing childcare makes him happy like playing games, but he is also afraid at the same time.

“It feels like playing with a Tamagotchi, so I'm happy to see it grow healthy, but life is at stake, so I'm afraid if something goes wrong or something.” (Aris, civil servant)

Feeling afraid somehow prevents them from involving themselves in infant care. They are afraid that they will hurt the baby. Faris and Hari said that they were afraid to bathe their baby because they were too afraid. Kevin was also very careful and stiff when he held the first born because he was afraid to hurt the baby.

“Maybe when I had my first child. When I held her, I felt like what would happen if I broke her neck? It was really confusing. The baby was a newborn. But the mother said, ‘if you don't hold it, then how can I hold it by myself all the time.’ So, yes, at the beginning it was still kind of stiff, stiff, but now I know, how to protect the neck, I know that.” (Kevin, civil servant).

The third feeling is confidence. They feel confident when they start to get used to childcare. Like Kevin when he was afraid to hurt his baby, but when he knew how to do it, he was not afraid to hold the baby. In addition, he shared that he was more involved in childcare when his second child was born because he knows how and what it feels like to care of the baby. This is also experienced by Jaya who said that the difference when he cares for his three children is how he feels confident caring for them. Fathers who have more than one child shared that they get more confident involved in childcare because they learned it when they have their first child.

“More confident in handle the children, because the first child is really the first one, I had many worries about this and that, the second child was still in the middle, and the third child, I already memorized that.” (Jaya, account manager)

The fourth is Happiness. Most of them said they feel happiness while doing it and a lot of happy moments together with their child. For examples are Aris, Dani, Luthfi, Beni, Jaya, Niswar and Hendra. Aris analogized his feelings and experiences in childcare to playing games. Dani said that he feels happy when he sees his children happy. Luthfi, Beni, and Jaya explain it they feel happy to witness the moment of child growing up. That moment is precious for them. Niswar and Hendra shared they were just happy and it hard to explain. Furthermore, he also feels grateful for every moment with his children.

“Thank God, just more positive feeling, seeing the children develop and grow well. [...] just happy anyway. It's hard to explain in words” (Hendra, civil servant).

3.2.2 Discussion

The working fathers show various feelings from stress to happiness. Those feeling are against the characteristic of hegemonic masculinity where men must brave all the time and feeling of stress and afraid is like weakness for them. Just like Jaya expressing his vulnerable side to his wife is something that is rarely heard, yet it is important to normalize that. Also, positive expressions like joy and happiness that seem unmatched with hegemonic masculinity that seem serious. The fathers develop caring masculinity that allows them to feel their care emotion that not known in hegemony masculinity (Elliot, 2015, p. 13). Moreover, Aris connects between game and childcare to describe about what it feels, means doing care makes him and other fathers discover the other side of masculinity in themselves.

3.3 Motivation to Involve

In this section, I will explain how their experience in childcare, wife, and information influence the working fathers' involvement in childcare. Those three things shape their motivation to get involved. Furthermore, the motivation is useful to understand the different care practices that the working fathers done in this study.

3.3.1 Care Experience

Some fathers share the initiative of doing childcare that comes from themselves. They are aware of their role in childcare. The reason behind their self-awareness is their past relationships with their father and the others are used to taking care of their younger siblings, nephew niece, or their firstborn. Their experience shapes their initiative in doing childcare.

First, the past relationship with their father is their motivation to be a better father than their father. Kukuh is one of those fathers. He shared that he wants to participate actively in childcare

and is very interested in father involvement in childcare because his past relationship with his father was not good. His experience is what is known as fatherless.

“To be honest, I was growing up without a father’s figure that could be used as leader or inspiration for the family. Sorry, I did not mean to blame my father here [...] Because of that I was searching for it alone outside.” (Kukuh, entrepreneur)

Second, they are used to childcare. For example, Aris shared, he used to care for his nephew niece sometimes. Moreover, Jaya and Malik used to care for their younger siblings when their parents were working, so, they are familiar with some care activities.

“Actually, I’m used to it (childcare) because I’m the first child, so I used to care for my younger sibling since start to crawl because my parents needed to work outside house around 10 am, so in the morning I used to handle it. It can be said that I used to care for child.” (Malik, team leader operation facility).

Third, their experience in social group relations. Luthfi shared that his ex-students, who already have baby, advised him to be always stay by his child because the moments only happen once. He also got inspiration when he was studying abroad in Netherlands and his friends who live abroad. In addition, Niswar shared that among his friends who were looking for attention outside the family are those who have unhealthy relationships with their father. Then, he decides to always give attention to his child by being involved in childcare.

“So, I see around me that when the husband is busy working and finally not close to his child, it seems that the development of the child is so different. I see that children who are not too close to their father are looking for attention from others. Because of that, I am motivated (to involve), so that my child is also comfortable with me as his father. Then the closeness between father and child is important for his development too. [...]” (Niswar, manager assistant)

However, it means that for the working fathers who are not used to care task, they find difficulties and need more time to involved themselves in childcare. So, they are involved in childcare but not as intense as those who get used to it and take some time in the beginning. For instance, Hari shared that he does childcare because it seems he is the only one that could do it while his wife works at fixed time, so he learns how to do childcare when he spends his time with his child.

“I dare to carry my children after above 8 months old. Before that I did not dare to do that. I don’t have any younger siblings so... psychologically I also don’t really like kids. So, I learn how to deal with a child. So yeah... I learn to face a child, especially my child.” (Hari, entrepreneur)

3.3.2 Wife encouragement

As a couple, it is important to support each other. As has been explained above, fathers who are not familiar with childcare need help and encouragement to do it. If the mothers do not encourage them, then there is a possibility the fathers will be uncomfortable doing childcare and not realize their role in it, especially in direct childcare. In this study, some fathers shared the involvement in childcare because of their wife encouragement. For example, Andi shared since the beginning his wife told him to participate in childcare together. Because of that He learn it and enjoy doing childcare.

“Because my wife said that we made it together, so we must care for it together.” (Andi, civil servant).

However, the mothers could be an obstacle for the fathers to participate in childcare. During the interview, Kukuh and I discussed his interest in father involvement, then he said that sometimes the mothers are protesting if the fathers doing childcare imperfectly and it could lead to fathers'

passive participation because of upset feeling. This experience was experienced by Irvin. He said that there was a time he swaddled the baby, but his wife said it did not look right. Nonetheless, he did respond casually, and her comments do not prevent him from doing the childcare. Even though Irvin was not making it a big deal, it could happen differently for other fathers. The mothers could let the fathers learn from their mistakes than criticize it so badly.

“Then I did... what is it called... swaddled, change the clothes, but sometimes I received protest for did not do it neatly. [...] It didn’t matter for me.” (Irvin, freelance psychologist)

3.3.3 Information

Information about childcare could increase father involvement in childcare. Some fathers shared that they learn a lot about childcare through parenting class or surfing on the internet. Most of the working fathers' resources in information are YouTube and Google. Luthfi added that his pediatrician also educated him about his child, like the sickness and what he should do. Furthermore, the information in parenting class helps Ferdi to be more involved in direct childcare. He watched the recording of parenting class after work when his wife was pregnant. From that class, he learned breastfeeding position and more prepared when he heard his baby crying. He said it opened his knowledge about childcare.

“The second reason maybe because of the literature because I was participating in parenting class before my child was born. Maybe it helped me to change my perspective about traditional childcare. It opened a little bit. [...] the context is, it was my wife who took the parenting class, then because I couldn’t do it together (due to work), I asked for the recording, and I listened to it alone. After that we discussed it. [...]” (Ferdie, data scientist)

3.3.4 Discussion

Related to their motivation in their involvement in childcare, some working fathers said they want to be a better father and some of them familiar with care work. Their experience and familiarity with care tasks contribute to early involvement in childcare. While others said that their wife encourages them to be an involved father. It is because mothers are still seen as main care actors (Peukert, 2019, p. 1462; Han, Liu, and Xie, 2023, p. 1972), so for some working fathers having permission makes them feel free to be involved in childcare. As the consequences, at some point, the wife’s aspirations and belief about gender norms also influences the father’s involvement (Suwada, 2017, p. 212). Moreover, care practice seems difficult for fathers because they never anticipated becoming care actors, so they are not even prepared (Hanlon, 2012, p. 210). Then, having access to the information, like parenting class, helps them to get involved. At some point, understanding their motivations in involvement made me recognize why working fathers have different practice and intensity in childcare.

Chapter 4. Childcare and Work Negotiations

4.1 Father and Work

In this section, I will describe the relation between working fathers, care work, and paid work. There are negotiations between care work and work that faced by working fathers, both formal and informal sector. The first part will talk about how working fathers organize and negotiate their time between care work and paid work based on the sector. The second part talks about how their children influence their work choice.

4.1.1 Time

A. Formal Sector

The working fathers in the formal sector in this study have three types of working arrangements. fixed hours, shift, and flexible working arrangements. First, a fixed hours working arrangement means that the working fathers need to work from the office between 09.00 a.m. to 05.00 p.m. during weekdays. The working fathers in this type of work arrangement have limited time to do childcare on weekdays. It is because they also need to spare time to commute between office and home, beside the working hours. For example, Andi shared that sometimes his baby already sleeps when he arrives at home after work, even though he tries to go home early because of severe traffic jam.

"The distance isn't too far, but maybe because of traffic jams, it takes more than an hour if it's jammed. We take the KRL, the total round-trip can be 3 hours. We must leave at half past seven in the morning, if we go home, it's even worse if you come from the office at 4.00 PM and arrive at house is Maghrib time. Most of the time it's like that when WFO (Work from Office). Sometimes the traffic is bad, right when I get home the child is already asleep, I just arrived around Isba." (Andi, civil servant)

They compensate for it by caring for the children before or after work and they reserve their weekend special for their children. For instance, Ferdi shared, he maximized his time with his child when he is at home. He likes to care for his child, such as playing together or bathing his child before he goes to work. Faris said that on the weekends he spends their time going to the mall or playground with their child. He described weekends as the only time when he is 'selo', meaning he has more time aside from work and he uses it to go out with his child.

"Now, on Saturdays and Sundays, we go to the mall, exercise together, and sometimes we go for a walk. Most often go to the mall on Saturday and Sunday. [...] Every month there is also a takeover class / one day class, for children under one year old and two years old. My child has been participating since the child was one year old. [...]" (Faris, civil servant)

The second type of working arrangement is shifting working hours. For fathers that work in shifts, like Malik, Jodi, and Niswar, their day off is not on the weekends, it depends on their work schedule. Because they work in shifts, they organize their time before or after work. Malik share, he drops off and picks up his child based on his work schedule and takes turns with his wife. Niswar shared that he always goes out with his child when he is on day off and organizes family trips every month, like visit grandparents. Jodi describes his activities when he needs to care for his child alone before work.

"When it is only three of us, my children cooperate well, like when it is bathe time, they follow without any fuss. [...] Around 3 p.m., they are usually sleepy, then they sleep until around maghrib time. Their mother arrived at

home around that time, and it is a crucial time. They started to make a fuss, especially when the mother arrived. After that, I could not take a break, so I prepare to go to work.” (Jodi, production technician)

Then, the third group is working fathers with flexible working arrangements, like Luthfi who works as lecturer and Kukuluh as a co-founder of his business. This group also includes the fathers on study leave, like Budi, because they organize their time in between their work or schedules when it is possible to do childcare. Budi shared that he finds time when he did not have any class and go to hospital together with his baby for check-up. For Kukuluh, he said that sometimes, if possible, he looks after his child and works at the same time. While Luthfi, shared that sometimes he needs to stop working for a while when he cares for his children at home.

“[...] Well, sometimes I have to give in, like when I am working, then I need to stop. Or when I am in the middle of writing, then I need to stop to play with him.” (Luthfi, lecturer)

However, as a worker, there is a possibility of work overtime, like experienced by Kevin. There was a time he worked overtime on weekdays, so his first child thought he was not going home. Not only on weekdays, but sometimes it happened on Saturday. He shared his concern with his office.

“I feel annoyed when they (workplace) ask me to work overtime on Saturday-Sunday. I conveyed this to my team leader, and he agreed with me that we are civil servants, but that doesn't mean we give our time only to the country, we also have families. [...] For me, the money I earn is not worth the time I spend with my family. I always say that if I could refuse, I will always refuse to work on Saturdays and Sundays. Family is number one.” (Kevin, civil servant)

Therefore, the work environment, like the colleague, the manager, and workplace system could be an obstacle when it does not acknowledge the working father's identity as fathers, not only as workers. On the other hand, when the work environment acknowledges the father identity, it could be a support for the working father to get involved in childcare. For example, Beni feels supported by his workplace. He has understanding supervisors, and he negotiates his working conditions to adjust with their role as father. Beni shared that his supervisor permitted him to have longer lunchtime to take care of his wife and child during his wife maternity leave.

*“At that time, I asked permission from the supervisor to leave the office from 11.00 am to 02.00 pm. I went out to buy lunch for my wife and me. After that, I went to my appartement to have lunch with my wife and care for the baby for a while. Then, I arrived at the office around 02.00 pm [...] I felt lucky to have an understanding supervisor. It was easier *Alhamdulillah*.” (Beni, finance accountant)*

B. Informal

There is also variation of working arrangements in the informal sector, however in this study, the common arrangements are flexible and remote settings. It similar to the working fathers in formal sector with the same arrangements. Nevertheless, the difference is how some of the working fathers in this sector express their childcare as part of their work. Dani, for instance, explained that he usually brings his older child when he drives the students after school in the afternoon. Hari also explained that most of his time cares for the children, besides his business delivering the order twice a week. He even describes taking care of his child as his work because he does it most of the time.

“Because I mostly do... is at least 2 times a week at noon (delivering the order). So, I really think of bathing the child and feeding the child as work.” (Hari, entrepreneur)

However, working fathers in informal sector with flexible working arrangement also shared that sometimes they have to work at a sudden. Irvin and Jaya describe their experience in that situation. Irvin's work schedule depends on the clinic, hospital, or the current project he does. Sometimes, he works until late, and he compensates for his time on weekend to involves in his children's activities to care them. And if something comes up suddenly at work on weekends, he will make up his time to his children at other times.

"Because I am a freelancer, so if there is patient on my day off on Saturday, the hospital will contact me, and it is on call. So, if I have a plan with my children that day, then I reschedule my plan with them to the next day. [...]" (Irvin, freelance psychologist)

Jaya shared that he does care work and paid work side to side. He shared that because it is remote working, there are no fixed hours. Sometime the client asks for a meeting all of a sudden, then he gives his children gadget for a while or asks his first child to look after his sisters. His activities are quite tight when there are a lot of meetings, especially at the end of month. Even though it could get busy sometimes, his current job helps him to have time to do childcare for his children.

"At the end of the month, I usually have... meeting, meeting, meeting, and meeting. It could be 3 to 4 meetings a day. But, after that, it is not problems, I could relax caring for my children." (Jaya, account manager)

4.1.2 Choice

Some of the working fathers share on how their children influence their work choices. They include their children as a factor in choosing their job, so they can participate in childcare. For example, Jaya and Kukuh prefer to do remote working so they can care for their children. Jaya shared that he is still holding on to his current job out of consideration for taking care of the children.

"I want to try (another job), that is, because working in a digital agency is not sustainable, like I work when there are projects, but if there are no projects, then I am empty. That's why I want to find a new, more sustainable job, but not in any job that isn't worth leaving my kids for, so that my kids remain my priority. If I were in a BUMN (State-owned Enterprise) or civil service, maybe it would be okay to leave my child. I think about them, so if I don't get a job in between, I don't think it's worth leaving my kids, especially since they're still kids. Maybe if they were older and I could leave them, but right now, I prefer to be comfortable with it (my job)." (Jaya, account manager)

Kukuh shared that he always wants to have more time to his family, so he chooses to build his business

"I have business in IT and souvenir shop. I build it since I was an undergraduate student, so that I have flexible time to care my family." (Kukuh, entrepreneur)

Next, Dani and Hari prefer flexible working arrangements to care for their children. They are both main caregivers for their children. There was a time when they tried to work fixed hours in an office, but they only worked for one month. It is because their children got sick, so they decided to resign and do flexible jobs.

"Actually, I had to work (in an office), and my child was put in daycare but only for one month. My child got sick and was hospitalized. So, maybe it was not yet possible to entrust care to daycare. [...] Incidentally, I did not continue to work, so it is my parents and me. Maybe later (for full time work)." (Hari, entrepreneur)

Furthermore, for Malik and Jodi, they prefer workplaces that are near to their home. Malik shared that since he works on shift, he wants to have a job with 9 to 5 jobs, so he could spend time

together with his family on weekends. However, he preferred a workplace that is close to his home because he wants to be close to his child.

“[...] I always try to be close to my child. So, when it comes to workplaces, I prefer ones that are close to home. For now, I don't really think about my job as a steppingstone to reach any position because I have a situation and a target that I plan (related to my child).” (Malik, team leader operation facility)

For Jodi, the location of his workplace and work hours influences his way of caring for the children. He once shared that he was in a supervisor position and he usually went home late because his work hours at that time were late, and he also needed to leave home early. It was when his second child was born, so he said he was very busy at that time. And now, his working place is quite far from home, and he feels easily tired and tries not to vent it while caring for his children. Because of that, he is thinking about finding a new job that is close to home.

“[...] When I'm busy at work, for example, I come home feeling breathless and tired, and that affects my mental state. Workplaces should implement work-life balance, so that there is harmonization between work and life. But in reality, work is dominant, so it depends on us. I had difficulty implementing it, so I looked for a new job close to home, around Jakarta. What I feel every day commuting from Jakarta to Karawang for the last two years is tiring [...]” (Jodi, production technician)

4.1.3 Discussion

This study shows both in formal and informal sectors, working fathers' work arrangement have significant influences on working fathers' care practice. Flexible work arrangements dominated by working fathers who are caregivers for their children. It is because they can do both care work and paid work at the same time. Paid work is not an obstacle for them to do direct care. While working fathers with fixed hours and workplace arrangements need to spare their time separately from work routines. That working arrangement is usually found in the formal sector. Working fathers need to negotiate their position between paid work and care work and find their best way to participate in both spheres.

Furthermore, it is important for working fathers to show themselves as a father (Atkinson, 2021, p. 856), not only as a worker in the working place. So that they can receive or ask support in their activities related to childcare from the workplace, just like what Beni did during his wife's maternity leave. Then, it will open their chance to not only position themselves as breadwinner, but also as care actor. To increase father participation in childcare, the workplace needs to acknowledge working fathers as fathers and their care role in childcare aside of being breadwinners.

4.2 Extended family

In this section, I will describe the role of extended family related to the working father's participation in childcare that I found in this study. Extended family here usually the grandparents. Study from Xiangxian (2020, p. 191) show that in China, it is common baby's grandparents giving full support to taking care of the baby. It is not much different from what it found in this study, some of them live with the extended family. Indonesian National Socioeconomic Survey in 2020 showed 50.48% of household types are parents with children and 11.58% are parents with children and relatives (Statistic Indonesia, 2020 in Utomo *et al.*, 2022, p. 304). Sometimes, nuclear families live around their extended family's neighborhood because of practical support (Riany, Meredith, and Cuskelly, 2016, p. 216). Related to that, the working fathers in this study mentioned the role of extended family in newborn care and when the mother is back to work.

4.2.1 Care the newborn

Most working fathers share in-laws' involvement when their baby is born. They ask for help from the in-laws to teach them how to care for a baby. Moreover, the in-law's involvement could shape the way father is involved in newborn care. This is because most in-laws, especially mothers-in-law's role care everything new parents need, so unintentionally, the in-law's involvement in newborn care reduces the working fathers' opportunities to engage in childcare. There are various types that are experienced by the working fathers which the in-laws come to their house, their wife living temporarily in in-laws' house, and they already living together with the in-laws.

The first type is experienced by Kevin when his first child was born. He had minimum involvement in childcare when his in-law was around. He shared that his mothers-in-law came from Bogor to Bandung spent around two months since the child was born. His in-law came to help his wife and teach her about childcare while he learned more by observing the activity. His expression 'did not feel being father' could have meaning being left out and do not know what he should do as father.

"[...] When my first child was born, I did not feel being father because my in-law came and stay for several months. Like, when the baby was crying at night, I did not wake up because I thought my in-law was there. [...] Until my wife told me after my in-law left, 'lucky you because mom was there, you did move at all when the child was crying (at night),' I answered, 'If I wake up, mom already awake, then what should I do?' But then I already aware when I had my second child, like 'oh right, we were together'" (Kevin, civil servant)

Then, Jodi experienced the second type which his wife living together with extended family for the rest of maternity leave, so he has limited interaction when his child just born. He experienced it when his second child was born. He was working in Jakarta, and he only spent around one week together with his family before his wife and his children went to Malang for three months. Jodi's wife lived with Jodi's family. His wife lived far from the city they live in, so the only interaction was through the phone.

"After I finished work, I always video call, especially my first child because we are so close since I cared for her from the beginning. [...] But, for my second child, because I was busy, so I did not sunbathe him. He was sunbathed by my relatives for three months when he was at Cilacap and Malang." (Jodi, production technician).

The third type is the working fathers who live with their parents or in-laws. For instance, Farhan. He lives with the in-laws and his in-laws took care of everything when his first child was born. It made him observe the activities than participate in those. He and his in-laws have different perceptions of childcare practice. He added that his in-laws were against his idea to participate, but he insisted on participating and learning, and after that his in-laws allowed him.

"I live together with my in-laws at my in-laws' house, so there was lot of intervention, like don't be like that, especially told my wife don't fell asleep, or don't do this. There were lot of myths that my in-laws still believe. For me, I wanted to learn, especially when my first child was born, I wanted to learn how to bathe and everything, but sometimes they said, "no need, you don't have to." It was hard at that time, but I was insisting on taking care of my first child. After a while it became normal, like bathing and feeding, that's how it was. For the second and third child because my in-laws saw I had been doing it for long time, so now, I in charge more to care of my children [...]" (Farhan, civil servant).

Furthermore, the different knowledge and access of information between the older and current generation make gaps in practice that could lead to conflict. Ferdi and Kukuh also experienced different perception and practice in childcare. Kukuh has different opinions about how he does childcare and sometimes receives negative comments from his family. He and his wife do not mind

it and try their best to educate his family. Like Kuku, Ferdi sometimes faced different opinions from the elders about childcare. For him, it is important to stand together and support each other with his wife in care practice to deal with those comments.

“The adversary is the grandmother (of his child) who is still traditional. I think the important role of father to defend the argument in front of the family, because the modern care practice perspective nowadays could not be accepted easily by elders. [...]” (Ferd, data scientist)

On the other hand, Andi experience with his in-law is unlike the others working father in this study. Andi was WFH (Work from Home) for three weeks from his wife’s hometown when his seven-month child was born. Andi shared how he got help from the in-laws to learn childcare, instead of the in-law covering all the care work for him. As a result, he gains skill in childcare and confidence in doing childcare when he cares alone.

“[...] Because it is my first child, I couldn’t do childcare, like bathe the baby. So, for example bathing the baby. I got help from my mother in-law while I also learned how to bathe because in the first month, I was still afraid because the baby looked fragile. [...]” (Andi, civil servant).

4.2.2. Care to get back to work

At the same time extended family facilitates the father to keep working after the baby is born. The role of extended family is not only at the beginning of birth, but also when both parents need to work. For some fathers in this study, it more significantly happened when the mother gets back to work. The extended family is accessible alternative care for them. There are five types of extended family arrangements that I found in this study.

The first type is their child stays with the grandparents. For example, Beni. He was living in a different neighborhood from his in-law, and because of that his child stayed with the in-law after his wife went back to work. He and his wife visited his child after office hours and on weekends. But now, he lives near his in-laws, so his child stays with his in-laws during the day.

“There was a time when we lived in apartments, my child stayed with my in-laws, while me and my wife stayed in the apartments. So, we only met after we finished working at my in-laws until around 10 pm, then we left the child. [...]” (Beni, finance accountant)

The second type is the working fathers’ family live near their parents or in-laws. Beni care arrangement move to this type after he live near his in-laws. Kuku also shared that he lives near his parents' house, so he goes there when he needs help to care for his child while he works.

“I work in the morning and evening, so in the evening the child play with the cousin or the grandparents [...] I go there (his parent’s house)” (Kuku, entrepreneur)

The third type is a working fathers’ family moving to the house of his parents or in-laws. Kresna shared that he moved into his in-law's house so his child could be under the grandparents’ care when he and his wife are working. He shared that he takes his son to school and the grandparents pick him up.

“[...] We end up living together with parents. We renovated the house [...] because it would not convenient if we asked them to keep come, so we are the who moved because the school also near the house.” (Kresna, architect supervisor)

The fourth type is the working fathers’ family living together with their parents or in-laws long before the child was born. Hari and Farhan are two of them. Hari shared that he asks his parent

to care of the child when he needs to work outside the house since they live together. So does Farhan, his in-laws take care of his children with the help of a domestic worker during the day. However, Farhan shared how he does not want their children to get closer to the grandparents or other person than the parents. That is why he is likely to care for his children when he and his wife are at home.

“[...] Sometimes when I get tired after work, I ask for help to bathe the baby, but me and my wife try our best to have more care than our parents. So, bedtime and dinner are the activities that should be done by me and my wife. Me and my wife are trying our best because we do not want our children closer to other people than their parents. [...]” (Farhan, civil servant).

The fifth type is asking the parents, in-laws, or relatives to live together temporarily. Jodi shared with his parents who came from Malang to care for his child for a while after he got a job in Jakarta. After that, he searched for other alternatives, like asked the neighbor and domestic worker service.

“I moved to Jakarta in 2019. My leave was ended, so did my wife’ maternity leave around December or January. At that time, I did not have a job. I got a job in Jakarta in March, then I asked my parents, and my in-laws to Jakarta to take turns in care of my (first) child. We also asked for help and pay neighbor to care while we both went to work. [...]” (Jodi, production technician).

Furthermore, besides it is accessible the reason why extended family common alternative care for the children is because they trust the grandparents or relatives than other parties. For example, Kevin’s reason. He believes that his children are safe with his in-laws, besides his in-laws are also willing to do it because they feel bored.

“After all, it’s their grandchild, they will look after it as well as possible, not on a transaction basis that ‘I look after the child and then get paid.’ [...] If this is the case, they must be lovingly looking after their grandchildren as grandparents.” (Kevin, civil servant)

4.2.3 Discussion

Regarding the newborn care, the way in-law sees gender norm in care work affects their respond to the father involvement. Generally, their perception of father and mother role is based on masculine and feminine practice constructed by society (Suwada, 2017, p. 195). It challenges the working father's participation which they could reproduce the inequality of a father’s care in early childhood (Xiangxian, 2020, p. 192). It makes the father feel outcasted in childcare practice (ibid. p. 191). It is same with Kevin experience which make him continue his routine as worker and resulting in ‘hazy transformation to fatherhood’ (Nešporová, 2019, p. 159). Furthermore, the different perception about father participation in childcare creates conflict between the in law and the working fathers (Suwada, 2017, p. 194) which was experienced by Farhan. He needs to prove himself in care work that is known for feminine spheres. However, if the in law is not hold on to traditional gender norms, they could facilitate the father to involve, like Andi experience. It is either the in-law or the working father's perception and desire in care practice that could break the reproducing of inequality. While for the support back to work, the in-laws' perception in gender norm is not as clear as before, during the newborn care. They started to loosen control from covering the care work to support it. It could be because working fathers begin to feel more confident in caring for their children and presenting themselves as parents which responsible for being active caregivers for their children, like Kresna get help to pick up his child and Farhan emphasized his role as main caregiver for his children.

Chapter 5. The Characteristics of Working Father

In this chapter, I analyze deeper the working fathers' practice and perceptions in doing care related to hegemonic masculinity and caring masculinity. Masculinity framework is useful to understand how the working fathers are positioning themselves in care practice. It allows me to look at the relation that the working fathers have and build with themselves, their child, and their wife. I am inspired by Hanlon (2012, p. 197) in developing the characteristics I found in this study, and I also look at other literature in analyzing it.

5.1 As a Leader

Most fathers view their role as a father as a leader. Some of them do not use the word explicitly but mentioned the element of it by being a guardian, educator, protector, role model for their children, and imam. Being someone, the child can look up to, protector, and educator are usually linked with father role and that how the expressing care (Johansson and Andreasson, 2017, p. 3; Anderson and Magrath, 2019, p. 125; Hanlon, 2012, p. 141). For example, Kukuh mentioned explicitly his role as a father is a leader in his family. For him a leader means to guide, to teach, and to give an example. Furthermore, he mentioned how his role is to *nurture* (the exact word that he uses) different from his wife as *nature* (the exact word that he uses), which it refers to *kodrat* or implicitly to masculine and feminine role of father and mother as man and woman.

"The man is the leader of the family; he must be responsible for the family's vision. Nature is the mother part. Nurture means instilling values, like you know you have to eat things like this so that your life is healthy, you have to build these habits so that your life will be better tomorrow. Well, things like this are more to the father. Teaching about responsibility, honesty, etc., is emphasized to fathers. Nature means the bond between mother and child that occurs naturally." (Kukuh, entrepreneur)

While, it is not only voicing about masculine side, but also the religious values. Here, Budi, a father of a 10 month-old-child, said for him the role as father means as *imam*. Imam has same meant as head of family, and often use in Moslem community. Based on Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI) (KBBI, no date), imam is a term that Moslem use to referring to the leader of the prayer, or a leader, or priest in Catholic. In general, imam, is common terms to referring a leader in Islam (Cambridge Dictionary, no date). Budi explained that his role is responsible for guiding the child, becoming his child's role model, and respected by his child. Being an imam in a family means he is responsible to the family and the family member will follow him.

*"He (a father) as **Imam**. It means, he should become a respected model for his child, so the child will obligate the parents and make the father role models. But the most important thing is to give love to the child. [...]"* (Budi, HR/Talent Development)

Moreover, the other words that could identify as leader's element are mentioned by others. Naufal and Irvin shared their position as father in guide and became an example. Naufal, who has a one-year-old child, shared that the child always looks up to the father's habit, so he started to improve his prayer practice. Religion teaching also become Muslim father's concern in childrearing (Juhari, Yacoob, and Talib, 2013, p. 225). While, Irvin shared, he scolded his second child for using bad English words, and since then he has always accompanied and closely monitored what his children watched. While he feels he needs to work harder to become a good example for his child.

"So... I feel like I cannot be 100% a good example. Sometimes, my wife said, gives a good example. Maybe now they can be informed, but later they will learn from the example of those closest to them. For example, because I

don't work every day, so sometimes when I work, I finish late and the next day I wake up late. My wife said, 'I told the kids not to wake up late, (but) their father woke up late.' So, yes, but like it or not, I am a father... slowly, this must change." (Irvin, freelance psychologist)

5.2 As Breadwinner

The working fathers imply on how they can make contribution to the family through paid work. The choice of paid work influences their family organizing care for their child or vice versa, like what I have described in previous chapter. The working fathers have strong characteristics as breadwinners. Some fathers shared that they want to give everything to their child. For example, Beni shared that he always wants to buy toys for his child as part of showing his love for his child.

"[...] I also show my love (to my child), like when we go somewhere together, I always buy her toys, but his mother forbids me from doing that too often. Maybe that is the difference between mothers and fathers, where mothers still think about family finances, whereas for fathers it is about making their children happy." (Beni, finance accountant)

Related to that, as working fathers, Faris feel more enthusiastic about work after they have a child. It is because he sees his role as father means to being breadwinner and fulfill child needs from this perspective. He motivates differently after he has a child.

"(before and after having a child) I feel different in terms of work excitement. [...] I become more motivated to work." (Faris, civil servant)

Hunter, Riggs, and Augoustinos (2017, p. 4) illustrate that being provider is not considerate important when they become main caregivers. However, it is not shown in this study which the working fathers who acknowledge themselves as main caregivers, feel better when they have a job or productive activities. It is because of the discourse that men as fathers are the main breadwinners which directly or indirectly puts pressure on them at a certain point. Dani also shared that he faces the stigma from his neighbors because he stays at home to care for his children and seems not to go to work. He was also concerned about his family needs. In addition, Hari shared his insecurity regarding his income. He feels he do not contribute enough to the family. They do not realize that they exercise their masculinity because they are committed as caregivers, but society does not acknowledge it as men's work. They express how they want to give financial contributions to their family, and they choose paid work that still allows them to take care of their child, like Jaya shared.

"That's why when my wife works as civil servants, it means that while I haven't got a job that is really settled that can cover my wife as well, in my opinion, I'm the one who handles the children with all the consequences of not being able to leave the house, that's it. And fortunately, there are jobs that can be done remotely" (Jaya, account manager)

Furthermore, for them, it is important to hold their masculine image by engaged as breadwinner while childcaring (Lam and Yeoh, 2018, p. 113). Because to be able to provide their family is the way men show care. Participating through paid work makes them feel secure not only in the family, but also in society. Furthermore, fulfilling their needs to contribute financially could build their confidence and encourage them to do childcare directly.

5.3 As a Selfless Carer

Besides being protector and wage earner, the fathers also show their care by being selfless (Anderson and Maghrat, 2019, p. 125). Being father, make men selfless and concern about their child more than themselves. Both working fathers in informal and formal sectors said since becoming a father, they put their child first over themselves. Most of them describe how they no

longer do their hobby, instead they prefer to spend their time and money for their child. For example, Farhan shares how his priorities change before-after he has child from himself to his child.

“For the spending now mostly for diapers – milk. There is no time to think about my needs, it comes last. Before having children, I liked futsal and I just could buy futsal shoes, I liked badminton, and I could buy badminton shoes. If I want to play then I would go right away, but now I will think twice about it. I put my children first, if my children are sick, then I will go to the doctor without thinking about the cost. I don’t care how much it costs for my children. But if it is for me, maybe later.” (Farhan, civil servant).

Moreover, in this study, work status is important for the working father because their child is the reason why they are working. Some of them shared that the tiredness from work disappears after they meet their child, especially for them who are working outside home in formal sector. Ferdi and Malik expressed their desire to go home immediately because they were looking forward to meeting their child. While Andi, Farhan, and Naufal explicitly shared that their tiredness is gone when they see their child at home.

“[...] (People say) Once you have children, no matter how tired you are, it will go away. And it turned out to be true, after I saw my child. At first, I didn't believe it, but it turned out to be true after I had my child.” (Naufal, marketing assistant).

They feel an obligation to be responsible for their children. Selflessness emerged as they felt responsible for the child. Most fathers have this caring characteristic, but they have different ways to express it. Some of them show it through paid work and material things, while the other could show them through time, emotion, and direct childcare. Even though, it could be different ways to express it, the working father in this study shows they put their child over themselves.

5.4 As ‘Ideal’ Partner

Most fathers shared that they share their task in childcare with their wife. They not only share the role of wage earner, but also in childcare responsibility (Suwada, 2017, p. 32). Nevertheless, the couple's perception gender norms influence their division of labor here. Some of them said that they divide the roles clearly in some aspect, while others are more fluid in dividing the task and based on the situation what they can do at that time. For example, Beni shared that he and his wife discuss the task and divide it clearly. Lutfi divides it by scheduling their paid work, but there are no specific activities done by him or his wife. Niswar shared that for him as father, his role in childcare is universal and flexibility in doing care so the child could be close with both father and mother.

“For me... the role is more universal for me. So, there is a time my role as a mother or a father. It is also the same with my wife. So, for example, I am alone with my child, I also have to be able to carry out the role of my wife. [...]” (Niswar, manager assistant)

However, in practice, sometimes it could be tricky. For working fathers that divide the task based on circumstances, the working fathers could involve more or less than expectation. On the other hand, they also could explore different childcare practices and develop their skills on that. For example, Kresna shared that he and his wife do not divide the task in strict ways, and he automatically helps based on his capacity.

“These days, maybe what can I do about my child. As men, what can we do. For example, he can cook, but I cannot cook. So, sometimes I feed my child, but not often. Other things I can do like bathing and playing together,

usually in that section. It has been more than 2 to 3 years so it should be automatic. [...]” (Kresna, architect supervisor).

For working fathers that divide the tasks clearly, the tricky part is the working fathers could limit childcare activities option and develop their skills, especially when the tasks divide in gendered ways. Yet, dividing tasks clearly helps in secure the working father's involvement in childcare. For example, Beni shared that he usually prepared the bottle, bedtime, and physical activity, while his wife changes diapers and bathes his two-year-old child since the beginning.

“From the start, we want to share the tasks (in childcare). So, I learn how to carry and hold the baby, how to calm, and how to put the baby to sleep. For bathing and changing diapers are not my tasks, but my wife’s until now. So, I learn other things like carry and make milk.” (Beni, finance accountant)

Furthermore, a wife's role in share care practice is like mediator between working fathers and childcare in fulfilling their aspiration of involvement. For example, Irvin shared that his children clingy to their mother. He does get involved in other parts of childcare, like drop off and pick up to school, but there are certain activities that his children, especially his 4 years-old-child prefer to do it with the mother. Nevertheless, his wife is aware of the situation and always involves him in those activities, like bathing and changing clothes.

“[...] Sometimes, he (the second child) still needs help buttoning his clothes, and he runs to his mother. But my wife suggested that I bathe the child, and my wife put clothes on. So, I still have a role, not all of it is done by the mother.” (Irvin, freelance psychologist).

5.5 As Care Actor

The burdens in care work could be understood by working fathers by being involved in childcare (Suwada, 2017, p. 262). The working fathers who are doing childcare can understand the feeling of women’s double burden. Kevin said that he understands his wife's struggles after observing her for a while. He became more aware to actively help his wife in direct care. In addition, especially, those who spend more time doing childcare, like Kuku and Hari, emphasized more in women’s burden in care work. Kuku and Hari said that they amazed by housewife who choose to care their child by themselves. Since they are actively in direct care, they can feel it by themselves.

“[...] Well, from the many things that happened, the moments I left alone with my child made me understand what it's like to be a housewife. In this case, I as a househusband feel stress. So yeah... the pressure of being a housewife is really that heavy. [...]” (Hari, entrepreneur)

Furthermore, the working fathers who recognize the childcare burden are those who position themselves as equal care actors and less gendered in divide the tasks. Dani, who has two children, shared the role as a father means can be both mother and father who need to feed and bathe the children. Additionally, Jaya shared it is important to share the burden of childcare as a couple.

“[...] Just sharing like that, when the wife is busy with work, I'm the one who handles the children, and that's okay. We just fill each other in. Why does one party have to carry a heavier burden like that compared to the other party?” (Jaya, account manager).

Nevertheless, when the working fathers are positioned themselves as supporter or the task that they share is in gendered manner, then the characters of care actor might not show. Their strong characteristics as breadwinner also could be one of the reasons, so they focus on their work to provide daily needs for the family. For example, Naufal shared that he often comes home late because of work, so he usually only spares his time on weekends and added that he sometimes

waits for his wife to tell him what he should do. His wife still does most of the care work because she arrived at home earlier than him.

“[...] I arrive late at night, and my wife knows the baby well. She will tell me to ‘help me this or that’. She knows if the baby feels sleepy or not, or hungry, or thirsty, so I wait for her instruction. [...]” (Naufal, marketing assistant)

The care actor characteristic depends on the intensity, their positionality, and their perception toward childcare. Understanding the struggle of it could lighten up the burden and bring appreciation for the actor and care activities. Moreover, it means the burdens of caring can be experienced by everyone who commits these actions, both men and women.

5.6 Discussion

From all the characteristics above, the dominant characteristics of the working fathers in this study are as leader, as breadwinner, and as a selfless care I suppose the characters as leader and as breadwinner exist is because of the influence of culture in society. Culture means the role that they believe as '*kodrat*' (italics from resources) which means God given (Nilan, Demartoto, and Wibowo, 2014, p. 71). Moreover, there is also religious values in it, which is believe that is given by God. In Asian religion and culture is significance (Seward and Rush, 2016, p. 22). That is why being a father means having dignity, being breadwinner, and a ruler (Nilan, Donaldson, and Howson, 2007, p. 5 and 6) which is like fate and fixed. It is also like most working fathers said about mothers who automatically have bond and fonder to the children. The culture and religion values are also adopted by Indonesian Law. The explanation related to the division of roles between men and women as husband and wife is mentioned in Act no. 1/ 1974 about Marriage (Levtov *et al.*, 2015, p. 7). It is written in the chapter of rights and responsibilities for husband and wife (Government of Indonesia, 1974, p. 12-13). Thus, breadwinner position is rooted as men's role in Indonesia society (Prospera, Investing in Women, and the University of Indonesia, 2023, p. 10), including those who act as main caregiver. Consequently, some working fathers participated in direct and indirect childcare in a gendered manner like it describe in as 'ideal' partner characteristic.

Moreover, the selfless care characteristic also exists for similar reason which is '*kodrat*'. It makes Indonesian men are considered adult when they married and having children (Prianti, 2017, p.6). Having children means they gain new status in society and having a successor is important in society. Children also have a role in working fathers' masculine identity. In addition, there is also religious values that children are a gift from God which is a common expression in Indonesian. Malaysian Muslim Fathers also believe being parents means the duty in this world and the hereafter that God gives to them (Juhari, Yaacob, and Talib, 2013, p. 215). Which I believe other religions in Indonesia also mentioned similar discourse. It further related to their role as leader in the family that obligate to dedicate themselves to the family (Prianti, 2017, p.9). That is why they are willing to do anything for their children because the children are precious and meaningful.

Additionally, I see all five characters as the way they express responsibility to care for their children as fathers because of those values above. The first three characters are dominance because of the values that they observe and internalize in society. While as 'ideal' partner and care actor are new for some of them that need to be learn through partnership. Thus, the interaction and dominance of certain characteristics influences their experience in care.

Chapter 6. Conclusion

The role of the father as the breadwinner and the mother as the main caregiver is divided based on masculinity and femininity which causes the father to be less involved in childcare even though both roles are important for the child's life. Therefore, related to working fathers' experience in childcare from masculinity perspective, this study shows that overall working fathers do and can carry out direct childcare practices, however their perception on their role as father is influence their involvement. Their perception on gendered tasks linked with how they see childcare (Suwada, 2017, p. 270). The perception of their role as support caregiver results in limiting their direct care, especially during newborn and let the other take the lead in care practice (their wife or in-laws). While for the working fathers that have perception as equal caregiver shows active involvement in direct care from newborn and show more caring masculinity characteristic. The caring masculinities framework by Elliot (2015, p. 17) suggests the potential changes of gender equality and men's involvement in it shaped by their care characteristic. Furthermore, even though they have different perceptions in their role in care work, the similarity of the working fathers in this study is they also see their role as breadwinner is important. That is why their working arrangements also determine their participation in childcare. Being breadwinner does not mean they could not develop care characteristics (Brandth and Kvande, 2018, p. 87). The working fathers in this study show the potential to share division of labor in childcare, yet there is strong manner in certain aspect of hegemonic masculinity because of the belief in *kodrat*, like being breadwinners.

Moreover, I look again on the concern about father participation in childcare and how it voices in Indonesia context, as supporter. Therefore, based on this study, consider the acknowledgement of working fathers as equal caregivers is needed in society, policy discourse, employment regulation, and father involvement in childcare discourse. As it shown in this study that some fathers have positive feelings after caring for a child alone, the moment when they become main caregiver. Country with high rank in Gender Inequality Index (UNDP, 2023, p. 35), like Sweden, applied father's leave quota that allow fathers to care their child alone and shows positive attitude in childcare involvement (Duvander, Haas, and Thalberg, 2017, p.126 and p. 142). Other Nordic countries, like Norway, the policies related to childcare promote fathers and mothers as equal caregiver (Eydal and Roostgard, 2011, p. 175). It is important to highlight fathers' involvement followed by a narrative about their role as equal caregivers, not as supporters in childcare.

Nevertheless, this study focuses on the working fathers' childcare practice in dual earner families and middle income social economic which they can negotiate their paid and care work with their partner. Therefore, to get better understanding, future studies could explore the issues in different settings, like exploring the influence of social-economic status in their involvement in childcare. Finally, by using remote qualitative interviews, it is helpful to capture a working father's viewpoint by paying attention to the words that they use which capture differently from using questionnaire or time use diary. It is helpful to understand their positionality and negotiation between work and childcare. Furthermore, the study is contributed to describe fathers' involvement in childcare and masculinity studies by adding the working fathers' experiences in childcare from Indonesia context. It also discusses the potential capabilities of fathers in childcare which need support and adds perspective to policy practices to facilitate them as equal caregivers.

Word counts: 17.284 word

Appendix

Appendix 1

Interview Guide

- Introduction.
Inform consent and ask permission to record.
- Start the conversation.
- List of possible questions:

At the beginning of the conversation, the interviewer will ask about their child or/and family to get to know the interviewee better.

- Could you tell me more about your child? What is the precious moment that you remember the most about your child?

To get to know about interviewee experience around paternity leave for formal worker and informal worker around the moment when the child was born for informal worker. These are possible questions to ask during the interview.

Formal worker:

- How many days did you take leave and what did you do during that leave? Could you please describe that?
- What do you know about paternity regulation that you familiar with/ experience it?

Informal worker:

- How was your experience when your child was born? What did you do at that time?

The possible of general question about interviewee's involvement and feeling toward childcare.

- Are there any ups and downs during that time?
- How do you spend your time with your child? And what do you do?
- How do you think your involvement is similar to or different from other carers?
- What is the difference between before and after having a child?
- What do you think about childcare? How do you see yourself as a father?

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